



January 4, 2007

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

It's Academic

Just before the New Year, Tadpole parent Louis Schump sent me the following email:

Realizing we'd been eating too much and not getting enough exercise, we took Helen to the playground today. While playing in the sand box, a brawl between a brother and sister broke out. Helen watched as they knocked each other to the ground, arguing over a shovel. Helen calmly looked around, found two more shovels, walked over and handed each of the siblings one. The fighting stopped and they handed Helen the shovel they were fighting over. No words were exchanged.

Helen was able to observe the conflict, decipher the dynamic, figure out a solution and implement that solution with the utmost confidence. We were very proud and quite certain that our tuition dollars are being well spent.

Then, just three days into 2007, I read the following on the front page of the *New York Times* (January, 3, 2007):

Have you ever made a profit from a catering business or dog walking? Do you prefer to work alone or in groups? Have you ever set a world record in anything? The right answers could help you get a job at Google. Google has always wanted to hire people with straight A report cards and double 800s on their SAT's. Now, like an Ivy League School, it is starting to look for more well-rounded candidates, like those who have published books or started their own clubs.

...or resolved a conflict in a sandbox. Increasingly, people seem to be wising up. Last year we learned that University High School, the San Francisco independent school with the top "academic" reputation, is, in the words of their Director of Admission, "looking for kids with high EQ, not just IQ."

Perhaps we have reached a tipping point in the last few years. It seems that people are finally waking up to the fact that just as it takes a whole village to raise a child, it takes a whole organism to be a success—in and out of school. People on tours of the school certainly seem to get that the enthusiasm of our students and their ability to work together skillfully and respectfully is going to predict academic success as well as other kinds of success. This is the feedback we get.

Hot Dates

Friday, January 5
8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly
Starfish presenting

Monday, January 8
Winter enrichment classes begin

Monday, January 8

3:30 p.m. (Girls)

4:30 p.m. (Boys)

Basketball game
Synergy, St. Mary's Park
95 Justin Street

Tuesday, January 9

4:30-6 p.m.

PTTA meeting

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



Thank You!

- To PTTA officers Tanja Beck, Ann Van Gelder and Laura Pliska for helping organize the Faculty Holiday Party.
- To the first and third grade parents for providing food for the Faculty Holiday Party and to liaisons Suzanne Jachinowski, Kara Schleunes and Bill Littmann for organizing the menu and class participation.
- To Tina Corse for coordinating and selling Wraps and Greens; all proceeds went to holiday bonuses for teachers and staff.
- To John Kraus, CDS volunteer parent and professional photographer, for photographing this year's Winter Performance.
- To Laurie and Chris van Löben Sels, Beth Mazie and Jerel Glassman, Kris Desby and Madhavan Rangaswami, and Jessica Lanning and Neil Olson, for donating technology equipment including printers and computers to CDS classrooms.

One day in the fourth grade class last month, the students' task was to recreate a map on the rug. It was a group problem-solving activity, and they had 45 minutes to do it. Kirby looked up at Ms. Paula and said, "You aren't going to help us with this are you? You're just going to watch us and notice how we work this out, right?" "Yes," said Paula, and only once did she have to say something.

That was when one student left his group to tell Paula that two girls were bothering him. Paula said, "You could complain about it to me, or you could go over to them and say, 'Stop talking about me. What you are saying hurts my feelings.'" He did; they apologized, and the work went on, 45 minutes of collaborating without a squeak of disturbance.

A school that teaches academics as if the students are in a social and emotional vacuum is making a huge mistake. It's like trying to make a tower of 5,000 pennies by piling one on top of the other. Our tower looks like a tetrahedron, and it is just as tall as other towers, if not taller.

From the Office

Annual Fund Update

We are happy to report that parents have blasted through the parent goal of \$120,000! Thanks to parent generosity, leadership and good spirit, we have reached our fundraising goal in record time. More details will be reported next week; for now, thanks again for your incredible commitment to CDS.

Events

Winter Performance Photos

John Kraus, CDS parent, professional photographer and the official CDS "visual historian," took some fabulous photos during the Winter Performance. They are available for viewing and purchasing at www.printroom.com/pro/johnkrausphotography.

Click on "CDS 2006 Holiday Performance" and use the password "learning."

Click on a thumbnail image and expand the photo for viewing; and click on the expanded photo for an even bigger view. There are lots of purchasing options and 25% of the proceeds will go towards the photography program at CDS. Photos will be available for purchase through January 19, 2007.

Fiesta 2007

Happy New Year! Feliz Año Nuevo! It's time to mark your calendars for this year's community celebration, Fiesta 2007, to be held on Saturday, March 31 at the Event Center at St. Mary's Cathedral. And, to make it easy to attend, free childcare will be provided at CDS during the Fiesta.

By now, you should have received the Fiesta 2007 Save-the-Date packet in the mail. You may have noticed an exciting change to how we are accepting donations this year; we are asking that all donations be in the form of a gift certificate. We are looking for donations that bring our immediate and broader community together—a parent-hosted dinner party, a gift certificate to your favorite restaurant, tickets to the theater, etc. Please look in your packet for additional donation suggestions. If you'd like some help brainstorming ideas, please give one of the Fiesta volunteers a call. Of course, there will be class quilts and arts and crafts made by kids—if your child wants to make something special, i.e. scarves, hats or ceramics, we'd love to showcase it.

