



September 15, 2005

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### All New

*Only Connect!* E.M. Forster

Last March a parent mentioned at a PTTA meeting that she had felt unwelcomed. A conversation ensued, which ultimately resulted in a series of meetings that in some ways are continuing this fall. Inclusiveness and hospitality were the main themes at the next four PTTA meetings. The PTTA reorganized around the idea (about which there was no controversy) that Children's Day School was a place where everyone should feel they belong, where everyone has a voice. A Community Building Committee was formed; welcomers were identified in each class; events were examined for how they could be more inclusive; and so on.

Echoes of these conversations have occurred at faculty meetings since they feed into and support the many conversations we have had about diversity, inclusion and social justice. Among other things, we all seem to have focused on the obvious—that class leadership's first job is to make sure everyone feels they are connected. Class liaisons and teachers can form a powerful partnership to make sure this happens. Two of the six strategic planning task forces focus on issues of diversity, and one on issues related to community involvement. It's pretty obvious where our values are.

There is, however, a great deal of work to do. We are a new school; this is only our tenth year. We have 250 students; three years ago we had 170. We have a full complement of classes and teachers, and many of us are doing things for the first time, or having to change old ways because we now have a sizable middle school operating on two campuses. There are fourteen new employees—teachers and administrators. Our infrastructure has needed to grow and change with our enrollment and our space. We have many more families who need help understanding what is going on because English is not their first language. We are still in need of translators.

Considering all this change it is remarkable how well things are going. Classes are beautiful. The teaching and learning are sights to behold. The faculty work of the last few years has clearly paid off in many obvious ways. The teaching teams are working well. Teachers in three different grades have reported stories about students who seemed to pick up on my assembly message about "being NEW." Students are casting off old ways to turn over a new leaf. It was terribly frustrating to have our internet down for so long, and yet several people reported enjoying the wonderful human learning community and experiencing how ancillary technology is to community.

## Hot Dates

Friday, September 16

10-10:15 a.m.

Friday assembly

Seventh grade presenting

Saturday, September 17

12-3 p.m.

Welcome Picnic

19<sup>th</sup> Avenue playground

(Mother's playground)

Golden Gate Park

Thursday, September 22

5:30-6:30 p.m.

New Parent Reception

Library

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Back-to-School Night

Yard and classrooms



## Thank You!

- To first grade families for providing a delicious kick-off faculty and staff appreciation breakfast. We appreciate you!
- To Tina and Kevin Corse for taking time this past weekend to hang more blue bulletin boards in the hallways—they look great!
- To Sally Nielsen for donating a computer monitor to the CDS administration.
- To Amanda Newstetter for donating a book to the faculty resource library.

Friday coffees continue to be more fun than ever, and the faculty appreciation breakfast last Friday was a smash hit. It went a long way toward draining the tension and anxiety that had built up in the staff around the rigors of starting school with so many new people, with so much to be designed on top of the basic work of getting the classes off on the right foot.

At the PTTA meeting this week, many people voiced the same theme. A strong community requires people making an extra effort to connect: connect by getting involved and connecting with others whom you don't know. Laura Pliska, who has volunteered to chair the Community Building Committee, said to a packed faculty lounge that she had decided to take the school at its word, that it is a place where she too can be new and stretch herself. She, a "shy" person, inexperienced at running meetings, is now leading the Community Building Committee.

Other parents made similar contributions which in my mind add up to the important lesson that parents can get as much education out of the school as the kids if they decide to get involved and submit to being a member of a learning community.

It's 6:30 a.m. Wednesday morning. I haven't had a chance to check with other people who were at the meeting last night, so I can only speak for myself, but I will say that it is a thrill to be a member of such a supportive learning community.

## From the Office

### New Phone Extensions

We have a new phone system—please note the attached list of updated phone extensions. Each faculty and staff member has a new extension.

### Woodshop Donations

CDS is working on developing a new woodshop for students to build their construction skills. If you have any of the following materials gathering dust in your basement, garage or closet, we would be happy to put them to good use:

- Used tools in good shape (screwdrivers, hammers, saws, electric drills)
- Old hardware (nuts, bolts, nails and screws)
- Wood scraps (three feet long or smaller)

Please deliver donations to the front desk. If you have any questions, ask Mr. John, second grade teacher, at 861-5432 x373. Thanks.

