



September 22, 2005

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### Words, Words, Words

*"Love of languages is nothing but one of the forms of love for mankind: to address someone in his own language is like visiting him in his own home as opposed to chatting with him in the street."*  
Lanza del Vasto

Early in the year, Colin Ying, a new Starfish, was having a rough day. Tears were streaming silently down his face, and he wasn't doing what the teachers were asking. Ms. Gloria asked Ms. Ngoc how to say "let's sit and eat lunch now" in Mandarin. Ms Ngoc told her, and Ms Gloria said, "Zou xia kuai chi." That's all it took. Ms Gloria learned several Mandarin sentences like, "Ting hoa, wo ai ni" (Listen, I love you) and, "Ni xi huan zuo shen me?" (What would you like to do?)

Gloria used just the right words. But the lesson isn't narrowly about the importance of speaking to someone in their native language. It's about being sensitive to the language the other person speaks. Each of us has our own way of understanding the words that someone else uses with us, and in many ways kids have a language of their own.

Tourists walk by our house in San Francisco daily. Sometimes, when I fail to understand what the foreign tourists are asking, they speak louder, as if my problem is that I am hard of hearing. It's a natural reaction to a failure to communicate, and we do it all the time with kids. Instead of saying something like, "Help me understand why you aren't getting ready for bed," we are more likely to say, "WHAT ABOUT: 'GO TO BED NOW!' DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?"

While helping kids understand with words is important, increasing one's understanding of the other person is often a more effective way of getting a point across. Asking the right question, such as, "What's getting in the way of doing your homework tonight?" is usually more effective than trying to make them understand with words the importance of doing their homework. Usually, kids *do* know why we are asking them to do stuff, especially if we have already told them once. If understanding is lacking, it is more often on the adult's part.

When you find yourself about to say, "Why can't you just sit still?!!" consider rephrasing the question in a way that shows you really want to know the answer. "Is there anything I can do to help you sit still?" Or, "Do you think you can handle sitting through this symphony, or should we do something else?"

## Hot Dates

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

Friday, September 23  
10-10:15 a.m.  
Friday assembly  
Sixth grade presenting

Thursday, September 29  
Finance committee meeting



## Thank You!

- To Georgia McNamara for updating our website.
- To Darcy Provo for continuing to help write promotional information about CDS in various books and websites.
- To all the fabulous welcome picnic organizers and day-of-event helpers: Laura Pliska & Jeremy Bloch, Marianne Evans & Bill Veiga, Mary Beth Towery, Amanda & Brian Richard, Patrick & Charlyn Everett, Robin McClarren, Michael Silver & Carlos Vasquez, Tina Leung, Georgia McNamara, Sam Hunt, Katherine Whitney & Farhad Farzaneh, Kate & Joe Becker, Richard Hylton, Ray Baxter, Rosemarie MacGuinness, Amanda Newstetter, Bill Gravitt, Matthew & Luma Dahlbacka and all of the classroom liaisons who arranged lunches. Thanks for organizing such a great community building event.
- To Jenny Lefcourt, Elizabeth Seirmarco, Ann Van Gelder and Katherine Whitney for participating in the admission tour training.

Finding exactly the right words for each person and each situation is a life-long project. Being handy with this skill is one of the main secrets of good teaching. Responsive Classroom, for instance, teaches us that it's better to say, "I notice you are having trouble working with Susan," rather than, "You need to try harder to work with Susan."

Moreover, words themselves can be overrated as a method of helping kids learn. Most of the time kids come to understand through action and experience rather than words. Using just the right few words that are action oriented ("I need you to get in the car now") is usually better than using a lot of words intended to help the other person "understand."

Sometimes the child is not doing what you ask because they don't understand the reason for it, but usually they just have their own agenda, and don't really care about our needs and motivations. Often they are simply hoping they can get their wants to the top of the family priority list. Parents and teachers are supposed to know what is best for each and for all, and to make those tough decisions, as in, "getting to school on time is more important than finishing your game." My favorite moment in *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint Exupery is when the Fox says to

the Little Prince, "Words are the source of misunderstanding."

Each of us speaks a different language; for best results with others, we need to keep trying to find the language that works best with the people we are working with and for.

## The Dirt

### Join Eatwell Farm

Did you know that the fruit served to the preschool and after school students is organic and nutritious produce delivered by Eatwell Farm? This year the third and fourth grade students are going to Eatwell Farm on field trips. They will be going on a tour of the farm and learning about farm work by working in the fields picking vegetables.

If you want to eat affordable organic produce, help protect the environment and support a local organic farm, sign up for an Eatwell Farm basket. It's an economically and environmentally sustainable way of growing, delivering and eating food. And, your kids will connect the food they eat for dinner with the farm they are visiting and learning about. Your fresh produce box will be conveniently delivered every Wednesday or every other Wednesday to CDS. Just call (800) 648-9894 to sign up!

## From the Office

### Sibling Applications

Do you have a child who is a sibling of a current CDS student that you would like to enroll at CDS in the fall of 2006? If so, please let us know of your interest as soon as possible by calling our Admission Assistant, Diane Larrabee, at 861-5432 x337. We would appreciate hearing from you by October 11 at the latest.

