



September 21, 2006

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### The Logan Principle

Last week at drop-off, as Rebecca was helping Leaping Lizard Logan out of the car, Logan handed her his lunchbox and said, "Would you please hold this for me?" Rebecca did of course (trying to keep her amazed jaw from dropping). Logan stepped carefully out onto the driveway, took back the lunchbox, said good-bye to his mother Jessica, and the traffic moved on smoothly. Rebecca and the other preschool teachers (who laughed with delight when they heard the story at lunch), had rarely seen a four-year-old who was so self-possessed, and at the same time so other-aware, as to ask another person to please hold their lunchbox for them so they could more easily get out of the car. Logan's request made Rebecca's day.

After Friday's assembly, Ted Dagnese and Poppea Dorsam introduced me to Gavan's grandmother Doris, who used to teach sixth grade. She told me how impressed she was with the assembly, how poised the students were, how courageous that they could stand up and speak in front of so many people, how natural it seemed for the students to listen respectfully to each other. As we were all commiserating about what a shame it is that all children don't get this, I asked what is it that CDS is providing that all schools should provide. Her first response was freedom: physical freedom—to move, play, use their bodies—and intellectual freedom to think, create, explore, and most of all to be themselves. The second word she used was discipline: the disciplines to use that freedom well.

Rebecca's story reminded me that I should have added a third word to our conversation: teamwork. CDS students are learning (and often demonstrate that they have, indeed, learned) the disciplines of interdependence. They seem to know that for each of us to acquire the courage to speak up, we have to support others in speaking up. For each of us to learn, we need to be aware of the impact we have on the class.

Of course, in school there is plenty of work that students need simply to do on their own. Most skills need to be practiced, for instance, and practice is usually best done solo. But many American schools emphasize students trying to achieve on their own, usually in comparison to and even in competition with other students. In America we have a cultural bias toward independence and the self-made-man.

But increasingly the world is teaching us that working together gets better results. Good teachers have always known that learning happens best in a learning community and a learning community requires that students experience their interdependence. So often a person learns something better when they have to teach it to someone else. To maximize the performance of

## Hot Dates

Tonight!  
6 p.m.  
New Parent Reception

6:15-8:30 p.m.  
Back to School Night

Friday, September 22  
8:30 a.m.  
Friday assembly  
Sixth grade presenting

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



## Thank You!

- To the families and faculty members who are this week's Families of the Week—you set the bar very high with 100% participation! We look forward to seeing all CDS families participate during the year. We'll let you know in advance when it's your turn to shine!
- To Amy and Thor Muller for setting up the new CDS online photo sharing website ([www.cds.smugmug.com](http://www.cds.smugmug.com)), including training our teachers. Watch for an announcement from your child's classroom teachers – they will let you know when there are photos for you to view.

each student, we need to have plenty of time when the students are helping and teaching each other.

The interdependence of life on the planet is not in question; it's a reality. To take interdependence to the next level, however, we need to use the Logan principle. As we approach other people there is a natural question: is this person likely to be on my side, or against me? It is a reasonable question. That person across from you has a different set of interests. The high schools are telling the applicants that there are way too many applicants for everyone to get in. Everybody in the sandbox wants the same fabulous truck. It would seem reasonable to act as if there is not enough to go around, we have to beat out others to get what we need, people do not have our interests at heart, we need to "look out for number one."

I have learned that this approach, though natural, is actually not so reasonable. If you act as if others are not there for you—guess what you discover? You discover that they are not. Actually, there is really only one reasonable approach and that is the Logan way—to approach others as if they want to help, as if they want what is best for you.

As an educator, I have had to act as if people want to help—that they would prefer to help, that they enjoy giving, that they actually want to benefit someone else. One of the main reasons the 8<sup>th</sup> graders did so well in their high school acceptances is that they acted as if the high school admission people were trying to get them into the

school that was right for them, rather than hoping against hope that they would get in somewhere. Surely there are conflicts, if diversity means anything it means that each of us comes at a situation with a unique set of interests. But here everybody has one common interest: what's best for the children.

This is a wonderful school community. Let's take it to the next level and practice The Logan Principle.

## From the Office

### Affinity Groups

The first LGBTQ affinity group for this year will be held in the faculty lounge on Tuesday, October 24 at 7 p.m. Our first student affinity group is also starting this fall. Parent Virginia Blue is facilitating a group for middle school girls that starts on Monday, October 16. Please contact her directly at [bluestearth@yahoo.com](mailto:bluestearth@yahoo.com) for more information.

