



# HEADLINES

September 9, 2011

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## Ten Years After

There are certain moments in your life that will always remain frozen in time. One, for me, is standing in the staff room of Bannockburn Montessori School in Toronto on September 11, 2001 and watching live coverage of the twin towers in flames. At the time, I don't think that any of us fully understood the impact that the horrendous events of that day would have upon our collective western psyches.

Fast forward ten years and we can look back upon a decade of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, ramped up security at airports and borders, no fly lists, rendition and detention without trial, and even a boom in the "smaller than 3 ounces" toiletry business! Our world changed and swept us up along with it.

We have hardened. We are a little more closed, a little more cautious, and a little more wary of the "other". There is no question but that one of the casualties of the events of that day was our openness and tolerance of those whose lives and values are different from our own. So, that is what happened to us, but what about our children?

The oldest students at Somersfield were only three or four years old on that September morning. Consequently, this life changing moment for us, was simply the creation of a "new normal" for them. As parents and educators it is our responsibility to help them to shape and define that new reality and to arm them with the values and attitudes that will make them positive and productive members of our increasingly global society.

At Somersfield we pride ourselves on being a learning community that is committed to instilling compassion and respect for others. It is our responsibility to wean our children away from the excesses of our own fears and to begin to rebuild a more hopeful future.

On this tenth anniversary of 9/11, I hope that we can try as a community to begin to take the first steps to build new understandings and unity of purpose out of the ashes of tragedy. Our children deserve our best efforts.

### Off to the Races!

September has burst upon us, and it is always a time of high energy and excitement as students and teachers settle in to new classes and experiences. As with every year, there are always some exciting changes around Somersfield. In addition to a host of new faces, young and old, we have continued to grow and enhance our facilities and programmes.

For elementary students, a great new addition this year has been the "greening" of our large playground. Gone are the old tire rubber "chips" (and the bills for bottles of Clorox!) and in their place is a nice resilient artificial turf. Plans and fundraising are already underway to make a similar transformation of our pre-primary playground and with luck, and your support, we are planning ahead to a late October installation. We have had a number of programme enhancements across the school this fall: in addition to running our early years enrichment programme Nicole Robinson and Lisa Brewster will be providing Art and Spanish enrichment to the 3-6s; Fabienne Lee has introduced a new widely acclaimed gestures programme in French at the 6-11 levels; we have a new classroom space for the P6s, and Mark Brown will be integrating Science and Technology (including robotics) for all the 9-11s; and we have introduced a full programme in Extended Mathematics at M4 and M5 and a new approach to Science in the senior grades and have a beautiful new Visual Arts Centre next to the Common Room.

New teachers bring new energy and new ideas and, for me, and the MYP staff, it has been great to have a full-time Division Head back in place at that level, and Carlos Symonds has certainly hit the ground running, a tribute to his high energy and wide range of experience.

It is shaping up to be a great year!



### COMING EVENTS

#### **MYP Language B Trip to Paris**

September 14th-22nd

#### **Welcome Back Barbecue**

September 23rd

#### **MYP Meet the Teacher**

September 27th

#### **PTA Meeting** September 27th