



April 19, 2007

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### We Have to Talk

This week started off with a shower of elm petals. Just before morning line-up, some kids found the drifts of elm petals at the foot of the steps irresistible. They scooped up handfuls and tossed them into the air, bathing all of us in a glorious flower shower. Then I got to high-five all the kindergartners and first graders and the day began.

On Tuesday night, the lounge was filled to overflowing with parents, teachers and middle school students, all coming to school for Parent Education Night to learn “how to talk with your children about race and class.” Parents spoke right up. Even better, so did the students. From what people said, it seems that all of us have come to this school to find a place where we can speak up and not be ridiculed, where we don’t have to explain ourselves to others, where we don’t have to fight to fit in, where we can share our feelings with others and feel heard and more a part of a community than ever before. If one were to extrapolate from the people who were there, it seems that everyone in the school has experienced not belonging, or fear of not measuring up.

We were all able to talk about it. In the middle school group, 25 people of all races and classes talked about their experiences of discrimination, how they worked out their issues and what they learned. This discussion brought me back to what this is all about: at CDS you can be your very different self *and* be accepted and appreciated.

As the middle school group talked, it was impressive to witness the students speak up. At one point a parent asked, “Yes, but how DO you talk with your kids about race? I came here hoping to learn how to talk with my fourth grader about race and class.” We talked some more. One middle school student answered the question by explaining how it was actually working. It was not so much that some teacher had made a big deal about it. There was one time, for example, when a few classmates were together and it just came up, lightly, and kids just talked about it casually—this is the best way. It seemed the answer to how you talk to your child is: “You just talk.”

And more talk is necessary. Most people who came to the discussion said it was only a beginning, that we need to have more talks like this. I know the students were only testing the waters; they have a lot more to say. We need to create more forums where we build our community through this kind of conversation.

One of the things CDS does best is create a safe place to develop your potential and discover yourself, achieve something you were afraid you couldn’t or become someone you didn’t know you were. Everything we do focuses on

### Hot Dates

Friday, April 20  
8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly  
Leaping Lizards presenting

Saturday, April 21

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Middle school fundraiser  
Car wash/bake sale/yard sale  
CDS parking lot

Friday, April 27  
8 a.m.

Earth Friendly Friday  
Come to school in an  
earth-friendly way!

Friday, April 27  
8:30 a.m.

Earth Day Celebration  
Led by the eighth grade class  
during Friday assembly

Dates also posted on CDS website  
[www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html](http://www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html)



## Thank You!

- To the parents who led discussion groups at Parent Education Night: Sara O'Malley, Cathy Manshel, Michael Silver, Angela Padilla, Virginia Blue, Darya Soto, Donna DeMatteo, Amanda Newstetter, Ivan Corado and Edwina Paschal.
- To Ray Baxter, Patrick Everett, Tina Leung and Michael Silver for making welcoming calls to new families.
- To Vanessa Lambright for organizing an off-site elementary and middle school summer camp option for CDS students through Swivel Arts.
- To the Eltinge-Burton family for their donation of skateboard pads.
- To Virginia Blue for donating skateboarding equipment and to Laurie van Löben Sels for lending skateboarding equipment.
- To Brian Richard for helping out with skateboarding camp, to Marina Richard for assisting with the preschool vacation camp and to Eric Subido for photographing students skateboarding during camp.

the conditions for this: Responsive Classroom, differentiated instruction, service learning projects, Friday assemblies and so on. For example, it's important to remember both sides of the CDS discipline represented at announcement time: stand up and wait until everyone is listening.

This is not "Pleasantville," or "Lake Woebegone." This is not a place where everyone is happy, good looking, and strong and where "all of the children are above average." This is a place like any other human place where all the messiness of the world also resides, because each of us carries it with us all the time, if only in our subconscious.

It is not too dramatic to mention the recent tragedy in Virginia. It is good for us to be conscious of the fact that what we are doing here can be seen as anti-exclusion training, anti-violence training, anti-tyranny training and anti-bully training. We don't achieve that by pretending that everything is pretty or safe or beyond conflict; we get that by educating each person to make conflict creative, and we do that by strengthening the community to make each child strong and confident in themselves. We want to graduate students who are confident enough to speak up and share their unique experiences in the world and be heard.