If anyone is interested in creating groups around other commonalities (e.g., adoption, multi-racial families, Spanish-speakers) please contact Charlie Stephens, Diversity Director at 861-5432 x315 ([charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org)) or Michael Silver, Diversity Initiatives at [Michael.silver@barclaysglobal.com](mailto:Michael.silver@barclaysglobal.com).

### Transforming St. Joseph's Hall

All parents, grandparents and friends who would like to learn from a pro about best practices in asking for donations to CDS are invited to attend a capital campaign training session with development consultant Sandy Drew on Wednesday, September 27 from 7 to 9 p.m. at school. The primary purpose of the session is to teach volunteers how to make a pitch for CDS, ask for gifts and answer questions in the context of the capital campaign. CDS will provide free childcare. Please respond to Amanda Richard ([amandar@cds-sf.org](mailto:amandar@cds-sf.org); 861-5432 x330) by Monday, September 25 if you plan to attend and indicate the names and ages of children who will need care.

## 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 2007? If so, please let us know of your interest as soon as possible by calling our Assistant Director of Admission & Communication, Diane Larrabee, at 861-5432 x337. We would appreciate hearing from you by October 10 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 Friday, November 17. More information about the admission process will be available shortly, but if you have any questions or concerns, please call Diane at 861-5432 x337, or Aimee Giles, Director of Admission & Communication, at 861-5432 x322.

### From the Classrooms

#### Middle School Car Wash

Come get your car washed this weekend and support the middle school social fund at the same time. The car wash will be held in the CDS parking lot from 12-2 p.m. on Saturday, September 23. \$10 buys you a wash and a cookie—advance tickets can be purchased tonight at Back to School Night. See you there!

### Events

#### Back to School Night

Please join us tonight for Back to School Night! All parents new to CDS are cordially invited to a wine and cheese reception in the CDS library at 6 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 6:15 p.m., and the program will begin at 6:30 with outdoor welcomes from Rick, Board Chair Tracy Kirkham, Middle School Head Doug Garfinkel

and our specialist teachers. Please bring a sweater – it gets chilly!

At 7:15 parents will go to their children's classrooms to meet with teachers and get a sense of what is planned for the year. Preschool–4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers will present two programs for each class, from 7:25-7:55 p.m. and from 8-8:30 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 7:25 to 7:55 p.m. If your child's last name starts with letters A through K, please meet with specialist teachers who will be stationed in the yard to describe their programs and answer questions, and go to your child's classroom at 8 p.m.

For middle school parents, logistics will be a little different. Each middle school core academic teacher will present for half an hour about their subject area. Their schedule is:

	Doug (DMSC)	Terry (B & G Club)
7:25 – 7:55	7 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	8 <sup>th</sup> grade parents
8:00 – 8:30	8 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	7 <sup>th</sup> grade parents

	Kirk (Eco Lab)	Melanie (Humanities)
7:25 – 7:55	5 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	6 <sup>th</sup> grade parents
8:00 – 8:30	6 <sup>th</sup> grade parents	5 <sup>th</sup> grade parents

This will be an evening for adults only. There will be NO childcare during the event. Please park on the street.

### Go Bulldogs!

#### Co-ed Volleyball Scores

September 18, CDS vs. Live Oak

Game 1: CDS 25, LO 19

Game 2: CDS 25, LO 5

September, 20, CDS vs. KDBS

Game 1: CDS 27, KDBS 25

Game 2: KDBS 25, CDS 18

Game 3: CDS 15, KDBS 6

#### Co-ed Volleyball Calendar

Thursday, September 28, 4:30 p.m.

SF Christian, Boys & Girls Club, 450 Guerrero St.

Don't forget to call the new sports hotline at 861-5432 x397 for game updates and scores!

## Extended Program News

### Enrichment Classes

There are some discrepancies in the enrichment class packet that was sent home last week with regard to which grades are eligible to enroll in which classes. Please refer to the actual description part of the packet; it's only the sign-up sheet that has some errors. Contact Charlie (861-5432 x315) if you need further clarification. Also, we'll be having our first-ever enrichment class showcase/preview as part of the after school program this Thursday and Friday from 3-5 p.m. so that students can get a sneak peek at selected classes before registering.

### Social Justice Camp

Packets were sent home for our 2nd Annual Social Justice Camp last week. This camp will be held on Monday, October 9 for CDS and community families. If you need an extra sign up sheet or have questions, please call or e-mail Charlie Stephens ([charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org) or 861-5432 x315).

