



# ∞ The CDS Weekly ∞

## Catching Up on the Coming Weeks

(415) 861-5432  
January 8, 2004

### Words From Rick

*Once More, With Meaning!*

Happy New Year. Welcome back, everybody, and welcome to our two new students and their families: Charlie Wilson in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and Kwesi TerboLizard in 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

Thanks to the leadership of Tacy Gaede, the generosity of several parents and the loving labor of Jake Fishman and David Guzman, a sparkingly new faculty lounge greeted us upon our return. Come to a meeting and see. (Next meeting is the diversity meeting this afternoon from 5:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.)

Ms. Emily and Ms. Sarah's Kindergarten class was surprised by something new when they arrived on Monday. Over the vacation Sam Hunt and Ray McFadden built a big, beautiful, sturdy loft in their classroom. The teachers immediately initiated a discussion with the students of what the rules should be on the new structure.

"You know what the basic rules are for being on the ground floor. Well, let's talk about the rules for being in the loft," said Ms. Emily.

The students had lots of ideas about how to be safe on the loft. They came up with them fast:

"Things should not be thrown over the edge."

"Only three...no two...no five people should be up there at any one time." (They decided on four.)

"Two hands on the ladder."

"One person on the ladder at a time."

"Two feet on the floor."

"Good Job. Of course, the first rule is that you must show you are ready for the loft by showing you know the ground rules," said Ms. Emily.

They decided there should be an up ladder and a down staircase, and they made signs to indicate which was which. The children were clearly ready to take responsibility for their environment.

Involving children in the ongoing creation and maintenance of their social and physical environment is not only necessary preparation for a democracy, it is also better education. Children learn more when they are invested. I'll go a step further: If the adults are doing the talking when the kids should be, we are at least missing an opportunity and at worst could be absolving them of responsibility, insulting them, or showing them how out of touch we are. "I KNOW!" If you hear that, you have done too much explaining.

The Kindergartners loved making the signs and writing down

### ∞ This Week's Hot Dates ∞



**Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup>**

5:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.

Diversity committee meeting

**Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup>**

Winter electives begin

**Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>**

4:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.

PTTA meeting  
faculty lounge

### Thank You!

- ▶ Tina Corse and Emma Donovan for running the wraps and greens sales, all proceeds from which went to CDS staff as holiday bonuses.
- ▶ The Veiga/Evans family for donating a TV to go with the new DVD player!
- ▶ Susie Carlson for baking and hand-decorating beautiful cookies to accompany the bonuses.
- ▶ Katherine Whitney for organizing the staff holiday party.
- ▶ Mike Dingle for hosting the party at the Bay View Boat Club.
- ▶ The Starfish and 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade classes for the amazing holiday-party food.
- ▶ All of the parents who helped with setting up the faculty holiday party: Amanda Richard, Kate Moses, Katherine Whitney, Kathryn Selleck, Stephanie Scarpulla and Jennifer Pickerell, Laura Pliska, Winifred von Ehrenburg, and Marion Quinones.

the rules, even those children who have not yet taken to writing are totally engaged when there is a real-world point to it. This year, already, our Admission Office is seeing the fall-out from public schools, and there is a theme: the standards movement has resulted in teaching to the test, and teaching to the test consists mainly of teaching academic skills without an emotional, intellectual or social context. Academic skills are not ends in themselves; they are means to ends — necessary and insufficient means. As my youngest daughter used to ask: "What's the point?"

Giving us some feedback on our new brochure this fall, one of our parents wrote:

Showcase our academic advantage. Here is a great place to expand on what our idea of

academics means – yes, we do really well on tests scores – but we actually take the term to mean much more. Parents want their children to be engaged in the learning process, take initiative, be inquisitive, resourceful, creative, spirited and develop strong communication skills. We should explain our commitment to these qualities, which enable students to realize their individual goals.

Do you know how to use a Cartesian coordinate system? Do you know how to solve two linear equations? Do you know what  $y=mx+b$  means? The Middle Schoolers do. Late last year they learned that a line can tell a story. They wrote a story and then drew a line on graph paper that told the story. They read these stories to their classmates and collectively evaluated how well the line conveyed the meaning of the story (or *visa-versa*.)

The first week of the new year, they are learning how exponents are used to represent very large numbers. Next week if you see middle schoolers standing on the playground—just standing—it may be that they are representing the relative distances planets are from the sun. ...And thank you, NASA, for landing some really cool equipment on Mars at such a useful time for us.

Happy New Year!

### 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Graders Read and Reach Out

Throughout the fall the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade class read 200 books for a special Scholastic Books Classrooms Care program. Because of the students effort, Scholastic will donate 200 books in their name to Scholastic's charity partners: First Books, the I Have a Dream Foundation, Reach Out and Read, and Save the Children. Those groups will then deliver the books into the hands of children in need. Way to go 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade! You can read about them at [www.scholastic.com/classroomscare](http://www.scholastic.com/classroomscare).

