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**October 2009**

## Telling Blake's Story

*By Guest Columnist ISACS Accreditation Chair Beth Hower*

During the 2009–10 school year, Blake will be involved in an important reflective process that will culminate in a comprehensive School Self-Study Report. The self-study is a required element of the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) accreditation cycle; Blake is entering year two of this seven-year cycle.

Blake officially began its self-study this August with a kick-off workshop day led by Kevin Rooney, ISACS accreditation services coordinator. Rooney, visiting from Chicago, provided an overview of the self-study to six different audiences, including the Board of Trustees and all employees. He also prepared the leaders of the self-study by explaining their responsibilities and offering suggestions as to how to maximize the work of each committee. Rooney encouraged all members of the community to view this yearlong process as an opportunity to “tell the unique story of The Blake School.”

The self-study is a detailed examination of every aspect of a school's operation, including: purpose, goals and philosophy; school community; personnel; program; and governance and administration. These five areas will be examined by 32 committees. The committees will be chaired by a Blake administrator, and the self-study steering committee will oversee their work. Each committee will collect and analyze data, identify themes, compare and contrast Blake in 2009 to Blake in 1999 (the year of the School's last self-study), consider ways to improve our School, and celebrate the accomplishments of the institution.

The Blake community will be examined by six sub-committees: admissions; advancement and alumni relations; parent community; school climate; equity and justice; and local community. Blake's program is sub-divided into 17 committees, which include the nine PK–12 departments, athletics, college counseling, extra-curricular, food service,



ISACS Accreditation Chair Beth Hower

LearningWorks, service learning, special programs and transportation. The governance and administration aspect of the School will be studied by four sub-committees: governance/decision-making; finances/financial audit; facilities; and technology/information systems support. The remaining five committees are: purpose, goals and philosophy; Lower School overview; Middle School overview; Upper School overview; and personnel. All employees are serving on at least one self-study committee; other committee members will include trustees, parents and Upper School students.

The “ISACS Accreditation Guide” offers questions that will be used to launch each committee's work as it undertakes a detailed process of analysis. For example, the equity and justice committee will consider this question: How is the worth and dignity of each individual honored by the various constituencies? The extra-curricular committee will seek to answer this question: How do these activities assist Blake in attaining its educational and social purposes? A question the governance/decision-making committee will discuss is: How is change initiated and sustained? The committee members' focused conversations will be critically important as viewpoints from different constituencies are debated and assessed. Through these discussions, Blake's story will unfold.

*continued on page 2*

## Telling Blake's Story

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All committees are responsible for writing a narrative report that provides an overview of the area of study and includes a summary of strengths, challenges, and plans and priorities for this aspect of Blake's operation. In addition, a collection of documents related to the topic will accompany the report in the addenda. We anticipate that the final report will be completed during the summer of 2010.

The steering committee is responsible for collecting, compiling, editing and revising the committee reports as it creates a coherent, comprehensive and beneficial School Self-Study Report. The ultimate outcome of the report is to tell Blake's unique story for its primary audiences: the ISACS visiting team, which will be on-campus in November 2010, the School's employees, and Blake's Board of Trustees. The steering committee will also ensure that the report demonstrates that Blake is in compliance with the 50 ISACS standards of membership.

The information contained in the School Self-Study Report will provide useful direction to all of the School's departments as they make decisions related to departmental improvement and allocation of resources. In addition, the report, combined with the written response of the ISACS visiting team, will be utilized to help frame Blake's next strategic plan.

We embrace the opportunity this self-study offers us to reflect on the complex operations of our School. We look forward to sharing our findings — Blake's story — with you in the coming year.

## AlertNow and Text Messages

**NEW!** This year students and parents may sign up to receive AlertNow text messages (in addition to phone messages). AlertNow is the system Blake uses for urgent communications, such as an early school closing due to weather. To sign up for text alerts, visit <https://www.alertnowsms.com/>.

Please note: you will need to sign in using the PIN: Blake1.

Blake will conduct its annual fall test of AlertNow for families and staff in early November. Watch for updates in Bear Essentials.

Questions? Please contact Cathy McLane at [cmclane@blakeschool.org](mailto:cmclane@blakeschool.org) or Jon Carter at [jcarter@blakeschool.org](mailto:jcarter@blakeschool.org).

## Blake Classic Auction Items Needed!

The Blake Classic will be on Saturday, May 1, 2010, and co-chairs Jane Mortell and Joy Solomon need your suggestions for items and donations for the online and live auction. If you have an item you would like to donate or an idea for an item on which you would like to bid, please send them our way. Big or small, we need them all! Please contact Jane or Joy directly or send an e-mail to [parent\\_association@blakeschool.org](mailto:parent_association@blakeschool.org)



## Breakfast at Blake

SPONSORED BY THE BLAKE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

### Join Us for Breakfast at Blake!

Meet and mingle with our great alumni and parent community. Hear interesting speakers on relevant topics — business, sports, arts, music and more!

