



December 2, 2004

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Support our Library

There's still time to "Buy a Book and Build a Library!"

If you haven't been in the library this week, it's not too late. Come by today from 2-6 p.m. or Friday from 8-10 a.m. and browse all the tables of beautiful new books for the collection – history, science, fiction, early readers, fairy tales, biography, sports, animals – there's something to entice everyone. Buy one, buy the lot... every book will include a bookplate to commemorate your generous gift to the school. Help fill the library shelves, and make this first-ever book fair a resounding success!

And if you couldn't make it to A Clean Well-Lighted Place for Books for the holiday fair on Wednesday night, you can still shop there through December 8 (next Wednesday) and benefit our library. Mention CDS when you purchase books, and the store will make sure 20% of the profits go back to the school.

Thank you to all who have helped make these events so successful and enjoyable.

Imagination and Education

In the kindergarten room at the end of a long, six hour day, twenty-nine five-year-olds are all actively and happily engaged in various forms of work, play, and creation, some on their own and some in cooperation with others. One girl was in the process of constructing an incredible molecule-type thing out of Space Links. Two groups of three were creating imaginary social situations in the loft area. Many were sitting at tables writing stories in words and pictures with markers, pencils and paper. A boy and a girl, who have been in conflict for most of the year, were playing together with blocks. They had walled themselves into a corner and together were building the most amazing, complex structure.

What is so exciting here is to see imagination at work in all these small, growing organisms. Each child is being driven from within. Some suggestion and inspiration has, perhaps, come from their teachers, their classmates or even something they saw on TV over the Thanksgiving vacation. Certainly, the structure of the room and the orderliness of the group have been provided by the teachers, but the actual energy for the work comes from a light burning inside them. That light, the desire to make something of themselves, is the central, critical element in all education.

In *The Work of Imagination*, Dr. Paul L Harris, professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, lays out in detail the results of twenty-some years of work on the centrality of imagination to education. Chapter titles include:

Hot Dates

Friday, December 3

8-10 a.m.

Book Fair

Library

Friday, December 3

10:15-10:30 a.m.

Friday Assembly

Starfish Presenting

Monday, December 6

7-9 p.m.

Sliding Scale Tuition

Information Night

Faculty Lounge



Thank You!

- To the dedicated book fair organizers – Sue Barnett, Marilyn Rogers, Wini von Ehrenbur, Debra Levin and Robin Wander – and all of their many helpers for building a better library and having fun, too.
- To Susi Alexander, Susie Carlson, Patti Cazzato, Susan Chastain, Sanlin Cory, Geddes Fielder, Aisha La Marque, Carolina Reyes-Ouk, Elizabeth Seirmarco, Michael Vasquez-Silver, Melanie Wise and Kristen Wurz for helping make our Admission Open House a smashing success. The parents of 84 prospective students visited CDS on Tuesday, November 16!
- To the many parent bakers, buyers and food stylists in the Tadpole, 6th and 7th grade classes for providing a fabulous spread of food, drinks and goodies for Grandparents and Special Friends day.
- To Stephanie Scarpulla, Fred Scarpulla, David Wilson, Don Zirulnik, Jennifer Pickerrell, Amanda Richard, Marianne Evans, Adam Feuerstein, Jonnie Sharp, Becca Nitzan and Mary Beth Towery for helping with Grandparents and Special Friends Day from food drop-off to folding chair pick-up.
- To our terrific community of grandparents and special friends for sharing CDS with us last week.
- To the Strang/Tsern family for planting daffodil bulbs in the entryway planters.
- To Regina Marler and Melissa DuBose for the donation of beautiful books for the library.
- To Marina Richard for donating a loom and collage magazines to the art department.
- To Tina Corse, Marie Cross, Steven Miller, Kara Schleunes, Katherine Whitney and Kristen Wurz for helping with admission tours in the last few weeks.

“Pretend Play,” “Role Play”, “Imagination and Emotion,” “Counterfactual Thinking”, “Obligation and Volition,” “Beyond Possibility” and “Language and Imagination.” (I selected it for the adult section of our library from a book fair list provided by Bob Curley, another education professor, who is also a CDS Trustee, father of Eddie in the fifth grade and one of the founders of the school.)

Wandering around this school with imagination on my mind I see it in action everywhere. Seventh graders are using matrices to solve the fictional problems of a fictional person. Fourth and fifth graders are trying to determine whether a golden bar found in a back yard and labeled “New Zealand Gold Rush, 1861, 12 oz.” is really gold by applying the formula for specific gravity and solving the complicated arithmetic problems in their heads. Second graders are inventing dozens of different equations, searching for patterns related to the number 30 (because that was the day of the month). In first grade there has been an obsession with magic lately. Out on the playground Matthew says, “This rock is magical. It is going to take me forward in time. Every second is ten years, so in ten seconds it will be a hundred years into the future,” and runs off.

