



November 11, 2004

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Head's Column

### Our Strategic Focus

Last week two Shakespearian actors came to work with the seventh grade and talked to me for half an hour about how great the students were. "What's so great?" I said, and their responses went off like a fireworks display.

"Your kids are so smart."

"They know more than other kids we have taught."

"They could tell us the story line from Macbeth."

"We judge kids on their willingness to enter into the world we create. Your kids went right in. They were the best seventh grade class in terms of behavior, attitude and little hesitation upon entering the world of Shakespeare. Peer pressure did not have a negative impact on them. Peer pressure contributed to performance. They were a respectful and receptive audience."

"We experienced the best audience interaction ever. We would do something and your kids just went with it. They laughed, but they did it like they were there, like they were a part of the show. It was really cool."

"Discipline was easy because the kids were already disciplined. As a result, we could engage much more with them."

"Most students will go along with our imaginative exercise, but your kids have a balance of imagination and analysis. They possess knowledge and can expand upon it. They can see the tension."

"Usually students say, 'I liked it.' CDS students were able to expound on the Why's. They are good thinkers."

"Most kids are so concerned about being right that they don't take the time to do the exploration. Your kids took risks. It was okay for them to be wrong. They think outside of the box."

"Usually kids are hesitant to express their own answers. Here, they were very willing to suggest their own answers."

"Yes, and always one answer at a time. Another cool thing about your kids is that they are respectful of someone else talking. We didn't have to remind them to take turns talking."

This is the CDS student. These observations have been made of CDS students of all grade levels. The results are intentional. They were in the mind of Jim Robinson twenty years ago, and were in the minds of the faculty as they began designing the K-8 program under Sandra Luna eight years ago. This student

### Hot Dates

**Friday, November 12**

10:15-10:30 a.m.

Friday Assembly

Tadpoles presenting

**Friday, November 12**

8:45-10:15 a.m.

K-7 tour for CDS parents

**Friday, November 12**

Sibling Applications Due

**Thursday, November 18**

Parent/Teacher Conferences

No school

No extended program

**Friday, November 19**

Parent/Teacher Conferences

No school

No extended program



## Thank You!

- To Susi Alexander for making sure the library has its very own, signed copy of *The Great Tree of Avalon* by T.A. Barron.
- To Tanja Beck for providing coffee and delicious donuts at last week's "coffee in the yard."
- To Ms. Paula and Ms. Brittany for attending Tuesday's PTTA meeting and presenting "Why CDS Students Love Math" for parents in attendance.
- To Tina Corse, Karen Georgiades, Bill Littmann and Katherine Whitney and for helping out with admission tours this week.

body is the result of twenty years of hard work by parents, teachers, trustees and administrators. Turning out the kind of student reflected above is our mission. A school cannot be everything; it can only fulfill its unique genius. This, I believe is ours: turning out fearless, disciplined learners with a well-developed sense of social responsibility.

As we move forward into the future, it is essential that we not lose sight of this mission. It is of strategic importance that we have defined our desired results, and that they are visible and obvious. We don't have to talk about respect, inquiry, knowledge and enthusiasm for learning as values, but as an existing condition that needs to be maintained and developed.

It is obvious that a fearless, disciplined and respectful student contributes to the kind of class that maximizes learning and academic achievement. What may not be quite as obvious is that the climate of the class, the quality of the community and the CDS culture are three major determinants of our success so far and need to be continuously strengthened and developed.

All six strategic planning task forces are underway and will help serve the CDS climate, community and culture. Each one is studying an area of strategic importance: 1) access and affordability, 2) recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and students, 3) the relationship of the school to the wider community, 4) programmatic issues of strategic importance, 5) facility needs, 6) sources of funding. A consensus seems to be emerging around the idea that

maintaining and developing the "CDS learner" is of utmost strategic importance; that everything else must serve this end, and that if it doesn't it is not of strategic importance.

