



May 10, 2007

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Community Based Learning

Last week I coined the term “self-fullness,” feeling the need to transcend a false dichotomy between selfless and selfish. CDS students are not selfless, but self-full in their generosity. As they apply themselves to others, they enrich themselves also. If we want our children to be generous, compassionate, kind and thoughtful of others, it is unwise to suggest that they have to compromise themselves to be so. It’s true that sometimes people have to give up something in order to be part of a community, but giving up can often become a step toward enhancement rather than diminishment. Especially if we envision conflicts as opportunities for collaboration, a conflict can usually result in mutual benefit rather than compromise or, where someone wins and someone else loses. It’s all in the language. If you have to be selfless to give, there will be less giving.

We have a similar opportunity to improve our language around student projects that make a difference to others. The teachers are consistently thinking of activities that will help our children broaden their horizons, from taking care of each other in the class to buddying with other classes, to service learning projects and other activities beyond our gates. All of these activities both fill the children up and allow them to give to others.

The middle school Thursday workshops have been marvelous additions to the program this year. Every week the students enrich their academic learning through fieldwork. The fifth grade students collaborated with teachers and students at McKinley Elementary School (SFUSD) to design, install and maintain a large vegetable and flower garden. In their study of labor, sixth graders attended the Domestic Workers Union Press Conference at the Women’s Building in the Mission.

The seventh grade students worked in collaboration with Literacy for Environmental Justice to produce pamphlets with information about health risks in the Bayview-Hunters Point area. In their study of the human body, students researched facts about health risks associated with environmental issues. I joined an eighth grade trip to Literacy for Environmental Justice in BayView-Hunters Point as they learned first hand about energy use. I was impressed by their questions that reflected an interest in the intersection of the physical ecology of place (the history of the site used as a toxic dump) and the social ecology of place (the impact on the people who live there).

Further, seventh graders are learning about students and their village in La Manzanilla, Jalisco, Mexico through correspondence and presentations from CDS staff with connections there. They are working toward a possible trip to Mexico next June to learn first-hand about the people and life there and

Hot Dates

Friday, May 11
8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly
Eighth grade presenting

Monday, May 14 – Friday, May 18

ERB Testing
Grades 3-8

Tuesday, May 15

7-8:30 p.m.

Middle school meeting: Intro to
Eighth Grade &
the High School Admission Process
For parents of students entering
eighth grade in the fall
David Minus Science Center

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



Thank You!

- To everyone who made this year's Country Fair so spectacular, especially co-chairs Diana Hunt, Jon Gilmour, Amy Muller and Tanja Beck and the barbeque master, Adam Feuerstein. The list of volunteers this year is long and inspiring; thank you to all parents, friends, students, dancers, faculty and staff for making the annual Country Fair such an incredible community ritual!

participate in a project of joint design.

Typically, these types of activity and involvement fall under the term "service learning." Other terminology might be even more helpful as we move forward with our curriculum. There are problems with the phrase "service learning" just as there have been problems with "community service." Service does not really say what's going on. The students are learning things in the real world, which inform, enrich and inspire academic learning. Students get to apply academic learning to concrete situations that will deepen their understanding and make the academics stick. They are not so much performing altruistic acts for others as participating in the real world, and strengthening themselves as they make a difference. Again, selflessness rears its ugly head.

Teachers have begun using the term "community-based learning." This is language that ties together everything we do. From the first day they walk in the gate CDS children are learning-in-community. They are learning in communion with nature and in community with other people of all types. They are learning that "everything goes somewhere." They learn that they are not islands of existence, but selves in relationship with other people or events and that these events are moving forward in increasingly complex patterns in which they cannot avoid participating.

From the Classrooms

Middle School Meetings

Recently, middle school administration and faculty have organized a series of meetings for middle school parents to talk about transitions appropriate for each grade (from entering middle school to starting the high school application process). The next meeting is an "Introduction to Eighth Grade and the High School Admission Process" on Tuesday, May 15 from 7-8:30 p.m. in the David Minus Science Center for parents of students entering eighth grade in the fall. Childcare is available; please contact Ryan Gordon at ryang@cds-sf.org by Friday, May 11 to sign up.