Engaging imagination can happen in individuals operating alone. We have all experienced that. I like to be alone early in the morning to write these articles. However, for best results in the education of children it is important for them also to be in community, listening to each other, sharing ideas, building on each others’ ideas, disagreeing, coming to agreement, taking risks and solving problems together. Imaginative play can certainly happen alone, but the possibilities for brain development increase exponentially with each student that is added.

Dr. Harris says “the capacity to imagine alternative possibilities, and to work out their implications” plays a central role in capacities such as empathetic understanding, causal reasoning and the evaluation of hypotheticals and counterfactuals. These are the kind of things that are critical to the present and future success of our children—and for that matter, the future of the human race and the planet.

Maximizing academic performance is merely a subset of maximizing mental capacity. For both, imagination is essential. If you watch children at work and play, you see that something inside of them agrees. What concerns me about so much of what goes on in schools is the attempt to purge work of imagination. We will not let that happen here.

The Dirt

The Green Bin is Here

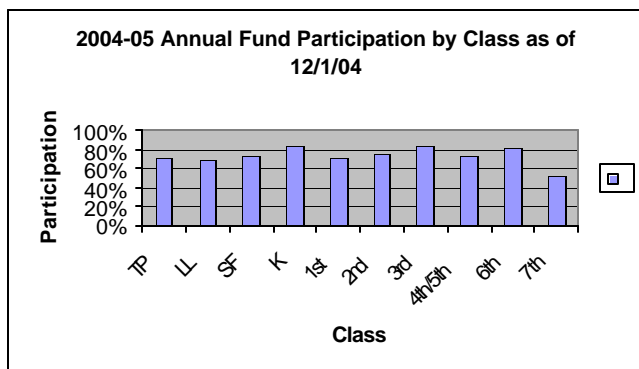
We are now composting all of our food waste at school. San Francisco is the first city to provide a composting

service to residents and schools. The composting program is unique because you can compost all food waste and food-soiled paper. This means that, unlike with a typical worm bin, we are now able to compost meat, bones, dairy products, paper cups, paper plates, napkins, paper towels and milk cartons. If you haven't already noticed them look for the green compost bins in the schoolyard.

From the Office

Annual Fund Update

We have now raised \$189,000 in pledges and gifts and are well on our way to meeting our goal of \$335,000. Parents have contributed over \$87,000 toward the parent goal of \$105,000, which we hope to reach by January 15. As usual, pledges can be paid any time until June 30, but we plan to wrap up solicitations and fill the gaps in the palm tree's outerwear this month and next. Many thanks to all of you who have made this campaign a success already – 74% of parents have pledged or made a gift, a significant increase in participation this year – and your collective response has been gracious, generous and enthusiastic. Participation in the annual fund has truly been school-wide, as reflected in the graph below. Thank you all, and please contact Marion Quinones (x23 or marionq@cds-sf.org) if you have any questions or contributions.



Grandparents and Special Friends Day

Grandparents and Special Friends Day last week was terrific. We had approximately 120 enthusiastic guests join us for sunshine, music, greetings from Rick, Tracy Kirkham and Grandpa Fred Scarpulla in the new library, and plenty of classroom visits. Thank you to all who attended, brought friends and family, helped with food,

T-shirt sales, the book fair sneak preview and all kinds of event logistics. This was way a great way to kick off the holidays, and we always welcome visits from grandparents and special friends, whether or not there is an event on the calendar.

Welcome Geddes

Please welcome Geddes Fielder, our new Spanish Specialist who will finish out the year for Consuelo. Geddes brings years of experience as a Spanish teacher in the Bay Area and London to this position. She has lived and worked in various parts of the world, including Cyprus, Nicaragua and Spain. Geddes has a California teaching credential, a masters degree in education from Greenwich University and is the parent of Vita Solorio-Fielder in the Kindergarten class. She is also a published poet and an Olympic athlete in track and field (1964 and 1968)! Those who have gotten to know her have come to appreciate her directness, flexibility and ready sense of humor. She will be a fun, experienced addition to the faculty. Please see her recent article about choosing CDS in the "Our Family Coalition" newsletter, attached to the *Weekly*.

SST Information Night

What is sliding scale tuition (SST)? Should we apply - if so, how do we do that? Come learn more about our sliding scale tuition on Monday night, December 6 from 7-9 p.m. in the faculty lounge. Members of the Access and Affordability Committee - Laurance de Vries, Aimee Giles and Rick Ackerly - will be on hand to answer your questions and explain how this process works. No RSVP

Go Bulldogs!