*A complimentary breakfast buffet will be served. Please R.S.V.P. by Friday, Oct. 2 to Sarah at (952) 988-3445 or [advancementsvp@blakeschool.org](mailto:advancementsvp@blakeschool.org).*

**Speaker: Barbara Forster '55**

**Friday, Oct. 9, 2009**

**8–9:15 a.m.**

**Hopkins Campus, Bovey Chapel**



Northrop alumna, former parent and longtime supporter of the Blake community, Barbara Forster has led a life exemplified by her business acumen, commitment to service and philanthropic generosity.

After a banking career spanning more than 30 years, Forster now serves on several boards, including the Center for Victims of Torture and the Women's Foundation of Minnesota. Her commitment to the community is characterized by her role as founding director of both the One Percent Club and the Domestic Abuse Project, as well as 20-plus years of service with the American Refugee Committee. Among her many awards and recognitions, Forster has been honored with the University of Minnesota Regents Award, Junior League Volunteer of the Year Award and the Headwaters Foundation Human Rights Award. Blake is proud to join this chorus of admiration by bestowing on her its 2009 Outstanding Alumna Award. Forster will discuss her global and local efforts to ease the suffering of refugees around the world.

For a listing of future Breakfast at Blake speakers, go to: [www.blakeschool.org/alumni/breakfast\\_blake/index.aspx](http://www.blakeschool.org/alumni/breakfast_blake/index.aspx)

## Homecoming & Reunion October 8–10, 2009



Catch some school spirit during the Reunion & Homecoming festivities taking place Oct. 8–10. A schedule of events for parents and students is listed below. For the complete schedule and to register for events requiring an R.S.V.P. (such as Breakfast at Blake), you can access the [reunion schedule](#) on Blake's web site. If you have any questions, please contact Director of Alumni and Parent Relations [Becky Ankeny](#) at (952) 988-3433.

### Friday, October 9 (Blake Campus)

|                  |  | Location       |
|------------------|--|----------------|
| 8–9:15 a.m.      | Breakfast at Blake: Reunion Edition<br><b>**RSVP Required**</b> Alumna of the Year Barbara Forster '55 | Bovey Chapel   |
| 9:45 a.m.–2 p.m. | Convocation & Legacy Day   | Aamoth Stadium |
| 6 p.m. kick-off  | Varsity Football Game<br>Blake Bears vs. DeLaSalle Islanders   | Aamoth Stadium |

### Saturday, October 10 (Blake Campus)

|                      |   |  |
|----------------------|---|--|
| 11:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. | Children's Activities   | Howard Courtyard<br>& Varsity Baseball Field |
| Noon–2 p.m.          | Picnic Lunch  | Loggia                                       |
| Noon                 | Boys' JV Soccer vs. DeLaSalle<br>Boys' C Soccer vs. DeLaSalle<br>Girls' JV Soccer vs. Minneapolis South<br>Girls' C Soccer vs. Minneapolis South  |  |
| 12:30 p.m.           | Girls' JV Volleyball vs. DeLaSalle<br>Girls' C Volleyball vs. DeLaSalle   |  |
| 1:30 p.m.            | Girls' Varsity Soccer vs. Minneapolis South<br><b><i>Alumna Athlete of the Year Award presented to Louise Wakefield Otten '65 during halftime of the girls' varsity soccer game</i></b> |  |
| 2 p.m.               | Girls' Varsity Volleyball vs. DeLaSalle   |  |
| 3:30 p.m.            | Boys' Varsity Soccer vs. DeLaSalle  |  |

*Please visit the athletic section of [Blake's web site](#) for other scheduled athletic events.*

## Blake Students Get Hands-On Work Experience through Blake Connections

The Blake School has always been known for its exceptional education and constant dedication to advancing student experiences both in the classroom and in the community. The School offers many programs that shape our students' knowledge of what awaits them beyond the classroom doors. One such program is Blake Connections, an Upper School internship opportunity now in its fourth year. This program serves both seniors and juniors who want a chance to work alongside established professionals to gain supervised, practical work experience. The main program goals are job exposure and hands-on experience for students in careers that interest them. This is a wonderful opportunity for our students to form alliances with working professionals and to connect with alumni and the broader Blake community.

Last year, 21 students participated in Blake Connections for either a three-week senior project or a summer internship. Fifty-two sponsors made it possible for students to have internships in areas ranging from criminal law at the Scott County Courthouse to doctor rotations at North Memorial Hospital, Children's Hospital and Tria Orthopedic. Students also gained skills in the world of finance, learned about the Minneapolis City Council and worked alongside mentors at Medtronic.

Blake Connections welcomes back our many sponsors, but we need your assistance to boost the number and variety of internship opportunities. We look forward to hearing from you and to creating new partnerships. If you are interested in being a mentor, please contact Director of International & Off-Campus Programs Dion Crushshon at (952) 988-3782 or [dcrushshon@blakeschool.org](mailto:dcrushshon@blakeschool.org).

## Use of the Directory and E-mail Addresses

The Blake directory is an invaluable resource for everyone in our community, but it is produced to facilitate communication between members of the Blake community only. PLEASE do not provide or use the directory for any other use than communicating with Blake family members and staff. Birthday invitations, meeting notices, etc. are acceptable; invitations for a personal, favorite fund-raiser or summer program are not acceptable. When the directory information is abused, it harms everyone.