From the Office

2007-08 Tuition Payments

Just a reminder that, new this year, the first tuition payment (or full payment) for the 2007-08 school year is **due Friday, June 1**. In years past this payment has been due July 1. June 1 is also the last day that, with written notice, you may withdraw your child from the 2007-08 school year without incurring the obligation for the total tuition. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Donna Shibata, Director of Finance & Operations, at donnas@cds-sf.org or 861-5432 x314.

SST Still Available

It's not too late! All families who have concerns about their ability to afford full tuition are encouraged to talk to us – and to apply for our sliding scale tuition (Donna at x314, Rick at x313 or Aimee at x322). Many families are submitting applications for the first time this year. We encourage families to apply regardless of the amount of sliding scale tuition they anticipate receiving. If a family thinks they would qualify for a small reduction in tuition and a small reduction would help, they should apply.

Sliding Scale Tuition Facts and Figures

Since every family's financial situation and obligations are different, there is no simple "rule-of-thumb" to determine if a family should apply. The program serves families with a wide variety of income. For example, families with income ranging from \$120,000 to over \$180,000 are paying tuition on a sliding scale for the 2007-08 school year.

Love the Farm? We Need You

We need a volunteer to coordinate weekend and vacation care for the chickens and sheep, as Family Farmer Parent Coordinator. Responsibilities include attending family farmer trainings, having a key at home in case a weekend farmer forgets to pick up their key at school, reminding families one week before their farm duty and being available in case of emergency if Misty Cummings is unavailable. Benefits include spending more time with the famous CDS animals and knowing you are an integral part of their care. If you're interested, please contact Misty at 861-5432 x321 or mistyc@cds-sf.org.

Class Photos

There is still time to purchase your class photo! You can place all orders through the CDS SmugMug website (www.cds.smugmug.com); they will mail your order directly to your home. Click on **Prints & Gifts** to see the many options available from mugs to puzzles to traditional 8x10 color photos for only \$8. Also, you can check out examples of the "goofy" style class photos in the first floor hallway. Please contact Ryan Gordon at ryang@cds-sf.org if you have any questions.

Events

Country Fair Clean-Up

Thank you to everyone for donating time, energy and "stuff" to make this year's Country Fair happen. We have many serving plates, platters and containers left over from Saturday; please stop by the faculty lounge on the third floor to claim your items. Thank you.

PTTA Update

End of Year Meeting

It has been an active year in the CDS community and next year promises more of the same. Annual rituals like the Fiesta and Country Fair proved to be great celebrations and Step Up Day and Graduation are on the horizon. Parents, teachers, trustees and administrators have worked to create plans for increasing diversity, transforming the building and guiding our school into the future. This year has seen significant changes in all areas of the school and has pointed to challenges in how we communicate about those changes.

Join us the evening of Tuesday, May 22 as we review this year, plan for next year and return to the focus of communication strategies at CDS. All are welcome. Childcare will be provided; please sign up with Ryan Gordon at ryang@cds-sf.org.

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday, May 22
7-8:30 p.m.
PTTA meeting

Thursday, May 24
7-8:30 p.m.
Middle school meeting: Intro to Sixth Grade
For parents of students entering sixth grade in the fall
David Minus Science Center

Friday, May 25
7 p.m.
A Midsummer Night's Dream
Dolores Park Church (455 Dolores St)

Saturday, May 26
9:30 a.m.
Family farmer training
2 p.m.
A Midsummer Night's Dream
Dolores Park Church (455 Dolores St)

Monday, May 28
Memorial Day
No school; no extended program

Tuesday, May 29 – Friday, June 1
Eighth grade class trip

Friday, June 1
8:30 a.m.
Building Celebration

First 2007-08 tuition payment due
Last day to withdraw your child from the 2007-08 year
without incurring the obligation for total tuition

Children's Day School

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