



# ∞ The CDS Weekly ∞

## Catching Up on the Coming Weeks

(415) 861-5432  
November 13, 2003

### Words From Rick Sharing Stories

(Thoughts on the Upcoming Conferences)

Last week parent B told me that parent A was not happy with something that was going on for their child in class. When I asked parent A about it, she said she didn't want to be a pushy parent. She said "I realize the teacher has a lot on her plate these days and I don't want to add to her burden."

I said: "You don't understand; it's kind of counter-intuitive. Every teacher always has a lot on her plate. Each teacher is working flat-out to make sure everything is happening just right for each child. If you give her information that will help her do that, you are giving her a gift. She wants any information that will help her work smarter-not-harder for your child. If you withhold information, you are increasing her burden."

Fear of delivering a "negative" message is an insult to a good teacher. Parents and teachers, both, can fall into the trap of fear of the negative. We all want to be positive and are afraid of "the negative." Let's forget about negatives and positives and focus on accuracy. One theorist, Chris Argyris, says, "Feedback should be hearable, seeable and doable." "Hearable" means say it so the other person can hear it. "Seeable" means describe behavior so that the other person can visualize it. "Doable" means concentrate on the new behavior we would want rather than on old behavior one doesn't want. This is not a bad focus for conferences.

Trying to be positive often results in euphemisms or other kinds of distorted data. ("Johnny is improving in his ability to get along with other children." versus "Johnny used his words three times last week when he got mad instead of hitting.") Trying not to be negative often can even result in withholding important information. Our goal is for the emotional content always to be loving and supportive of the child and of each other, and the cognitive content to be specific and directly observable.

The best objective of a conference is always the generation of useful and accurate information about how a child is functioning in a particular environment. Coming up with a plan is not as important as having everyone clear about the phenomenon. Therefore, our most productive focus is to add to our collective wisdom about a child.

Conclusions and plans should be held lightly and tentatively. Labels, theories, attributions should be avoided altogether.

We are after the truth. Stories are good data. Generalizations are always imprecise at best, and often just plain wrong. It is impossible accurately to sum a child up with a set of

### ∞ This Week's Hot Dates ∞



#### **Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup>**

6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Middle School Author's Night  
Maxfield's Cafe (17<sup>th</sup> & Dolores)

#### **Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup>**

8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Library Committee Meeting  
Teachers' Lounge - 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
&

10:45 a.m.

All-school assembly, 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade class presentation  
*Parents welcome!*

#### **Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Friday, November 21<sup>st</sup>**

Parent-Teacher Conferences  
No School on these days

**Reminder to sign up for your conference at the front hallway bulletin board!**

Childcare available from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
No childcare available between Noon and 1:00 p.m.  
\*Please Note: Care is only available for the half-hour you are in a conference with your child's teacher.

### Thank You!

- ▶ To Amanda Richard for coordinating the effort to get the CDS wall calendar together and to Betsy Cordes for designing it!
- ▶ To Lisa Eltinge for donating chapter books to the second grade.
- ▶ To Steve Donovan, Stephanie Holdenreid and Carolina Reyes-Ouk for helping with admission tours this week.
- ▶ To Susi Alexander, Colleen Bailey, Susie Carlson, Patti Cazzato, Tina Corse, Sanlin Cory, Emma Donovan, Lisa Eltinge, Marianne Evans, Jackie Haslam, Stephanie Holdenreid, Tracy Kirkham, Becca Nitzan, Carolina Reyes-Ouk and Kristin Wurz for being enthusiastic "CDS parents" at last Thursday night's Admission Open House. The parents of over 45 prospective children in grades preschool through sixth grade visited CDS that evening.
- ▶ To Beverley Griggs who organized the Leaping Lizard Halloween Party.

generalizations. One story yields an enormous amount of information. Let's share stories and ponder them together.

Let's have fun talking about the children we share. Every child in this school is just fine. Every child has challenges. Let's try to agree on the challenges and how we can team up to help them with these challenges. Our guarantee is to make sure that each child is appropriately challenged. This takes good collaboration among the combination of teachers and family members who are working with the child.

—Rick Ackerly, Head of School

## Change

Sometimes change occurs in the middle of the year which gives us a chance to practice our skills at dealing with loss and disappointment. This is one of those times.