The same is true with the use of e-mail addresses for members of our community. Please be mindful about what you are sending out to others, making sure that the information is useful and something they want to receive. Sending solicitations and political appeals is inappropriate unless the recipient has specifically asked to receive such information.

If you have any questions regarding the appropriate use of the directory or e-mail addresses, please contact [Cathy McLane](#) in the Communications Office at (952) 988-3434.

Please note: it is Blake's strict policy NEVER to provide or sell the contact information provided by parents and alumni to any outside organization.

Please be sure to check out the [October Directory Updates](#) sheet as posted on the Directory home page of BlakeNet. The update sheet includes important additions and corrections to the School's printed directory.

## Tweet With Tracy on Legacy Day

Tracy Grimm (aka [@LifeatBlake](#)) from Blake's Communications Office will be reporting via Twitter on all the exciting activities taking place on Legacy Day! Follow her on Friday, Oct. 9 to read real-time updates (and maybe see some photos!) throughout the day.

## LEGACY DAY 2009

The countdown for Legacy Day is on! Plans are afoot for this special day, during which the greater Blake community gathers together with the common purpose of strengthening commitments to lifelong learning, community service and world citizenship. Students, teachers, staff, alumni and parent volunteers — more than 2,000 people in all — will come together on Friday, Oct. 9 to celebrate, connect and give back. (For photos of last year's event, visit [Blake's online 2008–09 photo album.](#))



As is tradition, the day will begin with Blake's Convocation ceremony (to be held in the Gordy Aamoth Jr. Memorial Stadium, weather permitting, or the gym, if inclement); then each Legacy group will come together to work on one of three service activities (described below) to create a number of items for donation. The event ends with a final gathering in the stadium to celebrate the day and the connections made.

Please know that all parents are invited to attend the Convocation ceremony and to volunteer for the Legacy Day activities. With this being said, if rain forces us inside, spectator space for Convocation is minimal, and students and staff will have seating priority. For more information, be sure to watch [Blake's web site](#). If you have any questions or suggestions, or would like to help, please feel free to contact any member of the planning committee, listed below.

### Convocation and Legacy Day Planning Committee:

Activity Chairs (see below); Marc Bogursky (US); Elizabeth Hastings (MS); Ann Bellin (LS); Carolyn Olson/Stacey Stahl (operations); Nan Peterson (service); Becky Ankeny (alumni); Cathy McLane (communications); Cheryl Appeldorn (volunteer coordinator); Scott Flemming/LearningWorks (recess); Brenda Broucek (reflection notebooks); Ken Nivala (buildings and grounds/security)

## Service Projects for Legacy Day 2009

### FLEECE BLANKET PROJECT

Activity Chair: Carey Moe

Legacy groups will construct a number of fleece blankets to be donated to service organizations for the people they serve. Last year we made more than 260 blankets. In addition, the fleece scraps were used to make 1,000 dog and cat toys, which were donated to the Humane Society.

### HUNGER AROUND THE WORLD

Activity Chair: Mae Dayton

Legacy groups will partner with Impact Lives to package and distribute food worldwide to places where there is starvation and hunger. Last year, the Legacy groups packaged more than 54,000 bags, which translates to about 300,000 meals.

### NEW! FEATHERING THE NEST

Activity Chair: Penelope Greene

Blake Legacy groups will be building nesting boxes, which will be donated to the Three Rivers Park System. This fabulous new hands-on educational service project will benefit several aspects of our community. Some of the species-specific nesting boxes, designed for wrens, blue birds, bats, kestrels and wood ducks, will be installed in parks while others will be sold in the park system's gift shops to provide scholarship funds for nature education programs in Twin Cities schools.

The nesting boxes will be constructed from kits produced by Elpis Enterprises (Elpis is the Greek word for "hope"), a youth development organization focusing on youth employment training and small business education. Using reclaimed and recycled wood products in its woodworking shop, Elpis program participants work in all areas of the business. Elpis' young staff will lead Blake Legacy groups in the construction of the nesting houses.

## faculty profile



**Ann Bellin**

*By Ruth O'Neill*

Good parenting is often about finding the right balance between structure and flexibility for your child. Good teaching requires finding a similar balance in a classroom. As Lower School administrative coordinator, Ann Bellin works with colleagues to find this balance for 531 pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students.

"We are one school with one mission statement," says Bellin, who is now in her ninth year at the School. "It is important to create a cohesive feel in our programs and to build a warm sense of community." Bellin's main job responsibilities include overseeing Blake's after-school programs, working with the School's 22 teaching assistants and facilitating parent involvement.

Before accepting her current position, Bellin taught third grade on the Highcroft campus for five years. "As a teacher it was an honor to be part of so many children's lives," she says. "I honestly looked forward to every day. My life was enriched with knowledge of hockey, football, horses, gymnastics, archery, poetry and snowboarding. Being with children brings a sense of awe to my world. When adults can see the world through the eyes of a child, we are reminded of so many possibilities that otherwise we might be too busy to notice."

