

### Mr. Pete Adams - Principal



New is the one word I chose at the Picnic-on-the-Patio to express the feeling around school as we begin this year. For one, I am the new guy in the position of Principal, feeling my way around. It's not too much of a load though, as it is not me running the show but a team effort by our entire staff. They are great people with whom to labor. We also have an old but new math curriculum. We are still utilizing the Saxon math program, which provides us with the flexibility that we desire in order to provide the best fit for our students. But we have upgraded to the many new enhancements that have been added in recent years. A new reading program for the younger students also has been implemented. Obviously, this is the crucial area for learning development, so we want to provide the best system for our school of which we know. It is called the Daily 5 program. From what I hear from our teachers, it is working well. To monitor what we are doing and be able to respond accordingly, we will be using a, yes new, testing program that will take the learning temperature of our students three times a year. More significantly on the new side are our newest families. They are the Andgbeay family with Eyael in 2nd grade; the Degoffau's with Samuel in 3rd and Lewis in 6th; the Nicholls with Jazmine in 7th; and the Sipols with Ransom in 6th and Grace in 7th. We welcome them to our Eastside family.

To provide balance to all our newnesses, I would like to reprise an article that I wrote for our Eastside Events a few years ago which expresses some of the things that I trust will never change.

### Raison D'Etire

This is the French term that literally means "reason for being". We need to be able to justify why we go to all the expense, time, and energy to have our little school when there are other Christian schools around, and free government schools as well. Thinking through my position is profitable for me as a teacher. Theology is an appropriate starting point. Eastside is different because Board members and staff must be members of Protestant Reformed Churches, and the contracts of the staff state that we must agree to the Reformed Confessions. That means that we are engaged in the central doctrinal battle of the ages – the confession of the sovereign, particular saving grace of God. We understand that in this sovereign grace the Covenant is established in lines of generations, thereby making sense for there being Old Testament admonitions, such as in Deuteronomy 6, and New Testament callings of parents to nurture their children, in the Lord. This

immediately directs believing parents away from the increasing godless state institutions from raising their children that God has given to them. This also distinguishes us from other Christian schools that look at the students as unbelieving, "little vipers", (a term used by Jonathan Edwards), to be evangelized. We believe that the Lord works in the hearts of these students and are to be taught and admonished and treated as such. There is a very evident authority that is received by these young saints when the truth of the Word of God is brought to them that bears on the situation at hand.

For parents this means that they must singularly or in our case as a grouped society operate a school with all its associated needs and requirements. Not directly a church-run operation is Eastside, even though our canopy is jointly held up by the church and school buildings.

In discussing what we teach, the issue is really how we teach the what we teach. As our curriculum consultant Dan VanderArk expressed it, every school teaches the same “stuff” (math, science, history, etc.) that every other school does, but the good Christian school puts its own unique presentation to it. Therefore, flowing from our previously stated theology, our science will be non-evolutionary and our history will not be looking for the grace of God working in all the cultures all through their history. To state the matter in a far more powerful, positive way, we show how Christ is the foundation, the Enabler, of all scientific endeavors; we present Him as the source of all history, its Director, and its goal, executing His judgments and blessings as He wills all through time. The rich Reformed faith sees that the goal of all things is that the Lord will be glorified in Christ through His people. All kingdoms, all peoples, all history, all of the rest of Creation serve to that end, and so should our schools and education.

In the month by month and year by year operation of our school, we are run by a board and committees composed of our parents, as befits a parentally operated school. A distinctive for Eastside is how much mothers, yes women, are involved in the committee work here at Eastside. They bring much competence, energy, and direct concern. The multitude of volunteers we have create a high quality educational environment, far beyond what could be expected from a school our size.

To conclude on a very practical, mundane note as to why we are here, consider our name – Eastside. We are the only school, with our unique PR perspectives, on this side of Grand Rapids. We are here to serve the local (and beyond) Christian community. Thank you for this opportunity. May the Lord continue to bless us in this worthy endeavor.

Mr. Pete Adams, Principal

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## A TYPICAL DAY IN THE RAINFOREST

Now, that title may be a little misleading. After all, there is really nothing typical about the jungle. One minute you are walking down a lush, green, peaceful path with far-off calls of exotic birds, the muted echoes of tiny frogs and insects, and the rhythmic, soothing sounds of a distant waterfall. Suddenly, the jungle comes alive with the whoops of howler monkeys as they call to each other from the canopy trees above you, causing shrill squawks and a rushing sound of wings as a flock of macaws suddenly take flight, awakening a jaguar draped along a thick branch of a nearby tree, who in response gives a long, annoyed, and menacing growl. All of this triggers a cacophony of voices in all four rainforest layers - emergent, canopy, understory, and forest floor.

Our classroom theme this year is the Rainforest, and our 2nd and 3rd graders are a lot like the rainforest and animals described above. Just like the animals of the rainforest, God has made these amazing and unique children, each with his and her own talents and strengths (and weaknesses), and all of them learning and working

and growing together in a covenant community of believers.

Allow me to present a "typical" day in our jungle, er, classroom. First, a bit of background information may be helpful. The first week of school had not even concluded, and the students were asking when they could write a report about the rainforest! I just smiled, told them I thought that was a great idea, and continued with those necessary first-weeks-of-school topics we needed to complete to lay a foundation for our year's learning. To introduce the rainforest and pique their interest about it (Why did I think I needed to do that?), I have been occasionally reading books about the rainforest, which have been interactive and full of amazing information. We also watched an absolutely incredible documentary film called "Bugs!" about insect and bug life in the rainforest.