CDS has a policy of giving preference to applications from children of faculty and staff members, board members and siblings of currently enrolled CDS students. We also view each child as a unique, distinct individual and are committed to meeting the needs of each child individually. For this reason, we cannot guarantee that a child of a faculty or staff member, board member or sibling of a currently enrolled CDS student will be admitted automatically to CDS. However, these applicants will usually be admitted unless unusual circumstances dictate that an applicant's needs cannot be met here.

Sibling applications are due on November 18, 2005. More information about the admission process will be available shortly, but if you have any questions or concerns, please call Diane Larrabee, Admission Assistant, at 861-5432 x337, or Aimee Giles, Director of Admission, at 861-5432 x322.

## Events

### Back-to-School Night

Please plan to join the CDS community for Back-to-School Night tonight! 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.

#### Preschool – Fourth grade schedule

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 art space on the third floor 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.

#### Middle school schedule

Because middle school students have both humanities and math/science teachers, parents will have the opportunity to hear from both teachers, following the schedule below. Parents will meet with each teacher for 20 minutes and can spend the remaining 10 minutes meeting with their child's Selective teachers in the third floor art space. Parents can also choose to visit a younger sibling's class instead of seeing both math/science and humanities. Please note: Terry's presentation will take place in the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade humanities classroom at the Boys & Girls Club, 450 Guerrero Street.

	<b>7:30-7:50</b>	<b>8:00-8:20</b>
<b>Doug</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	8 <sup>th</sup> grade parents
<b>Terry</b> (Boys & Girls Club)	8 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	7 <sup>th</sup> grade parents
<b>Kirk</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	6 <sup>th</sup> grade parents
<b>Melanie</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	5 <sup>th</sup> grade parents

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.

### Hurricane Katrina Bake Sale

During Back-to-School Night tonight, the fourth grade class will be holding a bake sale to benefit victims of Hurricane Katrina. Baked goods will be priced to sell—help out those impacted by the hurricane and eat lots of sweets.

## 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.

## Go Bulldogs!

#### Good times at the Jamboree!

While no official scores were kept, the Bulldogs played hard in their first time out at the Jamboree volleyball tournament last week. Everyone had a lot of fun playing rival teams and starting the volleyball season off right. Please stay tuned for upcoming volleyball game announcements.

## 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.

## Boys and Girls Club

CDS students in the after school program will attend the Boys & Girls Club on the following days:

- 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 were sent home earlier this week. Classes will begin on October 11. There are many exciting, new classes this term! If you don't receive a packet by the end of this week, 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.

## Library Corner

### Volunteer in the Library

The Library Committee will hold its first volunteer meeting this Friday, September 23 at 8:30 a.m. in the library. We will be discussing the exciting new developments happening in the library as well as the numerous ways to volunteer in the library. We'll be talking about the upcoming Book Fair, the Birthday Book Club, volunteering for your child's class and other ways to support the library this year.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:goevansgo@yahoo.com)
- Amanda Richard, VP, Classroom Liaison Coordinator, (415) 695-0657 or [amanda.richard@sbcglobal.net](mailto:amanda.richard@sbcglobal.net)
- Laura Pliska, VP, Community Building Coordinator, (415) 641-5116 or [laura@sfbabyworks.com](mailto:laura@sfbabyworks.com)
- Ray Baxter, VP, Secretary, (415) 902-0765 or [ray@warmroom.com](mailto:ray@warmroom.com)
- Michael Silver, VP, Parent Volunteer Coordinator, (415) 597-2413 or [michael.silver@barclaysglobal.com](mailto:michael.silver@barclaysglobal.com)

## PTTA Update

### Volunteering at CDS

It's not too late to think about volunteering at CDS. There are many ways to be involved and help support our CDS community. If you haven't already done so, please complete and return the Parent Volunteer form, checking the committees you might be interested in joining, even if you are still unsure about how you'd like to participate. This form was sent in the original summer mailing and was due in the school office by August 8 for returning families or October 1 for new families. If you need a new form, they are available at the front desk.

### Upcoming PTTA Events

- Community Building Committee meeting: Monday Sept 26, 5–6 p.m. For information about the Community Building Committee, please contact Laura Pliska at 415-297-9258 or [laura@sfbabyworks.com](mailto:laura@sfbabyworks.com).
- General PTTA meeting: Tuesday October 11, 4:30–5:45 p.m. in the faculty lounge. Topics include school finances and the annual fund. Everyone is invited.
- Wraps & Greens sale: Purchase high quality holiday wrappings and green through CDS. Almost half of every dollar spent goes to holiday bonuses for faculty and staff. Packets will go home in backpacks on October 20; orders will be accepted through October 28.
- Faculty Holiday Party: around December 15, venue TBD. The PTTA throws the faculty and staff an annual holiday party. We are currently in need of a venue. If you have any leads, please contact a PTTA officer.

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

If you have any comments, questions about the PTTA updates or items you would like included on the PTTA calendar, 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 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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