I have two pieces of sad news. Ms. Anne, second grade teacher, and Ms. Megan, teacher in Kindergarten, will be leaving CDS. In both cases the reasons are personal; both have made important contributions to the school and will be missed. Although Ms. Anne has not been with us long, she has become an important member of the CDS faculty as well as the second grade, and a valued part of the fabric of the school. Ms. Megan, whose last day will be Grandparents' and Special Friends' Day, was starting her third year with us, and has established many close relationships with students, parents and teachers. We will miss them both. Please join me in thanking them for their service to the school and wishing them the best in the future.

Focusing on moving forward, we are in the process of interviewing people for their positions and will keep you informed about progress. In the meanwhile, Josh and Celese will be substituting in the second grade. We anticipate that we will have decided on Emily's new partner before Thanksgiving break.

In helping the students to deal with feelings of loss let's take this opportunity to help them strengthen their disappointment muscle. It is hard when someone we love leaves our community; determining the best way to express our feelings is a good thing for all of us to work on.

With sadness,  
Rick

## Children in Action

On Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00-7:00 p.m., the CDS Middle School will be having an Author's Night at Maxfield's Cafe across the street at 17<sup>th</sup> and Dolores. We invite all CDS parents to join us. We will be reading essays, poems, short stories, and random writings. Please come!

—CDS Middle School

## Sliding Scale Tuition

Attached to this *Weekly*, you will find information about affording a CDS education. As you know, the founding vision of CDS is to provide an excellent education for children in the Bay Area regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or the ability to

afford tuition. Our sliding scale tuition is one of the many manifestations of our core commitment to diversity. The families of approximately 33% of our students pay sliding scale tuition, making us a leader in economic diversity among independent schools in San Francisco. Financial support for the sliding scale is derived from the school's operating budget (i.e. tuition revenue and fundraising). CDS currently dedicates 18% of its operating budget to sliding scale tuition. Sliding scale tuition is available based on need.

If you are currently paying sliding scale tuition, you will be mailed information for the 2004-05 school year at the end of this week. If you do not receive this information and would like to, please contact Laurance de Vries, Business Manager, by phone (861-5432 x14) or email (laurance@cds-sf.org). Or return the blue postcard from the attachment.

New this year, we are offering a sliding scale tuition workshop on December 3, 2003 from 7:30-8:30 in the faculty lounge.

### Sliding scale tuition deadlines:

By December 18, 2003:

1. Complete a Parents' Financial Statement (PFS) and mail to School and Student Services (SSS) in Princeton, New Jersey;
2. Submit a copy of your PFS, a copy of your 2002 tax forms (1040), a signed copy of IRS form 4506 and a CDS Parent Contribution form to the Business Office.

By February 5, 2004:

3. Submit a copy of your 2003 tax forms (1040) to the Business Office.

## Visit the CDS Middle School

Curious about our new middle school? Interested in seeing the MS students and faculty in action? A CDS parent who attended our CDS-parents-only tour a few weeks ago relayed to me how impressed she was with the middle school students and faculty. This visit confirmed for her that CDS' middle school really is as great as she had hoped. Thanks to her encouragement, I have scheduled 3 more opportunities for CDS parents to observe our new middle school class in action. The schedule is below. Parents of CDS children of ALL ages are invited - please come! RSVP to me if you plan to attend (415-861-5432 x22).

### Middle school open house dates:

Friday, 12/5, 8:50 a.m. - Math with Mr. Doug

Monday, 12/8, 10:10 a.m. - Language Arts with Mr. Andre

Tuesday, 12/16, 1:45 p.m. - Science with Mr. Doug

—Aimee Giles, Director of Admission

## Last Week to Sign-up for November Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are being held from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. **(Reminder that there is no school on these days).** Sign up sheets to schedule a conference with your child's teacher are posted on the bulletin board just inside the front door of school. **You must come into the school to sign up for a conference.** Conferences will be 30 minutes in length and sign-up is on a first come-first served basis. Preferable times are slipping away, so make sure to sign up today!

### Parking in Teachers' Spots... Oh My!

Parents, we need your help enforcing our parking lot policy. Simply put, you may not park **anywhere** in the CDS parking lot. Not in teacher's parking spaces, not in the handicapped spaces (unless you have a disability), and not in the fire lanes. **If you would like to walk in with your child, or if you have a meeting to attend, you must give yourself enough time to park on the street.** CDS has been receiving increasingly frustrated complaints from our dear neighbors at Notre Dame Plaza who've been blocked in their parking spots, or prevented from leaving the parking lot due to parents parked in the fire lanes. In addition, our beloved **teachers** are being forced to circle the block for spots after finding their parking spots taken! This cannot happen. When you are picking up or dropping off your child, **please pull all the way forward, stay in your car and keep your car running. Do not turn your car off.** CDS staff persons will be available to help your children out of or into your car.