So, anyway, there we were at our gathering place (Daily 5 language) one day, having just completed a focus lesson on informational books and a model reading and discussion of the book *A is for Anaconda*, which

introduces a lot of wildlife in the rainforest. I then announced to the students that they would get to choose their own animal to research and write about, and the room was suddenly "alive" with excitement about what animal they wanted and searching for books and other informational texts. Once students were settled with their books and an initial worksheet to complete, the room was once again deceptively quiet, rather like the calm before a storm. Soon, the wind began to whisper through the trees, or was that the whisper of students who just had to share what they were reading - slowly at first, just a quiet whisper to their neighbor, or a quiet, "Mrs. Thompson, did you know...", but soon it spread through the room, and everyone wanted to share what they were discovering. The excitement and energy in the room was palpable, like the hair rising on your arms and the back of your neck just before lightning strikes.



It is this excitement and energy for learning that I hope to nurture in my students throughout this year. God our Creator is indescribably awesome, and we see this so vividly in His amazing creation! I think a fitting way to end here is with our class verse from Revelations 4:11, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Knowing all things are possible through Christ our Strength,  
Mrs. Kristi Thompson

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## FOURTH-SIXTH GRADE OVERVIEW

According to Mr. Adams, our fourth through sixth grade classroom this year is ridiculous. And you'd see why too if you were to walk into the room and see the slide, loft, swings, and other decorations that fit our playground theme this year. However, our theme was inspired by our beloved principal himself. It was at last year's end-of-the-year chapel, in response to our sports theme, that Mr. Adams made the comment that we had brought the playground into the classroom. And so, we literally did that this year.

We have nine students in the class this year. First, we have our five sixth-graders. Jeffrey is our history buff, Madelyn is our writer and animal lover, Hannah loves coffee and sports, Lewis is actually named after C.S. Lewis, and Ransom enjoys archery and chemistry. Second, we have our two fifth-graders. Elizabeth loves to run, and Samantha complains when she doesn't have homework. Finally, we have two fourth-graders. Anna wishes she could read every minute of the day, and Malachi would like it if school kept going until dark. We also have our beautiful, color-changing, cricket-munching, eyeball-licking, leaping pet gecko. We call him Rugby.

Thank you for your support. We pray that we will have a blessed school year, full of mental and spiritual growth. May we all enjoy being faithful in our callings.

Mr. David Mahtani



## OPERATING FUND DRIVE UPDATE

It's that time of year again, when we gear up for the next Operating Fund Drive. We appreciate all the support over these many years, and look forward to another successful fund drive. With gratitude to God, we were pleased to have met our goal of \$130,00 last year, and this year the Association approved a goal of \$110,000. In addition to the standard giving via checks and cash, we have also made available the option to give electronically. For those interested in this option, you may have the Treasurer debit your checking account for a specified amount, and for a certain number of transactions. Or you may utilize a website in the name of the school that allows contributors to give online. Look for more information soon to come in the mail, and updates in church bulletins. We thank God for His faithfulness to us and our covenant children. Please prayerfully consider how the Lord has prospered you, and the financial needs of Eastside Christian School.

Brian Baldwin, Fund Drive Committee

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### NEWS FROM THE PROMOTERS

What a great SUMMER!!! As we start a new year at Eastside I would like to introduce to you the Promoters. Some of you may know who the Promoters are and some of you may not. I am going to lead you through who the Promoters are and what we do.

**WHO:** The Promoters of Eastside are YOU and any one else who has an interest in the promotion and fundraising activities of Eastside. The Promoters are parents, teachers, grandparents, and supporters. It is not a group made up of just women, but men may and are a part of the Promoters as well. We believe we all have some great ideas and strengths that can be pulled together to help promote and raise monies. We are always looking for new ideas and fresh faces.

**WHAT:** The Promoters are an important part of Eastside and its operations. The money raised from FUNdraisers goes towards items such as playground equipment, new books for the Daily 5, and new lap tops to name a few.

**WHERE:** Where can you see the Promoters? You can see them setting up and taking down FUNdraisers. You will see them serving at Grandparent's Day. Sometimes they are behind the scenes, making phone calls, and sending out letters. You will simply see them everywhere, because they are the fabric who works behind the scenes to make Eastside go.

**WHEN:** The Promoters hold a meeting every third Thursday of the month at 7:30pm. These meetings are to inform the group of upcoming FUNdraisers and other events the group will be a part of. We are a small group and need more people to attend these meetings. Without your voice we cannot come up with the new innovative ideas for FUNdraisers and learn news ways we can help out Eastside. Watch the Monday note for when the next meeting is, and where you can help out at the next FUNdraiser.

**THANKS:** I would like to take this time to Thank ALL who help. Whether it is collecting Box Tops, committee work, setting up or taking down a FUNdraiser, or being a chair person for an event. I want to say your work does not go without notice. THANK YOU!

As you can see I keep saying FUNdraiser. That is because at Eastside our Promoters put the FUN into all our FUNdraisers and meetings. Are you looking to be a part of Eastside? Look no further and join the Promoters and participate, from just being a helper to chairing up a FUNdraiser. See you at the next meeting OCTOBER 25 at 7:30pm.

Erin Windemuller  
Promoters President