A strong believer in service learning, Bellin credits her parents with instilling in her and her five siblings the desire to try to make the world a better place. She has taught parenting skills to developmentally delayed parents and has been a teacher for Reading Recovery, a highly effective short-term program for first graders struggling with reading. Bellin initiated a school partnership program in which Blake third graders become buddies to first graders at Cedar Riverside Community School in Minneapolis, where one of her two daughters teaches.

What does Bellin like best about work? "Talking to parents about their hopes and dreams for their child and the comradery among my colleagues. It is truly a privilege to work with adults who care so deeply about children." Bellin's hobbies include home projects, laughing with friends, biking and traveling with her husband.

## The Risky Business of Growing a Child

By Ruth O'Neill

Not so long ago I watched my newly licensed teenager bump into the curb as he backed out of our driveway. He laughed at himself, adjusted his wheels and then drove away. I reluctantly waved goodbye both to him and to my last illusion that I could protect him from serious harm. Keeping him safe was no longer as simple as properly installing a newborn car seat or insisting he wear a bike helmet. All the sunscreen in the world will not protect him from the consequences of his own decisions.

Every day teens rely on their not-yet fully mature brains to make choices. New MRI brain imaging technology gives experts picture proof of what generations of parents before us already knew — high school students are not adults. Their brains are not fully developed. Their decision-making skills can be erratic and uneven. At times they lack the ability to assess risks, to evaluate consequences or to control impulsive behavior. Teens crave independence, but at the same time they are highly susceptible to the influence of peers, who likely have equally immature brains. Our teens have made, and will continue to make, mistakes. Some will drive over fire hydrants or speed out of the garage with the door still closed. Some will experiment with alcohol or other drugs, have unprotected sex or develop unhealthy eating habits. Good judgment is just not something one can order online. We know it will take some students longer to mature than others. So what can parents do in the meantime?

“Parents can encourage positive risk taking,” advises Upper School counselor Erin Adams. “A teenager’s main developmental task is to wrestle with his or her identity. High school not only presents opportunities to enhance existing skills and knowledge in particular areas, but it should also remain a time for delving into new interests. Let them explore who they are by trying new things like a drawing class, a different sport, AB Calculus, debate or drama. Encourage them to continue to pick appropriate new challenges. This allows them to develop their own feelings of competence. The process of learning and mastering skills helps them develop a larger sense of self and an identity that is separate from their parents.” By joining teams and getting involved with clubs and service learning, Adams says, teens can also find adult mentors who support them in making sound decisions.

So acquiring an adult brain requires more than just waiting in line behind the scarecrow for the Wizard of Oz to give you one. Our teens need to take chances. They need to move outside their comfort zones. They need to feel the thrill of mastering something that perhaps they never thought they could do. “Adults are always harping on the downside of teenage risk taking, and it’s true that teenagers are more apt than adults to get themselves in trouble,” says neuroscientist Bill Wilson in an article by Nancy Shute, which was published last September in U.S. News and World Report (<http://health.usnews.com/blogs/on-parenting/2008/09/02/7-ways-to-learn-more-without-more-study.html>). “But the fact that the parts of the brain that drive people to try new, risky and exciting things appear to be more developed in teenagers can be a huge plus.” Wilson believes that teens can actually become smarter by “harnessing” the power of risk taking. “Pick appropriate challenges — difficult sports, a tough job, mastering a performance art, or traveling overseas, and the teenage brain is uniquely primed to tackle them.” Wilson also offers two more reasons why parents should encourage appropriate risk taking. First, his findings



The O'Neill family: Phelan '10, Ruth, Brian and Ariel '12

suggest that the brain will actually “give” better attention and focus skills to a teen who finds something he or she is passionate about. Second, he believes most lifelong skills are obtained during the teen years.

Okay, so positive risk taking sounds great when it ends with the thrill of victory, but what about the agony of defeat? What about the other “F” word? What about failure? What about the all-important high school transcript? Are we really supposed to be supportive if a junior girl wants to drop varsity debate to play junior varsity tennis? Should we really let a star hockey player quit skating to try acting in the school play? If we allow our teens to make choices that might ultimately lower a GPA, how can that be a positive thing?

During my most challenging parenting moments, I try to remind myself that I am growing an entire person, not just a brain. If I do not let my sophomore take chances, she may not blossom. If I obsess about her grades, she may come to believe that bombing a quiz is the end of the world. If I protect her from disappointment, she may never learn to cope with failure. If I do not let her make her own decisions, she may struggle with separating from me and becoming a healthy adult.

This year all of us will watch our children make decisions, like how hard to study for a test, whether to attend a party or maybe whether to study overseas. Many times they will make good choices, but sometimes they will not. It will be an ongoing struggle for each and every one of us to know when to intervene and when to be brave enough and patient enough to let our teenager find his or her own way. The Blake School is a wonderful, rigorous college preparatory school that offers students many incredible opportunities in this very competitive world. Of course the high school transcript matters, but after 10-plus college visits with my senior this summer, I now finally believe that what matters even more than grades is that my son knows that I trust him enough to let him take the wheel.