Please, please let us help you, and in return help us by staying in your car and moving through our parking lot.

### CDS Calendars Are Here!

The CDS wall calendars coordinated by 2<sup>nd</sup> grade/TB parent Amanda Richard, designed by 5<sup>th</sup> grade parent Betsy Cordes and donated by All City Printing have arrived. You will receive one in your child's backpack today. If you don't receive your calendar, extras will be located at the front desk. Please take only one calendar per household.

### Children's Day School and Eatwell Farm

Here's a little background on the produce boxes that grace the hallways of CDS every Wednesday afternoons.

Eatwell Farm is a 70-acre organic farm and orchard located between Davis and Winters, about 1-1/2 hours east of San Francisco. Frances Andrews, Nigel Walker and their crew grow 40-50 different certified organic crops. They have been farming organically for 10 years in California. Their farm is located on the Dixon Ridge and they are lucky to have some of the deepest and richest topsoil in the world. Eatwell Farm operates a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, a 20 year old, international movement in which organic farmers sell directly to consumers. CSA's help form a unique community, or partnership with consumers. In a CSA, subscribers help

support small, regional farms by paying in advance for fresh, organic produce delivered weekly throughout the year. Included with a box of produce will be a newsletter with stories of the farm, descriptions of the produce, recipes and educational articles on sustainable agriculture. There are many opportunities to visit the farm. Among them, each spring they have a Strawberry Festival (May) and Lavender Festival (June). In September they have a Tomato tasting event in San Francisco.

Eatwell Farm has been delivering baskets of organic produce to CDS since they started offering them over 7 years ago. Some of the snacks the children eat at the school are supplied by Eatwell Farm. Connecting with CDS is very exciting for the farmers. To sign up for weekly boxes of produce delivered every Wednesday to CDS, contact Morgan Taggart (x21) or call Eatwell Farm at 1.800.648.9894. For more information about the farm and the CSA, visit their website at [www.eatwell.com](http://www.eatwell.com).  
—Morgan Taggart, Environmental Education Resource Teacher, x21

### Early Drop-off Is Now Available On a Drop-In Basis

Have an early meeting or conference call? Maybe you would like to squeeze an early workout in? If so, you can now drop your child off early any school day of the week on a drop-in basis. No notification is necessary.

Early care is available Monday through Friday in the Teddy Bear room from 7:30-8:00 a.m. The cost for drop-in is \$10.00. If you prefer, you may sign up for the whole month at \$60.00, or if you know what your schedule looks like already, you can sign up for the whole school year at \$500.00. See you in the morning!!!

### Extended Program News

#### Winter Break Camp:

Sign up packets for the upcoming Winter Break Camp have all been distributed. If you haven't received one, please contact Jenna directly. The camp runs December 29<sup>th</sup>-January 2<sup>nd</sup> and is open to preschool, elementary, and middle school students. The camp is also open to non-CDS families so spread the word to friends and neighbors! The theme for this year's winter camp is: The World's Celebrations. There will be lots of extra cooking, art, theater, and science activities, plus time to play and relax with good friends and fun teachers.

#### The Afternoons are Now Dark

If your child stays past 5:00 p.m. and has a flashlight, please have her/him bring it in! Preschool and elementary teachers have some fun after-dark activity ideas that flashlights will be useful for.

#### Childcare for the Book Fair:

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, the CDS Book Fair will be held at a Clean Well-Lighted Place for books. CDS will be offering childcare for the evening at school,

from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at a rate of \$5/hour.

To sign up or for more information, please contact the organizing parent: Robin Wander at (415) 286-3689

### **Childcare during Conferences**

There will be **FREE** childcare offered while you attend student conferences on Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup> and Friday, November 21<sup>st</sup>. Childcare is available starting at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 5:00 p.m. There will be no childcare available between Noon and 1:00 p.m.

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### **Electives Make Up Information:**

The following electives classes will be held through the December 5<sup>th</sup> make up week, to ensure each course has a complete session:

Monday, Dec. 1: Drama, Gymnastics, and Spanish

Tuesday, Dec. 2: Computer Tech

Wednesday, Dec. 3: Piano

Thursday, Dec. 4: Cooking, Chess

Friday, Dec. 5: Toy Story, Movie Making

—Jenna Stephens, Extended Program Coordinator, x15

## Hola Padres!!

Hola Padres!