## From the Director of Diversity

### Parent Education Night

On Tuesday night approximately 50 parents, faculty and middle school students participated in a conversation about talking with children about race and class. It was an extraordinary event that included much sharing, openness and candor. Thanks to all who participated. The hope is that such open dialogue will continue to deepen and expand all parts of the CDS community.

## From the Classrooms

### Car Wash/Bake Sale/Yard Sale

On Saturday, April 21 the middle school students will be holding a car wash, bake sale and yard sale from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the CDS parking lot to benefit the middle school social fund.

Car wash tickets will be \$10 each and include a free cookie. Tickets will be on sale beginning Monday, April 16. Imagine cookies, brownies, cupcakes and lemonade! Relax in the sun or the shade with a sweet treat while the middle schoolers make your car shine.

While your car is being washed, shop our great assortment of gently-used children's clothing, books, toys and games. Thanks for supporting the middle school.

### Earth Friendly Friday Returns

We are happy to announce our second Earth Friendly Friday, scheduled for next Friday, April 27. Our first Earth Friendly Friday was a big success with over 66% participation from students, parents and faculty. The third and seventh grades are once again asking all families to carpool, take the bus, walk or bike to school on Friday, April 27. Lemonade and lots of appreciation and encouragement from third graders will be available at the front gate that morning. Help us have even greater participation from students and faculty this month. If you'd like a list of families in your neighborhood to help with carpooling, or if you have any other questions, please contact Michael Gast at [michaelg@cds-sf.org](mailto:michaelg@cds-sf.org) or 861-5432 x329.

## Food and Clothing Drive

Beginning Monday, April 23 through Friday, May 4, CDS will facilitate a food and clothing drive for the families of migrant farm workers affected by this year's citrus freeze. As a result of the freeze, 28,000 farm workers are unemployed and they and their families need our help. This drive is sponsored by Julie Chavez Rodriguez, granddaughter of Cesar Chavez and the Cesar Chavez Foundation. Please bring items listed below to containers located by the glass doors at the entrance of the school. Farm workers and their families are an important part of our community; please help support their survival. Together, si se puede!

- Canned items: tuna, stew, chili, peanut butter, corn, vegetables, fruit, soup, menudo, albondigas, tomato sauce or spaghetti sauce
- Boxed or bagged items: powdered milk, beans, rice, macaroni and cheese, oatmeal, cream of wheat, cereal, crackers, cookies or spaghetti
- Toiletries: toothpaste, shampoo, lotion, soap or deodorant

## From the Office

### Campus Safety

It is with sadness that we acknowledge the events this week at Virginia Tech University. We want to assure you that we have both the physical and emotional safety of your children as our top priority. As you know, we have school security procedures to assure that only authorized adults and students are on the school grounds. In addition, we have a middle school advisory program that allows us to identify and respond to concerns and issues in the lives of our older students. Fortunately, we are a small and intimate setting and we know our children well. If you have any concerns you'd like to share, please contact Rebecca Kroll at [rebeccak@cds-sf.org](mailto:rebeccak@cds-sf.org).

### Staff Transitions

Unlike businesses, many independent schools employ teachers and staff on year-by-year employment contracts that can be renewed each spring. This is how CDS operates and it means that behind the scenes, spring is an important time in the life of the school. It is the time of year when teachers and administrators, in consultation with Rick, Rebecca and Doug, finalize their decisions about whether or not to renew their contracts and return

for the upcoming school year.

This means spring is also the time of the year when we start the hiring process. When an opening is confirmed, we look first to our current faculty members; changing roles within CDS can be a great opportunity for an employee to grow professionally as an educator. If we do not have an internal candidate, we post the position on our website and in many places in the community. A hiring committee led by Rebecca or Doug and made up of teachers and administrators helps to recruit, identify and interview candidates. Hiring recommendations are then made to Rick.

Our policy here at CDS is to announce teacher departures, hires and roles for next fall in the last *Weekly* of the school year. Teachers may choose to tell their colleagues they are leaving when the decision is made, but we try to communicate all staff transitions to the larger school community at once. Our number one priority is that each student feel safe and secure that their teachers are here for them for the remainder of the current school year. It can be distracting and detrimental to student learning (especially for the younger students) for students to be concerned about a beloved teacher not being here next year. For this reason, we ask for your patience in learning about our staff transitions, and if you hear of something through the grapevine, please don't share this information with your child yet.