## The Dirt

### Cheering for Dirt

In the early morning a few weeks ago I walked into the garden after a night of heavy rain and nearly fell into a sinkhole about two feet deep and twelve feet wide. My mood instantly switched from cheerful to grumpy. I immediately perceived the sinkhole as a tragedy in the garden. I was very wrong. The sinkhole turned out to be a wonderful learning opportunity and source of excitement for many CDS students. Later that morning the garden was closed and what followed was an intense curiosity among the students at all grade levels about the sinkhole. Over the past several weeks I have had numerous conversations with both students and adults about dirt. My favorite moment in the sinkhole saga is the day that we had dirt delivered to the school. The preschool students all lined up outside, quietly watching the truck drive into the yard. When the truck dumped the dirt I heard a loud cheering erupt and turned around in time to see the preschool students jumping up and down cheering for the dirt. Later that day I asked Sam in the Tadpole class what was so exciting about dirt. He said, "Well it's squishy, wormy and sometimes has spiders." I couldn't agree more. The sinkholes are now filled in (thanks to the serfs and peasants in the sixth grade class) and the garden has been re-opened to the students.

## From the Office

### Goodbye Nicola

Dear first grade families and CDS community,

After serious thought and consideration, I have decided that I will not be returning to CDS after the winter break. This was a very difficult choice for me, but as certain life events have transpired this past year, I am certain it is the right one.

Teaching at CDS the last three and a half years has been one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. CDS was not only a place of work; it was a source of family and friendship. It taught me real world experience. It has brought me great happiness to have spent time with your children, you and the entire CDS community -

administration and faculty included. I would like to specifically address my heartfelt appreciation to Carrie and Madora, and the mentor that I found in Rick. I will miss everyone very much!

Sincerely,  
Nicola Valentino

*As you can see from the attached letter, Nicola Valentino will not be returning to CDS after the winter break. It would not be betraying a confidence to say that she is moving to Hawaii. We are so grateful for her contributions to the CDS community during her years here as preschool and first grade teacher.*

*Nicola has given us plenty of time to make arrangements in the first grade classroom and CDS community. Sara Switzman, who knows the children from her work in the after school program and two weeks of filling in for Nicola, will be taking over Nicola's responsibilities on the first grade team. She will join us as a full time member of the faculty after winter break. Sara has her teaching credential from the Ontario College of Teachers and has been teaching in Canada for four years.*

*Please join us in wishing Nicola the best in her future endeavors.*

— Rick

## Food Drive

CDS students are organizing a food drive this month. Please see the flyer on the back of your *Weekly* outlining items that can be donated. Have your child bring all food to his or her classroom to be weighed – the goal is to collect 1,000 lbs of food! Students will graph total weight and report results at Friday assemblies. Food may be donated until Monday, November 22.

## Photo Retakes

Please note that school picture retakes by Mugshots will now be held on Tuesday, November 16 beginning at 9 a.m. Don't forget to arm your kids with plastic combs!

## Events

### Spring Celebration & Auction

The Spring Celebration and Auction will be held at the Greek Orthodox Church on Valencia and 14<sup>th</sup> streets on March 19, 2005. We are planning a sit-down buffet dinner, an exciting raffle and dancing until midnight.

Interested in volunteering to make this auction a success? The list below outlines some of the ways you can help. Look it over, think of how you'd best be put to work

and join us at the next meeting to begin planning for this fun event.

Our next meeting is coming up. Watch the *CDS Weekly* for information or contact Stephanie Scarpulla (sascarpulla@sbcglobal.net) or Emma Donovan (ed@globeconsultants.com) with questions and ideas.

### Volunteer Opportunities:

- Dessert donation
- Flowers
- Ticket sales
- Decorations and signage
- Program/Promotion/Graphics
- Photography
- Music
- Soliciting donations
- Advertising sales
- Sound and lighting
- Database entry
- Printing and copying
- Accounting
- Assembling goody bags

## Extended Program News

### The Boys and Girls Club

Beginning this month, 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> graders will have the opportunity to go to the Boys and Girls Club as part of the after school program. Everyone should have received a schedule outlining which classes are going on which days. Here is a refresher:

### Go Bulldogs!

The CDS volleyball team is heading to the playoffs! Please come out and support them tonight at 4:45 p.m. at Katherine Delmar Burke School. KDBS is located at 7070 California Street.