### Camera Donations

Christopher Gonzalez-Crane, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade extended program teacher, will be teaching an after school photography elective to interested students. It will be photography the old-fashioned way, with film and a darkroom! The class needs donations of manual 35 mm cameras. Would you be willing to donate or lend that camera that's sitting in your closet? If you are able to donate working 35 mm cameras, please contact Christopher at [christopherg@cds-sf.org](mailto:christopherg@cds-sf.org) or Vicki Woollard at [vwoollard@hotmail.com](mailto:vwoollard@hotmail.com). Thanks for your support.

### Grant Assistance

We are planning to approach the Bill Graham Foundation for a grant to fund sliding scale tuition for after school music classes Ms. Kyoko will be teaching at the Boys & Girls Club this year. Board members of the Foundation are Lee Smith, Phil Cussen, Bob Barsotti, Elena Peña, Phyllis Cook and Dick Greene, and the Foundation web site ([www.billgrahamfoundation.org](http://www.billgrahamfoundation.org)) lists the names of members of their Advisory Board. If you have contacts with any of these people and would be willing to assist CDS in presenting our application, please let Marion (861-5432 x323 or [marionq@cds-sf.org](mailto:marionq@cds-sf.org)) in the Development Office know. Thank you.

## Picture Day

Yet again, picture day plans have changed. Picture day will now take place on two days, beginning at 9 a.m.: Tuesday, October 18 and Wednesday, October 19. You will be informed closer to the date as to what day your child will be photographed.

### Events

## Welcome Picnic

Come join us at the Welcome Picnic this Saturday, September 17 from 12-3 p.m. at Mother's Playground (19th Ave and MLK) in Golden Gate Park. All families, faculty and staff are invited. This is a great opportunity to get to know new families and reconnect with familiar faces. The PTTA will provide water, juice and watermelon, and lunches are being arranged by class. Although there will be tables for each class to put their food on, we encourage people to mingle and meet families from all grades. There will be CDS gear for sale and information on Eatwell Farm. If you are able to help set-up, cut watermelon or clean up, please contact Laura Pliska at [laura@sfabyworks.com](mailto:laura@sfabyworks.com).

Please note: this is at a new location and we have included a map on the back of the *Weekly*.

## Back-To-School Night

Please plan to join the CDS community for Back-to-School Night next Thursday, September 22. All parents new to CDS are cordially invited to a wine and cheese reception in the CDS library at 5:30 p.m. with Rick, members of the Board of Trustees and PTTA officers. Food and drinks will be available to all parents in the yard beginning at 6 p.m., and the program will begin shortly after 6:30 with outdoor welcomes from Rick, Board chair Tracy Kirkham, Middle School Head Doug Garfinkel and the CDS Specialist Teachers. Please bring a sweater if it's chilly.

At 7:30, parents will go to their children's classrooms to meet with teachers and get a sense of what is planned for the year. Teachers will present two programs for each class, from 7:30-8:00 p.m. and from 8:00-8:30 p.m., to enable parents who have two children at CDS to go to both of their children's classes. If you have only one child at CDS and your child's last name starts with letters L through Z, please visit your child's classroom from 7:30-8:00 p.m. If your child's last name starts with letters A through K, please first meet with our specialist teachers, who will be stationed in the yard to answer

your questions (and look for Ms. Misty in the farm and garden), and then go to your child's classroom at 8 p.m.

This will be an evening for adults only; CDS will not be able to provide childcare during the event. Please park on the street. Thank you.

### Extended Program News

## After School Program

Please let the receptionist know before 10 a.m. if you would like to make a change or addition to your child's after school schedule on any given day. Also, when signing out, if you do not see your name on the alphabetical roster, it means that we don't have an Extended Program Agreement on file for your child. We need this for your child to stay in the after school program. Extra agreements are available at the front desk and can be turned in to Charlie via the receptionist.

## Call for Volunteers

We're looking for several parents who are available on Wednesdays from 3:45-5 p.m. to help with after school classes. Parents will read stories, lead activities or supervise free-play for preschool through 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes while teachers attend the weekly faculty meeting. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Charlie at 861-5432 x315 or [charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org) as soon as possible.

## Go Bulldogs!

### The Jamboree

Come out and support your CDS Bulldogs in the first athletic event of the school year, the Jamboree! The Jamboree is a multi-school volleyball tournament held at Katherine Delmar Burke School (7070 California St.) on Friday, September 16 from 3:30-5 p.m.

The CDS Bulldog volleyball team is a middle school co-ed team. Come and show your school spirit.

### Be a Bulldog coach!

If you are interested in volunteering to coach either a basketball or futsal (indoor soccer) team this year, please contact Mr. Jim at x372.