## Lower School

### LITERACYFEST (FORMERLY BOOK FAIR)

All families are invited to the Highcroft campus for the annual Book Fair and Boutique on Oct. 13 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Please see page 10 of this newsletter for LiteracyFest event details.

### PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETING

The first Parent Association meeting is on Monday, Oct. 5 at 8:30 a.m. in the Pillsbury Conference Room for the Blake campus and on Thursday, Oct. 8 at 11:15 a.m. in the Highcroft Meeting Room for the Highcroft campus.

### PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

There will be no classes on Wednesday, Oct. 14 and Thursday, Oct. 15 due to parent/teacher conferences. Conferences will be held from noon to 8 p.m. on Wednesday and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursday. Extended Day is available. Watch [Friday folders](#) to register.

### NO CLASSES

There are no classes on Friday, Oct. 16. No childcare will be provided.

### PICTURE RETAKES

**Blake campus:** Tuesday, Oct. 20  
**Highcroft campus:** Wednesday, Oct. 28

### GRADE 3 PARENT EDUCATION NIGHT

Third grade parents (Blake and Highcroft) are invited to attend Parent Education Night on Thursday, Oct. 22 at 7 p.m. in the Highcroft library.

### PUMPKIN DECORATING PARTY

Please provide your child with a pumpkin to decorate, and the Parent Association will provide the rest. Look for the sign-up sheet in the [Friday folders](#). Advance registration is required. If you are interested in volunteering or have questions, please call Blake campus Chairs Taruna Dandiker and Jamie Smith or Highcroft campus Chair Karen Bix.

**Highcroft campus:** Tuesday, Oct. 27, 3:30–4:15 p.m., Dining Room & Gym

**Blake campus:** Thursday, Oct. 29, 3:30–4:15 p.m., Dining Room

### GRAND FRIEND DAY

Friday, Nov. 6 is Grand Friend Day for grades pre-kindergarten through five on both the Blake and Highcroft campuses. This is an opportunity for someone special in your student's life to join us for a morning of learning and activities.

### BLAKE B.E.A.R.S. CLUB

**Highcroft campus:** If you have questions, please contact Carolyn Taylor or Jamie Wilson. The first meeting is Thursday, Oct. 8.

### GIRLS SERVICE AND ACTIVITY

**Highcroft campus:** If you have any questions, please call Nancy Lothenbach. The first meeting is Thursday, Oct. 29.

*Susan Hitchner Fluke, vice chair, Blake campus*  
*Aleya Champlin, vice chair, Highcroft campus*  
*Lower School Parent Association*

## JAVA ("Journey in Art using Visual Awareness," formerly known as Art Adventure)

**Blake campus:** The Blake campus will integrate JAVA-based methodologies in its Art Adventure program this year. Art Adventure is an educational program offered by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA) and presented to our children by trained parent volunteers. The program brings the discussion of specially selected pieces of art (paintings, sculptures, tapestries, period clothing, etc.) to the classroom. The collection this year is "Artists' Inspirations." The art reproductions are discussed with students during their art class. During the school year, students will travel to the MIA to view these original works of art. Volunteers may attend any one of the following training sessions at the MIA:  
Friday, Oct. 9 from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Thursday, Oct. 22 from 5:30 to 8 p.m.

**JAVA Chair:** Renee Carrel

**JAVA Vice Chair:** Anne Steinfeldt

**Highcroft campus:** Highcroft is using Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) in its Parent Association-sponsored art program. VTS grew out of research conducted at Harvard's School of Education on how young people interpret art. A VTS approach helps develop "flexible and rigorous thinking skills, including observing, brainstorming, reasoning with evidence, speculating, cultivating a point of view, reflecting and revising." Highcroft parent volunteers will facilitate student discussions of artworks in the classroom. Students' initial interpretations of the artworks are complemented by continued discussion during the annual field trip to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA) and by classroom projects and research. A required volunteer training session was held in September. An optional training tour at the MIA will be offered in early October.