We are in the process of hiring new staff for several positions here at CDS and look forward to sharing our new hires with you in the final edition of the *Weekly*.

### Fiesta Fundraising

We are thrilled to report that Fiesta 2007 raised over \$120,000 for sliding scale tuition! Thanks to the generosity, hard work and enthusiasm of many, our Annual Fund goal of \$350,000 has already been surpassed; the total for pledges and gifts for the year is \$367,000. This is great news and a true testament of this thriving community. Thank you to everyone for your ongoing support and commitment to CDS!

### School Calendar

An updated 2007-08 school calendar is attached to today's *Weekly*. Please note that next year's start-of-school date is Monday, September 10, 2007, and parent-teacher conferences will be held on September 5-6. Also, please note that the dates for the November parent-teacher conferences have been changed. They will be held on November 29-30 instead of November 15-16.

## Photography Volunteers Needed

We are looking for a cadre of volunteer photographers who would like to be part of an ongoing group that helps capture the many “moments of greatness, large and small” happening at CDS. If you are a photographer with a keen eye for composition and some basic photo-adjusting skills, we want you to join the volunteer paparazzi! Volunteers are needed to help photograph events such as the first day of school, Back to School Night, the Cesar Chavez celebration and more, as well as field trips and school projects. If you would like to volunteer to help capture the spirit of our wonderful CDS community, please contact Diane Larrabee, Assistant Director of Admission & Communication, at [dianel@cds-sf.org](mailto:dianel@cds-sf.org) or at 415-861-5432 x337.

## Events

### Country Fair

Mark your calendars, folks—the Country Fair is coming up on Saturday, May 5, from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.! Taking place on our own beautiful campus and run by the entire CDS community, the Country Fair is a free, fun and family-oriented event...please be a part of it!

The traditional and always-popular activities will be back—sheep shearing, pie-eating contest, handmade items from our own farm and garden, organic farmers market, wool washing, the bake sale, old-fashioned games and of course, the Grand BBQ!

This year we'll be kicking up our heels and stomping our feet with *Jubilee American Dance Theater*, a local performance group who will be providing traditional folk music and performing a square dance demonstration. Then our own fifth and sixth grade students will lead a community line dance for all who want to join in—you won't want to miss this unique experience.

In celebration of Cinco de Mayo, we'll be adding homemade tamales to the BBQ offerings...delicioso! In addition, the CDS Cultural Diversity Group will be on hand to show you their projects—look for their contributions of international treats at the Bake Sale booth.

We're also excited to announce a few new, earth-friendly additions to the Country Fair. First, all children who arrive in an earth-friendly way will receive a free

raffle ticket. In addition, CDS has gone “green” with compostable serveware. When you're done with your feasting, just toss your forks and plates, along with your corn cobs and watermelon rinds, into a green compost bin—easy clean-up, and great for the environment.

Don't miss out on all the excitement of this once-a-year, highly anticipated day!

### How We All Make it Happen

The Country Fair is run entirely by parents, students and CDS teachers and staff, so we're asking everyone to pitch in a little time to help make it happen. It's fun, easy and your kids will think you're cool. This week, class coordinators will be posting rosters in the classrooms or on your class websites with sign-ups for your class activity. Please sign-up for a time slot or two!

- Leaping Lizards: Bake Sale
- Starfish: Face Painting/Table Art
- Tadpoles: Old Fashioned Games and Races
- Kindergarten: BBQ
- 1<sup>st</sup> grade: Set-up and Break-down
- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade: Wool Washing and Fiber Arts
- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade: CDS Logo Items
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade: Ticket Sales and Name Tags
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade: Handmade Crafts
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade: Farmer's Market
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade: Old Fashioned Games and Races
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade: Old Fashioned Games and Races

### Sweet Treats for the Bake Sale

We love our sweets...and we need yours! Please bring your favorite baked goods to the Bake Sale Booth, organized this year by the Leaping Lizard class. Cookies, muffins, cupcakes, brownies, sweet breads, special gluten-free or sugar-free treats—all will be gladly accepted and sold in \$1 ticket increments.