Basketball season begins in January. There are sign-up sheets in classrooms for a girls and a boys basketball team.

- Mondays: 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 3:30-4:45 p.m.
- Tuesdays: 4-7<sup>th</sup> grades, 3:30-4:45 p.m.
- Wednesdays: 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 3:30-4:45 p.m.
- Thursdays: 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

If you would like your child *NOT* to participate on any given day, please call the receptionist or Jenna to let us know so that your child will stay behind at CDS for an earlier pick-up time.

This is a great opportunity for our students to meet new friends, have access to amazing art, woodworking and photography studios, as well as a fun rec-room, gymnasium and a computer lab. If you have any questions, please call Jenna at x15.

## Winter Vacation Camp

Yes, it's true. Forms are already going out for the winter vacation camp that will be held Monday, December 27 through Friday, December 31. Camp is open from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. each day. Please check your child's backpack for complete details including a registration form. Remember, camps are open to children who do not attend CDS during the regular school year, so spread the word to friends and visiting family! If you have not received vacation camp information by Thursday, please stop by the front desk.

## Afternoon Enrichment Classes

The enrichment classes have been really great this fall. Because the 7-week session has included several days in which classes couldn't run (due to half-days, conference days, holidays, etc.) there will be several make up classes offered through December 9. Please check the bulletin board at the glass doors to see which classes will continue through December. Jenna will also be sending home a calendar of remaining classes in backpacks next week.

## Adult Enrichment Classes

Thanks to all of you who signed up for adult enrichment classes. This will be a great first term. The next round of classes will begin in early spring. Keep your eyes out for exciting, new offerings.

## Altar Offerings

If you contributed to the Day of the Dead altar in the library, please come pick up your offerings by November 17. Thank you for contributing to this community altar.

## Library Corner

### Buy a Book, Build a Library

Mark your calendar for two fabulous events to kick-off the holidays!

December 1: BUY A BOOK at A Clean Well Lighted Place for Books. This annual event promises to be fun for parents and friends of CDS. Enjoy shopping for your favorite titles while sharing tall-tales. All proceeds benefit our very own CDS library. Day care will be provided at CDS (details will to be provided soon.)

November 30 - December 3: BUILD A LIBRARY is a new book fair at CDS! Come and help purchase our new arrival of wonderful books. Our librarians are volunteers and have put in countless hours dedicating time and research into titles that will engage your children. We want you and your children to be proud of a well rounded and well supported library. Come buy a title or two and a bookplate will adorn your purchase for many years to come.

Invitations for both events will be mailed in the next few weeks. Meanwhile, if you have any questions or wish to get involved please contact:

Buy a Book: Robin Wander,  
[robinwander@hotmail.com](mailto:robinwander@hotmail.com)

Build a Library: Marilyn Rogers,  
[mrogers@moralesgary.com](mailto:mrogers@moralesgary.com)

## PTTA Corner

### **Friday Morning Coffee**

Come join other parents for coffee and doughnuts in the yard after Friday drop-off, 8:30-9 a.m. This is your chance to meet other families, have a few minutes of grown-up conversation and grab sustenance and caffeine before you start your day.

In addition, we need volunteers on occasion to help set up and bring doughnuts. Please sign up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board. Nothing gets the kids out of bed in the morning like the knowledge that they will stop off for doughnuts during the drive to school!

### **PTTA Questions or Ideas?**

Contact Marianne Evans, PTTA President, at (415) 648-1731 or [goevansgo@yahoo.com](mailto:goevansgo@yahoo.com).

## Upcoming Dates

### **Wednesday, November 24**

9:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Grandparents and Special Friends Day

### **Thurs, November 25 – Fri, November 26**

Thanksgiving Break

No School

No Extended Program

### **Thursday, December 16**

Sliding Scale Tuition applications due

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Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.