**JAVA Co-Chair:** Mindy Rechelbacher

**JAVA Co-Chair:** Michele Mitchell

| October |   |                                      | November |   |                      |
|---------|---|--------------------------------------|----------|---|----------------------|
| DATE    | EVENT                                     | TIME/LOCATION                        | DATE     | EVENT   | TIME/LOCATION        |
| 10/1    | LS LiteracyFest: Guest Author Celebration | 6 pm MPAC                            | 10/20    | LSB Picture Retakes                               |                      |
| 10/2    | LS LiteracyFest: Guest Author Visits      |                                      | 10/22    | Gr. 3 Parent Education Night                      | 7 pm LSH Library     |
| 10/5-6  | LS LiteracyFest: Book Exchange            | 8:15 am–3:30 pm<br>LSB & LSH Library | 10/27    | LSH Pumpkin Party                                 | 3:30–4:15 pm HDR/Gym |
| 10/5    | Student Services LS Parent Workshop       | 8:45–10 am HMR                       | 10/28    | LSH Picture Retakes                               |                      |
|         | LSB Parent Association Mtg.               | 8:30–10 am PCR                       |          | Student Services LS Parent Workshop               | 8:45–10 am PCR       |
| 10/8    | LSH Parent Association Mtg.               | 11:15 am–12:45 pm<br>HMR             | 10/29    | LSB Pumpkin Party                                 | 3:30–4:15 pm BDR     |
| 10/13   | LS Friday Schedule                        |                                      |          |   |                      |
|         | LS LiteracyFest: Book Fair and Boutique   | 9 am–7 pm LSH                        |          |   |                      |
| 10/14   | No School — LS Conferences                | Noon–8 pm                            |          |   |                      |
| 10/15   | No School — LS Conferences                | 9 am–3 pm                            | 11/6     | Grand Friend Day                                  | 9–11 am LSH/LSB      |
| 10/16   | No School                                 |                                      | 11/6–7   | LiteracyFest: Sale at Barnes & Noble and Bookcase |                      |

For contact phone numbers and e-mail addresses, please use [The Blake School online directory](#) (found in password-protected BlakeNet). Other questions? Send an e-mail to [parent\\_association@blakeschool.org](mailto:parent_association@blakeschool.org).

## Middle School

### PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETING

The Parent Association meeting will be held on Friday, Oct. 2 from 8:45 to 10:15 a.m. in the Pillsbury Conference Room. The featured speaker will be Head of School John Gulla. The next meeting will be held on Friday, Nov. 6 from 8:45 to 10:15 a.m.

### GRADE 6 SKATING PARTY

All sixth graders are invited to attend the sixth grade ice skating party on Friday, Oct. 2 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. in the Blake Ice Arena. Please contact Linda Krelitz or Mimi Rae with any questions or to volunteer. More information will be sent home with your child.

### LEARNING LUNCHES

All parents are welcome to join Middle School Director Joe Seivold for informative discussions on a variety of issues concerning Blake Middle School students. Lunch will be provided. The sixth grade lunch is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 6. The seventh grade lunch is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 13. The lunches are held in the Pillsbury Conference Room at noon.

### MAGAZINE DRIVE

The Middle School magazine drive is under way! The deadline to turn in your subscriptions is Tuesday, Oct. 13. Last prize distribution is set for Monday, Oct. 19. Please note that magazines can be ordered online all year long and credited toward the School.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL CONFERENCES

There will be no classes on Wednesday, Oct. 14 and Thursday, Oct. 15 due to conferences. Each

Middle School student and his or her parents will meet with the student's homeroom teacher for a conference. Sign up for conferences will be on [blakeschool.org](http://blakeschool.org). Click [here](#) for a sign-up form. Conference times will be confirmed by regular mail.

### GRADES 7 & 8 FALL DANCE

The seventh and eighth grade dance will be on Friday, Oct. 23 from 7:30 to 10 p.m. in the Middle School dining room. Please remember that students may not arrive after 8 p.m. without a note from home. Also, if a student needs to leave the dance early, a parent must come to the dining room to pick up his or her child. Admission is \$5 at the door. Parents wishing to chaperone, please contact Karen Murray.

### HAUNTED HOUSE

Please join Blake's ghosts and goblins at the third annual Blake haunted house on Saturday, Oct. 24 from 7 to 9 p.m. Haunted house visitors should come directly to the dining room on the Blake campus where they will wait their turn to be led through the house with a guide. The entrance fee is \$5, but additional donations will be accepted. All proceeds will benefit the Tubman Family Alliance. Due to the nature of the content in the haunted house, only students from grades six through twelve will be admitted. Upper School students interested in acting inside the house should contact Amy Walters at [awalters@blakeschool.org](mailto:awalters@blakeschool.org).

### QUARTER ENDS

The end of the first quarter is Friday, Oct. 30.

### Gr. 7 & 8 PARENT PARTY

All seventh and eighth grade parents are invited to attend their parent party on Saturday, Nov. 7 at 5:30 p.m. in the Bovey. Please look for an invitation to arrive in the mail.

### GRADE 6 DANCE LESSONS

Calling all sixth graders! Save the following Friday evenings for dance lessons: Nov. 13, Jan. 29 and Feb. 19. Details and registration forms will be mailed to you soon. Contact Joanne Patterson or Andrea Schemel with questions.

