

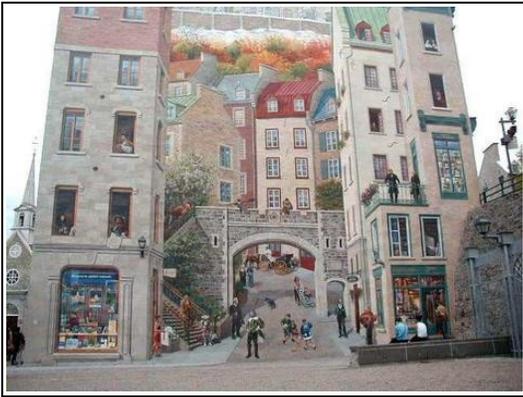
# Ann Arbor Academy Newsletter

## Summer 2011

Greetings, Academy Families! I hope that you are having as enjoyable a summer as we are. The Summer Program is in full swing, and we are busy getting ready for the fall. This newsletter will cover some of the activities and events coming up, as well as some of the additions to the curriculum we're planning for next year. It's amazing how quickly school begins after the summer break!

– Meredith

### Merci! Bonjour! Cafe au lait!



That's all the French I know. But students going on the **fall trip to Quebec City** will learn a lot more than that, even if it's only "Where are the bathrooms?" Yes, that's right – Quebec City. The plan is to take the train from Windsor to Quebec City and visit this famous and historic town. The trip will be from Monday, October 10 to Friday, October 14, and the cost will be \$800 per student. The trip is open to eighth graders and up, and the chaperones will be Peter, Chad, and Ramayan. We may need a female chaperone, so we'll keep you posted. Deposits of \$250 are due on September 9, but we'd love it if you could shoot us a quick e-mail at [annarboracademy@gmail.com](mailto:annarboracademy@gmail.com) and let us know if your child plans to go. This trip is not discounted for students on scholarship like

the one in May will be.

### Mark your calendars!

This mailing includes a copy of the school calendar, and of course you can always check the Google calendar on our website, but there is one important date you should get on your calendar now. The Parent Potluck and Curriculum Night is a time to meet other parents and learn some important information about the school. It is on Friday evening, September 9, from 6 – 9 pm. The curriculum presentation will be from 6 – 7 in the commons, and the potluck will begin at 7 in the theater area. Parents will be asked to bring a dish to share based on their child's grade level, and that information will come to you near the end of the summer.

### New after school program

Starting in September, we will be open each day until 5 pm for students who would like homework help. We will have one teacher staffing the building each day, and students may not leave and come back. We hope to have college students available for extra homework help most days. The teacher who stays may help with homework, but this will not substitute for actual faculty tutoring – if you need an individual tutor for your child, you will need to make specific arrangements with that teacher, and there will be a fee. However, for the general after school homework help, at this time, there is no charge. Attendance is conditional upon good behavior and respect for school rules.



### The Summer Program still has openings

The Academy Summer Program runs until August 5. If your child is in need of summertime fun and academic practice, we're the place to be. The program is from 8:30 – 3 Monday through Friday at the Academy. The cost is \$350 per week.



## **Dictation to text program available on the iPod touch, iPhone, and iPad**

The latest issue of the Learning Disabilities Association of America's newsletter has a great article on how to use the talk-to-type app available for Apple accessories. All you need is an iPod touch, iPhone, or iPad, and you will then need to install the Dragon Dictation app, which is free. This is from the people who brought us Dragon Naturally Speaking software, and it works even better. You don't have to train the program to recognize your voice - it's possible to just open the app and start talking. You do need a version of the hardware that

has a microphone, but all of the new ones do.

After downloading the app, open it up and see "Tap and Dictate" in the middle of the screen with a red button under it. Tap the red button and you will see "Recording..." Say a sentence, ending with the word "period." Continue dictation until you are finished, then press the red bar at the bottom of the window marked "Done" and you will see your transcribed dictation in the text window. You can pause during the dictation and the program will pick the transcription right back up again when you begin to speak.

You can then e-mail the text, or you can copy and paste it into a word processing app such as Pages. You can also edit the text in the window before you send it on. This product could be of real benefit to many of our students, so I am very glad to hear of how easy it is to use and that it's free!

## **Speaking of iPod touches...**

I hope that the summer reading program is progressing well at your house. I wanted to clarify a point about the prize that will be awarded to a student picked randomly from those who complete and turn in their book reports. We will be giving away an iPod touch, but, since many students already have one, what we will actually give is a gift certificate to Best Buy for the total amount of an iPod touch. That way, if a student already has one, he or she can choose an alternative if they so desire.

## **Accreditation Update**

As many of you know, we are provisionally accredited by ISACS, the Independent Schools Association of the Central States. This comes with a concurrent accreditation through AdvancED and the National Association of Independent Schools, NAIS. Accreditation is important because it provides an outside evaluation of the rigor and efficacy of the school's curriculum and instruction. Although we had been accredited for many years through a different association, ISACS is larger, with more schools and more resources, and we have been very happy that we moved to this organization.

Because we are new to ISACS, we are provisionally accredited, which means that our program has been evaluated and found to be of good quality. In order to become fully accredited, which carries a number of benefits, we must go through a three year long process of self study in order to be sure that our mission is clear and that the education we are providing is not only of the highest quality possible, but that it is subject to a plan of growth and development that is sustainable and consistent with our mission. This is a lot of work, but it's worth it.

We are entering Year 2 of our three year provisional status (three years is the minimum amount of time a school can spend as a provisional member, and most take extra time to achieve full accreditation, but the plan we have developed for our school has us accomplishing full accreditation as close to the three year minimum time period as possible), and this begins the time period during which the school community gets involved. We will be conducting a survey of school constituents this summer, which will be done electronically, and we hope that you will all respond. We will also be conducting self studies, and will be seeking feedback from you as parents, as well as from the students, along the way. So stay tuned - lots will be happening with ISACS this year!