The Bulldogs finished off an excellent volleyball season in a playoff game against Lycee Francais.

Co-ed Volleyball Scores

November 11, CDS vs. Lycee Francais

Game 1: LF 25, CDS 17

Game 2: LF 25, CDS 17

Don't forget: the CDS basketball season begins in early January with games for both the girls and boys teams. Once again, come out and support our awesome Bulldogs!

is necessary, but if you have questions, feel free to contact Laurance de Vries (x14) or Aimee Giles (x22).

Donate your Laptop Bags

CDS and the David Minus Science Center need ten laptop bags. If you have an old laptop bag that you are not using, please donate it to CDS. You can bring them to Amanda on the third floor.

Handicap Parking Spaces

Please remember to respect our handicap parking spaces. We've all been getting a bit lax lately and have been using the spaces inappropriately. If you need a CDS parking space for a few hours (meaning you are unable to take public transportation or can't find street parking), call Rose at x10 or come to the front desk and ask her about available parking spaces for that day or time. We sometimes have an extra space or two temporarily available and would rather have you park there than in a handicap space. Thanks for your cooperation.

Parking Lot Safety

Please remember to drive slowly and safely through the parking lot at all times. During morning drop-off preschoolers are crossing and walking through the lot and we need to be extra cautious at these times.

Events

Winter Performance

Calling all parent musicians and producers! The winter performance will be held in the gym at 11 a.m. Friday, December 17. We are looking for help this year with sound equipment and production. We would like to have at least two more microphones and someone who can help us set up the equipment and run the sound throughout the show.

If you can help, please email Emilie, our Music and Drama specialist at emilier@cds-sf.org.

Library Corner

Buddy Books

The seventh graders and Tadpoles have teamed up to write and illustrate stories about hunger. These stories can be read in the library. Here are a few great titles and summaries:

Little Bear Looks for Food, by Christian Hipolito and Julian

Fritz-Littmann in which Little Bear finds food to help his hungry family.

A Holiday Meal, by Emme Woolard, Anya Ruppert and Alice Donovan in which a family without food or gifts on Christmas finds joy in a meal generously given by others.

The Beautiful Mango, by Cara Keller and Sam Fisher, in which a beautiful, rich and vain Mango meets his match and comes to a digestive end.

Billy, Joe and the Tadpoles, by Haden Cory, Liam Branch and Kees Hoekendijk, in which hungry marsupials make a pilgrimage to America and are fed by the Tadpoles.

This is My Farm, by Aaron Garfinkel, Julian Totah and William Chung, in which starvation on the farm is prevented and every animal gets his or her rightful feed.

Returning Books

With all of the recent holidays, special events and missed library periods, many students have overdue library books. Please make an effort to locate any CDS books and see that they are returned to the library right away.

Hola Familias de CDS

Hola Familias!

Students have been very busy studying Spanish this month. First graders have been learning the words for hot and cold (*caliente* and *frio*) as well as many things possessing heat or cold such as ice cream (*el helado*) and fire (*el fuego*). Kindergarten students have been learning Spanish words to use in the kitchen (*la cocina*) such as cake pan (*el molde*), strainer (*el colador*) and stove (*la estufa*). Six and seventh graders have been working with the verb *gustar* or "to like." Parents, please remember to practice the new words with your children, in the kitchen, in the snow, at the book fair or at the ice cream shop.

La frase de la semana:

A mi me gusta este libro. This book pleases me.

— Spanish Department

Thank you!

PTTA Update

Meeting Change

Please note, the PTTA meeting originally scheduled for Monday, December 6 has been changed to Tuesday, January 11. There will be no meeting in December. The January 11 meeting will be held from 4:30-5:45 p.m. upstairs in the faculty lounge. The topic of the January meeting is parent involvement/community building. We are interested in hearing from new and returning parents on their thoughts on this topic! See a future *Weekly* for more specific information. As always, please don't hesitate to contact me should you have anything you would like to discuss or add to the agenda.

- Marianne Evans, PTTA President

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.

Upcoming Dates

Monday, December 13

3:30 p.m.

Students vs. CDS Faculty Volleyball game
CDS yard

Thursday, December 16

Sliding Scale Tuition applications due

Friday, December 17

11 a.m.

Winter Performance
Boys and Girls Club gymnasium

Friday, December 17

Noon Dismissal

No Extended Program

December 20 – December 24

Holiday Vacation

No School

No Camp

December 27 – December 31

Holiday Vacation

No School

Vacation Camp offered

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