*Donna Magarian, vice chair  
Middle School Parent Association*

## Come Enjoy the Middle School Play!

What is a family? To answer this question playwright Sandra Fenichel Asher traveled the country. She ran workshops with teens and adults and asked them to experiment with scenes and monologues based on their own real life family experiences. Out of this rich endeavor came the script for "Family Matters," a montage of situations that explores what is truly at the heart of a family. You and your family are invited to watch our talented Middle School actors and technical crew (and two faculty actors!) perform this wonderful play on Friday, Oct. 30 at 7:30 p.m. in the MPAC.

| October  |  |                       | November |                            |                    |
|----------|--|-----------------------|----------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| DATE     | EVENT  | TIME/LOCATION         | DATE     | EVENT                      | TIME/LOCATION      |
| 10/1     | Student Services MS Parent Workshop              | 8:45–10 am PCR        | 10/24    | Haunted House              | 7–9 pm BDR         |
| 10/2     | MS Parent Association Mtg.                       | 8:45–10:15 am PCR     | 10/29    | MS Picture Retakes         |                    |
|          | Gr. 6 Skating Party                              | 3:30–5 pm Ice Arena   | 10/30    | MS Qtr. 1 Ends             |                    |
| 10/6     | Gr. 6 Learning Lunch                             | Noon–1 pm PCR         |          | MS Play                    | 7:30 pm MPAC       |
| 10/13    | Last Day To Turn In Magazine Drive Subscriptions |                       |          |                            |                    |
|          | Gr. 7 Learning Lunch                             | Noon–1 pm PCR         |          |                            |                    |
| 10/14–15 | No School — MS Conferences                       |                       |          |                            |                    |
| 10/16    | No School  |                       |          |                            |                    |
| 10/21    | Student Services MS/US Parent Workshop           | 11:30 am–12:45 pm PCR | 11/6     | MS Parent Association Mtg. | 8:45–10:15 am PCR  |
| 10/23    | Gr. 7/8 Dance                                    | 7:30–10 pm BDR        | 11/7     | Gr. 7/8 Parent Party       | 5:30–7:30 pm Bovey |

## Upper School COLLEGE COUNSELING

The Office of College Counseling reminds students and parents of the following dates:

**Wednesday, Sept. 30 and Thursday, Oct. 1**  
National College Fair held at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

**Sunday, Oct. 4**  
College Fair, 1–3 p.m. at Breck

**Saturday, Oct. 10**  
SAT testing, 7:45 a.m.–1 p.m.

**Wednesday, Oct. 14**  
PSAT testing, 8–11 a.m. for Grades 10 & 11

**Saturday, Oct. 24** ACT testing (not at Blake)

### COFFEE WITH THE GRADE 12 DEAN

On Thursday, Oct. 1 from 8 to 9 a.m., Alyn Eastin will meet with parents for coffee and conversation in the Upper School Cherne Forum.

### COFFEE WITH THE GRADE 10 DEAN

Tenth Grade Dean Jim Mahoney will have coffee and conversation with the parents of tenth graders on Friday, Oct. 2 from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in the Upper School Cherne Forum.

### PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETING

The Parent Association meeting will be on Monday, Oct. 12 in the Cherne Forum. Lunch is at 11:15 a.m. and the meeting is from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The guest speaker is Blake parent Beth Dooley, cookbook author and food writer for the Star Tribune. She will discuss “Smart Food Choices: Feeding Your Body and Brain.” Following the meeting, junior and senior parents are invited to join Blake College Counseling liaison and essay coach Linda Barrows for a conversation about the college application essay.

For contact phone numbers and e-mail addresses, please use [The Blake School online directory](#) (found in password-protected BlakeNet). Other questions? Send an e-mail to [parent\\_association@blakeschool.org](mailto:parent_association@blakeschool.org).

### INTERNATIONAL/OFF-CAMPUS STUDY NIGHT

The Upper School is hosting an informational meeting for students and parents to learn about international and off-campus study opportunities available to Blake students. The meeting will be held on Monday, Oct. 19 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Upper School.

### NO SCHOOL DAYS

There are no classes Wednesday, Oct. 14, Thursday, Oct. 15 and Friday, Oct. 16. Parent/student/teacher conferences and teacher meetings will be held in lieu of classes. College Counseling recommends seniors take the long weekend to tour college campuses.

### FALL PARENT/STUDENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Fall parent/student/teacher conferences for grades nine through twelve will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 14 from noon to 8 p.m. and Thursday, Oct. 15 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. These conferences offer parents and students a chance to meet with teachers individually to review students’ progress and address questions or challenges. Click [here](#) for a sign-up form. Upper School conference times will be confirmed by e-mail only.

### QUARTER END AND OPEN MIC NIGHT

The first quarter ends on Friday, Oct. 30. Open Mic Night is on the same day from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Upper School in room 115. Open Mic Night is a wonderful opportunity for Upper School students to exhibit their many first-rate talents.

*Maureen Rudd, vice chair  
Upper School Parent Association*

## International and Off-Campus Study/ Work Information Session

An information session will be held on Monday, Oct. 19 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Upper School for all students and parents interested in learning more about off-campus programs. Blake students are strongly encouraged to consider studying or serving in a foreign country. A number of Blake-sponsored service trips will be showcased on this evening. Representatives from various student exchange programs will provide information and answer questions. Blake students will share first-hand accounts of their experiences traveling and studying abroad. Some of the programs presented will include Swiss Semester, Oxbridge and Oxbow. There will also be a chance to hear from students who have experienced semester-away programs within the continental United States, such as CITYterm at The Masters School in NYC and Rocky Mountain Semester in Colorado.

Blake faculty who plan to lead future summer or spring break trips will be available to provide program information and application materials. The Upper School service learning coordinator will discuss service abroad opportunities, and the director of financial aid will answer questions about cost.