Extra packets and donation slips can be found at the front desk. Please remember that all donation forms need to be turned in by Friday, March 2. You can include a picture of your item or event and we'll help write the description. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call Robin McClarren at 415-235-0295 or Leslie Edelman at 415-271-4732. Thanks to everyone for helping with this year's Fiesta!

Extended Program News

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

This year, CDS will be celebrating the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. in several ways. On Friday, January 12, CDS will be recognizing the life and legacy of Martin Luther King and the many people involved in the civil rights movement starting with a morning assembly led by the eighth grade. Throughout the day, all classes will take part in lessons and activities focused on the civil rights movement and the positive role of young people making change in their communities. On Monday January 15, a national holiday in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., all CDS families and staff are invited to join in celebration with families, students and staff from Marshall Elementary School for the third year in a row. Together we'll take Caltrain to San Mateo to board the 18th annual "Freedom Train" back to San Francisco. The "Freedom Train" is chartered by the Martin Luther King Jr. Association of Santa Clara Valley. More details will be forthcoming on where and when we'll meet up on Monday morning. Please contact Michael Gast, michaelg@cds-sf.org or 861-5432 x329, with any questions.

Community Action Camp

The winter vacation camp, centered around the theme "community action," was a great success. A record number of students (and teachers!) participated in community activities and offered help and support to various local organizations.

Preschool and kindergarten students spent time building shelters and neighborhoods using blocks and other materials which led to a discussion about homes, neighborhoods and community. Part of the conversation was about how some people have homes and other people are homeless. They also talked about what assumptions are and how homeless people aren't bad, that they simply do not have a place to sleep, bathe or eat healthy meals. Students also spent time decorating candles, cards and cookies to donate and learned about how the farm and garden and people (!) are affected by

the cold winter weather.

Elementary and middle school students started the week by making colorful donation boxes to collect clothing and food for the organization, At the Crossroads, which serves homeless youth and young adults. These boxes were strategically placed in neighborhood businesses such as Tartine, Dolores Park Café, The Women's Building, ImagiKnit, Bi-Rite and Café Petra. In the middle of the week campers ventured on the #22 bus (very exciting in and of itself) to the San Francisco Food Bank in Portrero Hill. Students toured the facility and had a chance to ask a lot of questions about the organization and the people they serve. Another project that day was stringing popcorn with millet, peanut butter and seeds to make a special wild bird tree in the CDS yard. If the birds haven't eaten everything, you can check it out just south of the main entry gate in the large planter box.

Toward the end of the week campers headed to the SPCA to learn about their many programs (including their youth volunteer programs) and meet some of the resident cats, kittens, dogs and puppies. On the same day, campers spent time at Rainbow Grocery, learning about how cooperative businesses work and about the differences between organic and commercial growing practices. At our closing circle that day, Mo explained, "At Rainbow everyone is the boss, not just one person!" and Jackson said, "With organic fruit there might be more bugs around but usually the apples are healthier and taste better."

The final day of camp involved making thank you cards for all the organizations we visited, as well as our special guest speaker Rob, from At the Crossroads. Throughout the week, students made popcorn, drank hot cocoa and played freeze-tag. During the final camp celebration on Friday afternoon, older students shared some of their favorite aspects of community action with the younger students. (Also, congratulations to Liam who lost a tooth!) Thanks to everyone who participated.

Go Bulldogs!

Basketball Calendar

Girls: Monday, January 8, 3:30 p.m.
Synergy, St. Mary's Park, 95 Justin Street

Boys: Monday, January 8, 4:30 p.m.
Synergy, St. Mary's Park, 95 Justin Street

Sports Hotline: 415-861-5432 x397

Winter Enrichment Classes

Tomorrow is the absolute last day to turn in your registration for winter enrichment classes. Don't miss out! Classes begin next week.

Summer Camp

Summer Camp 2007 packets are being sent home today for those students entering preschool or kindergarten next year. If you have any questions, contact Charlie at charlies@cds-sf.org.

Library Corner

Library Changes

In order to maintain our library program after Sesheta's absence, our AM Receptionist (and last year's part-time librarian) Elsa Townsend will be adding afternoon hours to her schedule to manage our library for the remainder of the school year. She's looking for parent volunteers to help out with reading to preschoolers, shelving, and checking in and out books for a few classes. Please contact her directly if you'd like to help at elsat@cds-sf.org.

PTTA Update

January Meeting

Please join us for a PTTA meeting on Tuesday, January 9 from 4:30-6p.m. titled "Making Magic Happen—Stories from the History of CDS." The PTTA will present a panel discussion on stories from the early days of CDS, covering the creation of our school, its mission, culture and values. Why do we have a farm? How did the school come to embrace project-based learning and responsive classroom techniques? How and why did art education become so important at CDS? How did we acquire St. Joseph's hall and this school site? How were the strategic plan and mission statements created? Tracy Kirkham, Matt Schwartz, Elizabeth McClellan, Aimee Giles and Jen Weiss will be on the panel. All are welcome to attend and childcare is free during the meeting if you sign up by 10 a.m. the day of the meeting.

Upcoming Dates

Monday, January 15

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

No school

No extended program

Thursday, January 18

4:30 p.m.

Boy's basketball game

Lycee Francais

Boys & Girls Club

Monday, January 22

5 p.m.

Girl's basketball game

KDBS, 7070 California Street

Friday, January 26

Middle school academic open house

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

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Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

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