## Boys and Girls Club

CDS students in the after school program began their weekly trips to the Boys & Girls last week. Here is an updated schedule:

- Kindergarten students in the after school program will attend special, structured classes once or twice each month. Parents will be notified at least a week in advance and will be required to sign a permission slip.
- 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> graders will go to the Boys & Girls Club each Wednesday from 3:30-5:15 p.m. After school teachers will walk them over at 3:30 p.m. and they will return to CDS by 5:15 p.m. We will not require permission slips for students in these grades. Please let us know if you don't want your child to attend at all or on any given date. Otherwise we will assume you would like your child to participate.
- 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders will go to the Boys & Girls Club on specific days throughout the month. Please refer to the after school study hall calendars that the after school teachers have made available.

## Enrichment Classes

Registration packets for Enrichment Classes will be sent home the week of September 19. Classes will begin on October 11. There is a wide range of exciting, new classes offered this term! If you haven't received a packet by September 21, please pick one up at the front desk.

## Morning Program

Before school care is available every day in the library from 7:30-8 a.m. If you'd like to sign your child up for this program, please fill out an Extended Program Agreement and turn it in to Charlie. Care is charged to your account at an hourly rate of \$10.00, in 15 minute segments. You must sign in with the morning program teacher, Brittany, in the library with your name and the time of drop-off each morning.

## Music Program

A full after school music program will be offered as part of fall Enrichment Classes. These classes will be open to both CDS students and Boys & Girls Club participants. We got ahead of ourselves in announcing last week that music classes would be free; instead, the music program will have a fee with a sliding scale option. Please refer to the upcoming Enrichment Class course packet for details of fees, days and times.

## Library Corner

### Library News

We will be holding our first volunteer meeting of the year on Friday, September 23 at 8:30 a.m. in the library. We welcome anyone interested in the library to attend.

## 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. To volunteer, contact Michael Silver at 415-518-1803 or michael.silver@barclaysglobal.com. 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?

- Marianne Evans, PTTA President, (415) 648-1731 or goevansgo@yahoo.com
- Amanda Richard, VP, Classroom Liaison Coordinator, (415) 695-0657 or amanda.richard@sbcglobal.net
- Laura Pliska, VP, Community Building Coordinator, (415) 297-9258 or laura@sfbabyworks.com
- Ray Baxter, VP, Secretary, (415) 902-0765 or ray@warmroom.com
- Michael Silver, VP, Parent Volunteer Coordinator, (415) 597-2413 or Pmichael.silver@barclaysglobal.com

## PTTA Update

### PTTA Meeting

The first PTTA meeting of the school year was held on Tuesday, September 13. A large group was present to hear from parents about the benefits and possibilities for volunteering at CDS. Minutes from the meeting will be distributed via the liaisons shortly. Two useful messages from Rick captured the tone of the meeting and the spirit of volunteering at CDS: "If it's not fun, don't do it," and, "If it's more than you want to do, get some help."

All parents are welcome at PTTA meetings. CDS is committed to parent participation and provides free childcare during the meetings; simply sign up with the receptionist before 10 a.m. the day of the meeting.

### Upcoming PTTA Events

- All School Welcome Picnic: Saturday, September 17, from 12-3 p.m. at the Mother's playground (19<sup>th</sup> Avenue playground) in Golden Gate Park. Celebrate the CDS community and meet old friends and new. See details and map on the back of the *Weekly*.
- Community Building Committee meeting: Monday, September 26, from 5-6 p.m. For information about this committee, contact Laura Pliska at (415) 297-9258 or [laura@sfbabyworks.com](mailto:laura@sfbabyworks.com)
- General PTTA Meeting: Tuesday, October 11, from 4:30–5:45 p.m. in the faculty lounge. Topics include school finances and the annual fund.
- Wraps and Green sales. Purchase high quality holiday wrappings and greens through CDS; a portion of all proceeds provide holiday bonuses for faculty and staff.
- Faculty holiday party: December 15, venue TBD. The PTTA throws an annual holiday party for staff and faculty; if you have ideas about possible venues, please contact a PTTA officer.

If at any time you have questions or ideas, please contact Ray Baxter at (415) 902-0765 or [ray@warmroom.com](mailto:ray@warmroom.com).

### Upcoming Dates

Friday, October 7  
8:45-10 a.m.

Grandparent and Special Friend breakfast  
Library

Monday, October 10

No school  
Extended program available

Tuesday, October 11

Fall enrichment classes begin

Tuesday, October 18 & Wednesday, October 19  
Picture Day

Tuesday, October 18 & Wednesday, October 19  
Annual Fund Phonathon

Children's Day School

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