



May 11, 2006

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

This Just In...

We received great news this week: CDS is now a fully accredited member of the California Association of Independent Schools! We received a three-year term and will submit a report detailing the progress we have made on the visiting committee's recommendations and our action plan before May 2009. Many people invested time, energy and love in this school to make this happen, and it is clear that we all—community members past and present—deserve the credit. Thank you to everyone who worked on the self-study and to all who make CDS such an incredible school.

I and We IV

Highest and Best Use of a Cookie

Last week's *Weekly* reported on some preschool girls who found a win-win solution to their social problem. Even before they get to kindergarten, children are masters at finding that point of mutuality between their self-interest and the interests of others. This is especially true for girls. It is initially puzzling, therefore, that girls become so mean to each other in fourth grade. Educators, who consistently experience this phenomenon, have come to expect it. Nine years old is, after all, a marker for a developmental stage in children (plus or minus a year). It is an age of individuation.

Educator and author of *Kingdom of Childhood*, Rudolf Steiner observed:

When the child reaches his ninth or tenth year he begins to differentiate himself from his environment. For the first time there is a difference between subject and object; subject is what belongs to oneself, object is what belongs to the other person or other thing; and now we can begin to speak of external things as such, whereas before this time we must treat them as though these external objects formed one whole together with the child's own body.

While watching socially skilled fourth grade girls being mean to each other this year, it occurred to me that perhaps this behavior is more clumsy than mean. Maybe what happens is that girls reach a level of self-reflection that allows them to see moral dilemmas from a new more self-consciously selfish point of view. Whereas in the past they may have naturally sensed the wisdom of giving up something for the sake of the relationship, now their reaction to a moral dilemma is to side with themselves over others. By this age they have become so experienced at harmonizing their feelings with the feelings of others, that it is less important to them than individuating. The new challenge of self-definition is so important that they seem willing to put their long-time friendships at risk.

Hot Dates

Friday, May 12

10-10:15 a.m.

Friday assembly

Sixth grade presenting

Monday, May 15-Friday, May 19

ERB testing week

Grades 3-8

Tuesday, May 16

4:30 p.m.

PTTA meeting

Faculty lounge

Wednesday, May 17

6-8 p.m.

Diversity recruitment brainstorm

Faculty lounge

Dates now posted on CDS website!
www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html



Thank You!

- To Country Fair co-chairs Kathleen Cologne and Tanja Beck and barbeque champion Adam Feuerstein for all of their hard work and enthusiasm in leading the Country Fair.
- To classroom liaisons and PTTA officers for participating in the welcome ceremony for new families during the Country Fair.
- Thank you to all of the family farmers who lovingly cared for the sheep and chickens during the winter: Mike Abbott, Tina and Kevin Corse (Teija and James), Kim Nguyen-Gallagher (Ryan and Griffon), Andrew Baker (Baz), Angela Romagnoli and Megan Adams (Reese), Sally Nielsen (Cara), Leslie Edelman (Isaac), Michael Laflamme (Zoe and Jacob), Nina Robin (Natasha), Yvelise Cabral (Angelica), Gayle and Gary Strang (Carlyn), Tim Wirth and Ann Stuhldreher (Zoe), Beth Porter (Maia), Peter Kusnierczyk (Patrice) and Tanja Beck (Vivien).
- To Ray Baxter and Linda Glover for donating all leftover lost and found items to Community Thrift.
- To the Starfish and Leaping Lizard families for providing amazing faculty breakfast spreads in the last two months.

When my stepdaughter Lizzie was in fourth grade, she added a new line to her very considerable verbal repertoire. She started to begin sentences with “No offense, but...” It took a little doing, but I was able to convince her that to introduce criticism with “No offense, but...” was automatically offensive (the same way beginning a sentence with “I’ll be honest with you...” makes me suspicious.) It would work a lot better if she introduced the negative feedback with “May I talk with you about something that is bothering me?” Sometimes they just need to be given their lines.

It is of course, not as simple as this; how kids treat one another has many dimensions. In the fourth grade last Monday, in order to get a more personal understanding of some of the issues involved in immigration, three children were identified as ‘illegal immigrants’ for the day. All the other students were either ‘citizens’ or ‘lawful permanent residents.’ Throughout the morning, the illegal immigrants (Asher, Alena, and Erin, randomly chosen out of the feely

box) had to do extra jobs, or missed out on fun things like recess. At snack time, the teachers gave out cookies to everyone—except the illegal immigrants. Most of the other kids noticed that this was unfair, but they accepted and ate their cookies anyway. However, very, very quietly, Leyla snuck up to the illegal immigrants and whispered to them that she wanted to share her cookie, even if this meant she would be ‘sent to jail.’ She took them into the cloakroom and gave them her cookie to share.

The beginning of responsible civil disobedience? Maybe. My guess is that Leyla’s empathy kicked in. She felt bad for her classmates—for the indignities and suffering they had to endure as illegal immigrants. Maybe, she even felt guilty. Maybe she just wasn’t that hungry. We educators would like to believe that she stood up to authority in the name of justice. Maybe someone should ask Leyla why she did it.

But whatever her motivation, she experienced the joys of being kind. And I think we can all agree that if she was being self-centered, she was being smart about it; for the benefits of being kind—friendship, happy community, just the thrill of giving—far outweighed the loss of the cookie. I think we can all agree that she found a higher and better use of her cookie.