### Feliz Ano Nuevo from the Spanish Department

I am so refreshed and glad to be in school again after a little Caribbean break. The Spanish Department is looking forward to a new year that promises to be filled with exciting activities. Looking through my mail on Monday, I found a beautiful letter from a little girl who lives in Valparaiso, Chile. She wanted to let us know how beautiful her city is. I immediately thought we should take the time to share with her school how beautiful it is in San Francisco. I've begun collecting pictures, drawings and writings to send to this little girl and her classmates in Valparaiso to show them how we live in our city. Here is a translated poem included in her letter:

*Valparaiso, World Cultural Heritage*  
Port city, surrounded by hills;

A natural amphitheatre with the ocean as stage,  
Its streets breakup and spin capriciously as you climb them,  
Leaving many different spaces where houses are built,  
Fitting their volumes to this special geography.  
Lifts are built linking hills with the flat area

Rich in styles, as a result of different times  
And cultures of its settlers.

Thus, a kaleidoscope of forms, colours, lights, corners and  
mysteries took shape with its spontaneous,  
delightful simplicity.

An inspiration to poets and painters  
such as Ruben Dario, Pablo Neruda,  
Thomas Somerscales and others.

Here are the *frase de la semana*:

-*Yo vivo en San Francisco*. I live in San Francisco.

-*Me gusta mi ciudad*. I like my city.

Gracias y hasta pronto.

—Consuelo Aparicio-Cercos, Spanish Department

### A Big Thank You from Staff & Faculty for the Holiday Bonuses

The *CDS Weekly* mailbox was deluged with requests from staff and faculty to extend a hearty, public thank you to parents for the holiday bonuses. To find the bonus nestled behind a delicious, homemade cookie made it all the more wonderful! If you were at the staff and faculty holiday party you were sure to overhear one of myriad conversations about how lucky everyone feels to work at CDS. Thank you parents! You really make the difference.

### Development Update

A big thank you to all of you who used the end-of-the-year tax deadline as motivation to fulfill your commitment to the CDS Annual Fund! We now have a total of \$227,461 pledged toward our goal of \$350,000, and over half of that has been received! Included in that figure is \$1,658 that has been received from E-Scrip.

As you know, it is important that every family participates in the annual fund because that helps us get funding from outside sources such as corporations and foundations. Pledges can be paid anytime before June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004, using cash, check, VISA/MC, F.A.C.T.S. or stock. We will continue to follow up with those who have not yet made a commitment for 2003-04. If you'd like to make a pledge (and avoid any more phone calls and emails!), please contact Beth Ditlefsen, Development Director, at ext. 23 or [bethd@cds-sf.org](mailto:bethd@cds-sf.org).

### Extended Program News

#### *Winter Electives*

Electives begin next Monday, January 12. Please sign up as soon as possible, as classes are filling up quickly! If you haven't yet received a packet, please ask for one at the front desk. Also, **I will not be sending out confirmations for electives**. Unless you hear from me, you should assume that there was room for your child in the elective you signed up for. If you would like to confirm for your own peace of mind, please call me at extension 15.

### Winter Break Camp

Thanks to students and teachers who spent part of their winter break at CDS. We had several students from the greater San Francisco community participate in the camp, which was very exciting. A special thanks to CDS parents who referred them to us. Highlights of the week included making calzones, returning Lucky to the farm after a brief escape under the fence, a trip to Dolores Park, lots of art and games, and much more. What a fun and relaxing week!

### The PM Program is Now Open to All

As many of you may already know, we are opening up the Break Week camps, Elective/Enrichment Classes, and PM Program to children who don't attend CDS during the regular school year. Please help us by spreading the word to neighbors and friends. For more information call Jenna at 861-5432 x 15.

—Jenna Stephens, Extended Program Coordinator

### Parent Education Night

After the winter holidays, do you need a brush-up on your limit setting techniques with your child(ren)? While the memories are still fresh, bring your own true stories... "Well, no we don't get presents on Martin Luther King's birthday, but we do celebrate his life and civil rights." And... "If you do your homework now, THEN you can visit your Neopet on the Internet." Or... "Why do you wear your jacket when Ms. Alicia tells you to and NOT when I tell you to?" CDS teachers have been working hard to create an informative evening based on the topic of limit setting and "What CDS teachers know that parents can use at home." Come join us for this fabulous and informative parent/teacher get together Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the faculty lounge.

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

PTTA Meeting Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>

Join parents and faculty as we gather for the first PTTA Meeting of 2004 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. in the faculty lounge. Issues on the agenda include the delivered lunch program KidChow. Also, if you missed the opportunity to observe middle school math and science teacher Doug Garfinkel in action in the classroom last month, this PTTA meeting will present another chance...except this time, you get to be the student.

Doug has prepared a challenging, short, math lesson for us. Find out if you're still good (or not so good) at math, and experience "learning" from your child's perspective. See you there!

### Friday Morning Coffee

Suffering from separation anxiety...from fellow adults?  
Schedule a few minutes in your Friday morning to join other

parents for hot coffee and grown-up conversation in the yard after drop off, 8:30 a.m. - 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?

Help us reduce our paper usage by receiving the *Weekly* via email. Please email us at [cdsweekly@cds-sf.org](mailto:cdsweekly@cds-sf.org) and give us your email address. 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



**Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup>**

5:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.

Diversity Committee meeting

**Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>**

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Parent Education Night  
Faculty lounge

**Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup>**

Reenrollment contracts mailed to all families.

**Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>**

Reenrollment contracts due.

**Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>**

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

State of the School Night, Part II  
Location TBA

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

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