In honor of November 2<sup>nd</sup>'s Day of the Dead, we are visiting the Dia de Los Muertos exhibition and altar at the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts.

Last Thursday, we went with the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade to learn more about Spanish culture and it was interesting to see the kids' surprise themselves by discovering the richness of this experience.

On Wednesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders practiced ordering in Spanish at a local Taqueria.

On Thursday, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders will visit the Dia de Los Muertos exhibit as well as lunch at the Taqueria.

Continue to help your child with their Spanish lessons; it's paying off in the classroom!

La frase de la semana es:

Some different ways to say Me gusta.....(I like) and No me gusta.....(I don't like), (That we studied last week)

Me gusta... Me encanta..... Me chifla.....

No me gusta... Me desagrada.....Me disgusta.....

Ejemplo:

Me encanta or Me chifla el jugo de naranja (I love orange juice)

Me desagrada or Me disgusta la guerra (I don't love war)

Gracias y Hasta pronto!!!

—The Spanish Department

## Grandparents' & Special Friends' Day

Invitations have been mailed for Grandparents' and Special Friends' Day, Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003, 8:30 a.m.– 12:00 p.m., to all of those for whom we have addresses on file. If you did not return the lavender form in the summer mailing and have a special friend or relative you'd like to invite, you may pick up an invitation from the front desk. Let's make this a very special day for friends and relatives to visit with the children and their teachers in the classrooms and see CDS in action! If you have

questions about the day, please email or call Beth Ditlefsen, x23, bethd@cds-sf.org.

—Beth Ditlefsen, Development Director

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual CDS Holiday Book Fair

Is it possible to have a great time, support our school library *and* cross items off of your holiday shopping list? On December 10<sup>th</sup> it is. Come to the CDS Book Fair to purchase books, enjoy terrific conversation, sip wine and munch hors d'oeuvres. Twenty percent of *all* sales – books purchased for the CDS library AND gift books for your family and friends – will go toward the library's book fund.

When you buy one or more titles for the library from a table of pre-selected, teacher-approved books, these books will help to support classroom work and build the library collection, which is available to every child at CDS.

Choosing gift books for your family and friends will be easier and more fun this year, thanks to the "CDS Recommends" books we're highlighting at the book fair. There's sure to be something for everyone on your list in our wide-ranging selection of titles personally recommended by our parents, faculty, staff and students. "CDS Recommends" titles – everything from cookbooks to poetry, novels to art books – will be displayed on special tables, with placards giving short descriptions and the recommenders' names.

More details about the book fair - including special guest authors, childcare, parking, and additional ways to support the library – will be coming in the following weeks. So mark your calendar for the CDS Holiday Book Fair now:

### **4<sup>th</sup> Annual CDS Holiday Book Fair**

Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

A Clean Well-Lighted Place for Books

601 Van Ness Avenue, Opera Plaza

If you would like to volunteer to help with the book fair, please contact Sally Nielsen at sn@hausrath.com or (415) 861-4575.

CDS Parent-Teacher-Trustee-  
Administrator Association: PTTA  
Update

## Friday Morning Coffee

Suffering from separation anxiety...from fellow adults? Try to schedule a few free minutes into your Friday morning to join other parents for hot coffee and grown up conversation outside in the yard after drop off, 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

## PTTA Questions or Ideas?

Contact Marion Quinones at 701-1957 or  
MQuinones@fbm.com.

## Do You Prefer *The Weekly* by Email?

If you would like to help us reduce our paper usage and receive the *Weekly* via email, please drop us a quick email at [cdsweekly@cds-sf.org](mailto:cdsweekly@cds-sf.org) and give us your email address. Also, let us know the name and class of the child your hard copy usually goes home with so we can remove him or her from the classroom distribution list. Thanks!

### Upcoming on the CDS Calendar



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8:30 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.

Grandparents' and Special Friends' Day  
Noon Dismissal

#### **Thursday, November 27<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Friday, November 28<sup>th</sup>**

Thanksgiving Break  
No School

### How to Submit to *The CDS Weekly*.

Submissions are to be received **no later than Wednesday at 8:00 am**. Please email them to [cdsweekly@cds-sf.org](mailto:cdsweekly@cds-sf.org).