The Dirt

Summer Family Farmers Needed

Did the Country Fair get you pumped for some garden time? Are the newly shorn sheep and rambunctious chickens calling your name? If so, you might want to consider becoming a family farmer for the summer! To become a family farmer, you just need to attend one training, which will be held on Sunday, May 21 at 9 a.m. in the farm and garden. The training will last approximately one hour and will provide you with all of the information you’ll need to care for the animals and the garden. To RSVP for a training slot, please call Misty at 861-5432 x321. If you were trained last September or January and want to take care of the animals this summer, simply RSVP and show up at 9:45 a.m. to pick dates; you don’t need to attend the training. You only need to commit to two weekends and/or holidays during the next four months and in return you will have the chance to bury your fingers in JoJo’s warm, soft wool and collect fresh eggs for Sunday morning breakfast.

From the Office

Fiesta Update

The Fiesta news keeps getting better and better! We are happy to report that we greatly underestimated our Fiesta total a few weeks ago; our new total for Fiesta fundraising is just over \$100,000! Once again, a huge thank you to our incredible co-chairs Stephanie Scarpulla and Robin McClarren for leading volunteers in creating a fun and enormously successful community celebration. Thank you everyone.

Capital Campaign Survey

Thank you to everyone who has filled out our capital campaign survey. The survey is designed to reach all members of the community; because we feel that it is important for everyone to have the opportunity to give us feedback, we are extending the deadline of the survey to midnight on Sunday, May 14. Guidelines for accessing the survey have been re-sent in an e-mail from Amanda Richard via Survey Monkey. If you have any questions please contact Amanda at 861-5432 x330 or amandar@cds-sf.org. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes. Thanks again for your participation.

Diversity and Social Justice Newsletter

Check out the Diversity and Social Justice newsletter that is being sent home in student backpacks today! This newsletter highlights all of the amazing diversity and social justice work that has taken place at CDS this year. If you have any questions about the newsletter, please contact Charlie Stephens at charlies@cds-sf.org.

Diversity Recruitment Brainstorm

Do you wish CDS enrolled more students of color? Are you interested in helping CDS recruit more diverse students and families? If so, we need your help. Join Sara O'Malley and Richard Hylton (preschool parents), and the Admission Office staff next Wednesday night, May 17, from 6-8 p.m. in the faculty lounge. We'll brainstorm ideas for the upcoming fall parent tour season and we want everyone's input. Parents, teachers - everyone in the CDS community is encouraged to attend! Some of the things we'll be talking about include:

- How can we attract a more diverse group of prospective preschoolers (and others)?
- What about the current recruitment/admission process works and what doesn't?
- What are the specific concerns we should address for prospective families of color?

Childcare will be provided (contact Ryan Gordon to sign up at 861-5432 x310 or ryang@cds-sf.org), along with pizza and beverages for both children and adults. Questions? Contact Aimee Giles at 415-861-5432 x322 or aimeeg@cds-sf.org.

Lost & Found

All lost and found items will be displayed on the front gates today and tomorrow! Come and claim your lost items; leftover items will be donated to Community Thrift at the end of the day on Friday.

From the Classrooms

Earth Friendly Fridays

For the next five Fridays, the Tadpoles will be coming to school in earth-friendly ways: bikes, feet, scooters, carpools, buses, trains and so on. We would love it if other members of the CDS community joined us! On these Fridays, we will be making and serving cold beverages in the Tadpole classroom for those of you who chose an earth-friendly way of getting to school. The Tadpole class looks forward to your participation in Earth-Friendly Fridays.

Events

Country Fair Update

Thank you to everyone who attended the Country Fair last Saturday. Hundreds of people showed up to watch the sheep shearing, eat delicious barbeque chicken, buy hand-made crafts and play tug-of-war. A special thank you to Country Fair co-chairs Kathleen Cologne and Tanja Beck for their leadership and enthusiasm, to Adam Feuerstein for running the barbeque and to all of the class coordinators who organized volunteer efforts. A great time was had by all.

Extended Program News

Spring Enrichment Classes

Spring is racing by and this is already the last week for most enrichment classes. However, the following classes will be holding one last class next week. They include:

- Monday: Movement and Photo Fun
- Tuesday: Acrosports and Wood is Good
- Thursday: Toy Story

PTTA Update

Welcoming Families

Thank you to classroom liaisons and PTTA officers for participating in the welcome ceremony for new families during the Country Fair. Anyone interested in being involved in new family welcoming events should contact Laura Pliska at laura@sfbabyworks.com.

Upcoming Events

The final PTTA meeting of the year will be held on Tuesday, May 16 at 4:30 p.m. and will feature a brief keynote from Rick about next year, review of PTTA activities for 2005-06, planning for the 2006-07 school year and an introduction of PTTA officers and classroom liaisons for 2006-07.

If you have any comments, questions about PTTA updates, or items you would like included on the PTTA calendar, contact Ray Baxter (415-902-0765 or ray@warmroom.com).

Upcoming Dates

Friday, May 19
7 p.m.

CDS middle school students' adaptation of
Twelfth Night
Dolores Street Church

Saturday, May 20
2 p.m.

CDS middle school students' adaptation of
Twelfth Night
Dolores Street Church

Sunday, May 21
10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Seventh and eighth grade car wash
CDS parking lot

Monday, May 29
Memorial Day observed
No school
No extended program

Dates now posted on CDS website!
www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html

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