## PTTA Update

### CDS Stories

*How the PTTA was Born, or  
Why Breakfast Really Is the Most Important Meal*

Eight years ago, when my daughter Celeste started preschool, CDS was in the early stage of growing into the elementary grades. We had a parents' association, but there was a lingering philosophical debate over its membership: would it be most effective if open only to parents, or if it included faculty and administrators as well? Should parents and school staff be partners in and out of the classroom, or would such close contact put excessive pressure on the teachers and administration? Just as at CDS today, there was use of the term "playing position," but the school was young enough that we had not yet defined what that meant, or how our adult interactions would most benefit our children and our community.

The debate came into high relief in September of the 2000-01 school year. At a meeting for preschool parents thinking toward kindergarten, parents were told CDS would lose an incoming preschool class – and a team of preschool teachers – to accommodate our

classroom shortage and growing elementary program. After the meeting, parents were devastated: we couldn't imagine losing a single preschool teacher. Just as in our preschool now, every teacher not only knew each preschooler's name but whether they were good nappers and liked to feed the chickens, regardless of the child's assigned classroom. We wanted all of the teachers to know how much they meant to our families.

The CDS Parents Association had sunk most of its energy into developing a school library from scratch – our expanded, fully equipped library is their legacy – so, with their blessing and that of the administration, a group of preschool parents organized the Teacher Appreciation Committee, and our first project was a potluck breakfast for the entire staff. You'd have thought we'd bought everyone stock in Google! We couldn't believe how grateful the teachers were at our paltry gesture, and it was a revelation when several teachers told us that feeling appreciation and camaraderie, a sense of partnership, was what they most wanted from parents. A simple "thank you" and "how are you?" at the end of a long school day had more power than any of us had realized.

Teacher breakfasts became eagerly anticipated monthly events, and we also hosted the school's first-ever staff parties at winter break and the end of that first year. By the 2001-02 school year the parents' association had disbanded, but the Teacher Appreciation Committee continued, organizing a second year of breakfasts and staff parties as well as teacher birthday remembrances and encouraging lots of "thank yous" at the end of school days. More and more parents from every class joined us, and many close friendships and real partnerships developed among the teachers and families.

When our new Head of School, Rick Ackerly, came to his first meeting with CDS parents in the spring of 2002, there was already a buzz in the room: we felt the school needed a revived parents' association, and we were sure it should include all of us – every adult with an impact on the experience of our children at the school. When Rick asked us if we had any questions or suggestions for him, one of the other parents kned me from behind; someone else yanked my arm up, and I think someone else was holding a "SUCKER" sign over my head, which is how I ended up volunteering to help create a new parents' association for CDS...but not alone! The same jokers who had been standing behind me stepped up without having to be asked, and together

we mapped out the awkwardly named but intentionally inclusive Parent Teacher Trustee Administrator Association. Over the last five school years the leadership of our PTTA has refined and expanded what we do and how we do it, and now our definition of “playing position” is understood: it means mutual support and trust among all of us – parents and caregivers, teachers, administrators and staff, trustees – so that we can each give our very best for the benefit of all of the children at CDS. Just like it is at home, breakfast at CDS turned out to be a good place to start.

Kate Moses (Celeste Kamiya, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade)  
PTTA President, 2002-03  
Trustee, 2002-present  
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CDS Stories is an occasional feature of the *Weekly*. Please send your stories and suggestions to [cgs-stories@warmroom.com](mailto:cds-stories@warmroom.com) or call Ray Baxter at 415.902.0765.

## PTTA Corner

### 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 [anndirkgv@hotmail.com](mailto:anndirkgv@hotmail.com)
- Tanja Beck, VP, Coordinator of Events, (415) 377-8756 or [tbeck@zephyrsf.com](mailto:tbeck@zephyrsf.com)
- Yvelise Cabral, VP, Middle School Coordinator, (415) 348-1154 or [yvelisecabral@msn.com](mailto:yvelisecabral@msn.com)
- Edwina Paschal, VP, Middle School Coordinator, (510) 499-7739 or [edwinapaschal@earthlink.net](mailto:edwinapaschal@earthlink.net)

## Upcoming Dates

Wednesday, September 29  
7-9 p.m.  
Capital Campaign training

Monday, October 2  
Fall enrichment classes begin

Monday, October 9  
Government Holiday  
No school  
Extended program available

Dates now 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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