Looking for an off-campus experience closer to home? Representatives from our internship program, Blake Connections (see page 3) will be on hand to discuss possible internships ranging from one-week explorations to full-summer work opportunities in areas including medicine, education, business and government. Student internship applications and internship sponsor forms will be available. For more information, please contact Director of International & Off-Campus Programs Dion Crushshon at [dcrushshon@blakeschool.org](mailto:dcrushshon@blakeschool.org).

| October |                             |                               | November |  |                       |
|---------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|--|-----------------------|
| DATE    | EVENT                       | TIME/LOCATION                 | DATE     | EVENT                                  | TIME/LOCATION         |
| 10/1    | National College Fair       | Minneapolis Convention Center | 10/17    | SSAT                                   | 8 am–Noon US          |
|         | Gr. 12 Coffee with the Dean | 8–9 am Forum                  | 10/19    | US Off-Campus Study Information Night  | 7–8:30 pm US          |
| 10/2    | Gr. 10 Coffee with the Dean | 8:30–9:30 am Forum            | 10/21    | Student Services MS/US Parent Workshop | 11:30 am–12:45 pm PCR |
| 10/4    | MISP College Fair           | 1–3 pm Breck                  | 10/24    | ACT                                    | Off Campus            |
| 10/8    | US Bonfire                  | 8:30–11 pm MS                 | 10/30    | US Open Mic Night                      | 7–9 pm US Rm. 115     |
| 10/10   | SAT Testing                 | 7:45 am–1 pm US               |          |  |                       |
|         | US Homecoming Dance         | 8:30–11:30 pm                 |          |  |                       |
| 10/12   | US School Picture Retakes   |                               |          |  |                       |
|         | US Parent Association Mtg.  | 11:15 am–1 pm Forum           |          |  |                       |
| 10/14   | PSAT (Gr. 10 & 11)          | 8–11 am US                    |          |  |                       |
|         | No School — US Conferences  | Noon–8 pm                     | 11/2     | US College Financial Aid Night         | 6:30–9 pm US          |
| 10/15   | No School — US Conferences  | 9 am–3 pm                     | 11/6     | US Parent Association Mtg.             | 8–10 am Forum         |
| 10/16   | No School                   |                               | 11/7     | SAT Testing                            | 8 am–1 pm US          |
|         |                             |                               |          | Gr. 9 Parent Party                     | 5:30–7:30 pm PCR      |



**Author Celebration: October 1, 6–7:30 p.m., MPAC**

Come meet Newbery Honor author Gennifer Choldenko! Ms. Choldenko will sign books and answer questions about her experiences as a writer. Boutique Blake apparel will be available for purchase, and the specially designed Lower School class T-shirts with student names will be available for order.

**Book Exchange: October 5 and 6, LSB Media Center and LSH Media Center**  
Back by popular demand! During this two-day event, Lower School students can bring gently used books to recycle and exchange with each other during school hours.

**Book Fair and Boutique: October 13, 9 a.m.–7 p.m.**

All families are invited to the Highcroft campus for the annual Book Fair and Boutique. Come browse the latest and greatest in children's literature. Boutique Blake apparel will be available for purchase, and the specially designed Lower School class T-shirts with student names will be available for order.

**Shopping Expedition: November 6 and 7**

New this year! Shop at The Bookcase in Wayzata or at Barnes & Noble at Galleria in Edina on these days and a percentage of your purchase price will be given back to the Lower School.

*The Blake School provides students with an excellent, academically challenging education in a diverse and supportive community committed to a common set of values. Students are expected to participate in an integrated program of academic, artistic and athletic activities in preparation for college, lifelong learning, community service and lives as responsible world citizens.*

*Love of Learning • Integrity • Respect • Courage*



*Challenging the mind, engaging the heart*

PARENT NEWS is published under the auspices of the Communications Office and the Parent Association. Deadline for information submissions is the first of the month prior to issue date. Contact the editor or parent representatives: Editor, Ruth O'Neill (952) 541-4791, cincobill@aol.com; Upper School, Maureen Rudd (612) 377-2552; Middle School, Donna Magarian (612) 823-3219; Lower School-Blake, Susan Hitchner Fluke (612) 929-2925; Lower School-Highcroft, Aleya Champlin (952) 476-0258; Parent Association President, Ellen Hoeg (612) 377-5102; Blake Today, TBD; Calendar, Joni Starr, Head of School's Office (952) 988-3405.

CODES: MPAC—MacMillan Performing Arts Center; PCR—Pillsbury Conference Room; US—Upper School; MS—Middle School; LSB—Lower School Blake Campus; LSH—Lower School Highcroft Campus; LS—Lower School, both locations; BC—Blake Campus; CCR—Crosby Conference Room; NSDR—Northrop Campus Small Dining Room; BDR—Blake Campus Dining Room; HDR—Highcroft Campus Dining Room; BLCR—Blake Lower Conference Room; MTC—Middle School Media/Technology Center; JNA—US Juliet Nelson Auditorium; HMR—Highcroft Meeting Room.