Please deliver your baked goods when you arrive at the fair—we do not have a place to store them overnight. Remember to include a note if your item has special dietary information, and put your name on any serving dishes you'd like returned. Thank you.

## Special Call for Cupcakes

The annual Cupcake Walk is a fun and popular game for the kids. Similar to ‘musical chairs’, the kids walk around a ring of numbers, and when the music stops and the numbers are called, the lucky kids standing on the number gets a delicious cupcake. Everyone wins!

So we need A LOT of cupcakes! Please bake and frost, and bring one or two dozen cupcakes to the Bake Sale booth on the day of the fair.

## Country Fair Work Day

Enjoy the spring weather and come help prepare our campus grounds for the Country Fair on Sunday, April 29 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

If you’d like more information about the Country Fair, or to find out how you can volunteer, please contact:

- Tanja Beck: [tbeck@zephyrsf.com](mailto:tbeck@zephyrsf.com)
- Jon Gilmour: [jongilmour@zephyrsf.com](mailto:jongilmour@zephyrsf.com)
- Diana Hunt: [samanddi@pacbell.net](mailto:samanddi@pacbell.net)
- Amy Muller: [amymuller@gmail.com](mailto:amymuller@gmail.com)

## Extended Program News

### Vacation Camp Update

Spring vacation camp was a great success, with younger students engaging in farm and garden activities and older students choosing between urban art and skateboarding. A highlight of the week was the student trip to the Pacifica Skate Park for a day of skating. Thanks to everyone who participated.

### Summer Camp Updates

#### Swivel Arts Summer Camp

With the help of CDS parent Vanessa Lambright, Swivel Arts has put together a week-long summer camp just for CDS students the week of August 27-31. The camp is for children ages 3-17 and is broken into three age-appropriate programs. The theme for the camp will be “Off the Cuff” and will include improvised music, creative movement, drama and hip hop. The camp is located at Dance Mission (24<sup>th</sup> and Mission streets) and morning and afternoon extended care will be available. Please register at [www.swivelarts.com](http://www.swivelarts.com) by Tuesday, May 15 to reserve a spot.

## Open Camp Spots at CDS

The pre-K summer camps are filling up. There are approximately 10 spots left per session. If you need an additional registration form, please contact Charlie at [charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org)

## Summer Camp Resources

The summer camp resource box located in the library is filled to the brim with information on Bay Area summer camps for elementary and middle school students—check it out! Also, [www.gocitykids.com](http://www.gocitykids.com) is another great resource.

## PTTA Corner

### Friday Morning Coffee

Come join other parents for coffee and doughnuts in the yard after Friday drop-off, 8-9 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.

### PTTA Questions or Ideas?

- Ray Baxter, PTTA President, (415) 902-0765 or [ray@warmroom.com](mailto:ray@warmroom.com)
- Patrick Everett, VP, Coordinator of Classroom Liaisons, (415) 609-4055 or [patrick@everettnilsson.com](mailto:patrick@everettnilsson.com)
- Laura Pliska, VP, Coordinator of Welcoming Initiatives, (415) 641-5116 or [laura@sfbabyworks.com](mailto:laura@sfbabyworks.com)
- Michael Silver, VP, Coordinator of Diversity Initiatives, (415) 518-1803 or [silvermas@aol.com](mailto:silvermas@aol.com)
- Ann Van Gelder, VP, Parent Volunteer Coordinator, (415) 647-8561 or [anndirkvg@hotmail.com](mailto:anndirkvg@hotmail.com)
- Tanja Beck, VP, Coordinator of Events, (415) 377-8756 or [tbeck@zephyrsf.com](mailto:tbeck@zephyrsf.com)
- Edwina Paschal, VP, Middle School Coordinator, (510) 499-7739 or [edwinapaschal@earthlink.net](mailto:edwinapaschal@earthlink.net)

## Upcoming Dates

Sunday, April 29  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Country Fair workday

Saturday, May 5  
11 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Country Fair  
CDS yard

Monday, May 14 – Friday, May 18  
ERB Testing  
Grades 3-8

Dates also posted on CDS website  
[www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html](http://www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html)

### Children's Day School

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