



June 5, 2008

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

The Perfection of a Learning Community

One of our parents, whose calling seems to be starting tech companies, told me at lunch the other day that potential investors evaluate him on how many mistakes he has made, rather than his successes. Even though “mistakes are learning opportunities” has been a mantra of mine for most of my career, I found this message from the real world a little surprising. Then, last night at our reception for new parents, a parent on the investor side of business confirmed that many (though not all) investors are indeed looking for someone who has made a lot of mistakes. I guess education really is like “Gordon the Guided Missile.” (*CDS Weekly*, February 14, 2008.)

For an educator, whose job is to maximize growth and bring out the best in people, it makes sense, but the world I grew up in—the world of the mid 20th century—didn't teach me that. School certainly didn't reward risk takers, and once I got into the work force I can't really remember getting patted on the back for mistakes. I did notice that those who always got it right did so by taking safe routes and somehow developed the slogan: “He who has learned the most when he dies wins.” But I always secretly suspected I was just giving myself a consolation pep talk for not being perfect.

I guess it really is true. It has been an enormous year of growth for our community as well as for our children, and it isn't because we were perfect. It's because we are a learning community. We are a group of people who are on a mission to build a school that maximizes learning; so for us, not getting things right the first time is just an opportunity to learn and try again. All year long I heard screeching sounds coming from the classroom next to my office in the afternoons. If I didn't know there were children in there learning to play stringed instruments, I would have thought someone was being tortured. But after a while it began to sound like music, and their teacher Poppea Dorsam tells me that next year a number of her students will be ready to take their skills public.

Well, most of what we do—from learning to read to growing this school—is more like that than we would like to think. We just finished moving into our new building to make room for 30 more students and for the middle school to be on the third floor of St. Joseph's Hall. We were SO organized, making sure that each desk and file cabinet would be placed exactly where we wanted it. The movers were a well-oiled machine of motivated professionals, and still each of us can think of examples of things that we didn't get right and now have to fix.

Yes, our community flies like Gordon, the missile that made hundreds of small mistakes that eventually led him to his final destination—or perhaps more like

Hot Dates

Friday, June 6
8:30-9:30 a.m.

16th Street Open House, Assembly
and Friday Coffee

Tuesday, June 10
8:15-10 a.m.

Middle school project fair

Thursday, June 12
8:30-9:30 a.m.

Passing the Torch ceremony

3:45-5 p.m.

Class of 2008 Graduation

Friday, June 13

Last day of school

Extended program available

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



bumble bees pollinating a huckleberry bush. Rarely does the music get played exactly as the composer was hearing it when she wrote it down.

Construction begins again on June 16 in St. Joseph Hall, and when school opens the day after Labor Day, and we all flood in the gates for more growing, come prepared for another year of mistakes and learning. Children's Day School is on a new launching pad, ready to take off on our next adventure together.

Transforming St. Joseph's Hall

Millions of Thanks

A St. Joseph's Hall-sized shout out goes to the many generous parents, grandparents, trustees and friends who have been busy making the *Building Our Future* campaign such a success this spring. The campaign has raised over \$1.7 million in gifts and pledges to fund the renovation of St. Joseph's Hall. On Monday, June 16, crews will begin construction of five permanent classrooms on the building's third floor and installation of a new heating system. We're making great progress toward the campaign's \$2.25 million goal, and could not have gotten this far, this fast without the dedicated efforts of the volunteer campaign cabinet – Susi Alexander, Patricia Buse, John Hendrickson and Tracy Kirkham – who have worked tirelessly from the project's inception to build support and inspire generosity throughout this community. Please take a last look at the unfinished cubicle-strewn space on the third floor of St. Joseph's Hall, as well as the extra-large faculty bathroom with shower; come on over to the new administrative offices in the 16th Street annex on Friday morning for an open house; and get ready to enjoy new middle school classrooms and a building-wide heating system next fall.

From the Classrooms

2007-08 CDS Yearbooks

The 2007-08 CDS yearbooks have arrived! Teachers will distribute pre-ordered yearbooks to students (or parents at pick-up) over the next few days. If you haven't yet purchased or ordered a yearbook, don't despair. There are additional copies for sale by donation at the front desk.

Middle School Dance Chaperones

All middle school students are invited to a dance to celebrate the Class of 2008 and the end of the school year on Thursday, June 12 at the Axis Café (1201 8th Street) from 6:30-9:30 p.m. (fifth and sixth graders will leave at 9 p.m.). Adult chaperones (preferably from lower grades) are needed to supervise the dance. If you'd like to re-live your middle school days, and celebrate with our middle school students, please contact Pat Rose at patinsf@pacbell.net or 415-282-9209.

From the Office

Fall Teacher Line-Up

As we prepare for graduation and the final days of the school year, we also look ahead to next year. The 2008-09 school year line-up of teachers and staff includes many familiar faces and several new faces. As always, there may be a few more changes over the summer but we wanted to bring you up to speed as you prepare for summer vacation, and in a few months, the new school year. We've appreciated your patience this spring, waiting to hear news of transitions, changes and new beginnings.

Preschool

We're happy to report that the Leaping Lizard team will stay the same. Alicia Perdue, Gladys Miyahira and Ngoc Tran will all be returning next year. The Starfish team will be led by Gretchen Ott once again, along with Gloria Argueta and James Bannister, our long-time substitute who will be staying on as a regular employee. The Tadpole team will be led by Candy Mabry, who taught preschool in the Teddy Bear classroom for many years and brings with her more than 20 years of preschool teaching experience. She will be joined by Carmen Gerughy, returning for her tenth year. We are in the process of hiring one additional associate teacher for the Tadpole classroom. Finally, Derrek Gerughy will stay on as the Preschool Outside Teacher.

CDS Yahoo Group

Our CDS Community Yahoo group is a forum for the CDS community to share information about life outside of school. Join this Yahoo group, our in-house "craigslist," by visiting: groups.yahoo.com/group/cdscommunity.

Elementary School

Jen Weiss will return to lead the Seahorse kindergarten class, along with Matt Martin who currently teaches in the Tadpole classroom. Matt is thrilled to move up with his students and meet new kindergarteners as well. The second kindergarten class will be led by Luisa Pinto, who comes to CDS from Ring Mountain Day School in Mill Valley where she has been teaching kindergarten and first and second grade. She'll be accompanied by full-time associate teacher Christian Strauli, a Bay Area Teacher Training Institute (BATTI) intern. Christian has spent the past year as a paraprofessional aide in the Resource Specialist Program at Lawton Alternative School working with children struggling in classes due to learning disabilities or processing deficiencies.

Barbara DeMoss is returning as first grade head teacher. Barbara will be assisted by Molly Meng, who will split her time between both first grade classes. Molly Meng has served as a CDS substitute for several years and has worked as a teaching artist with Stagewrite and as an instructor in the CDS and Live Oak summer programs. We're happy to report that Paula Symonds jumped at the opportunity to return to teaching at the lower elementary level and will be returning as a first grade head teacher, also assisted by Molly Meng.

Sara Switzman will lead a second grade class, with part-time assistance from Jasmin Hoo (current kindergarten associate teacher and after school teacher). Due to the departure of Madora (see below), we are looking for another second grade head teacher.

Ginny St. Denis will return as third grade head teacher, and will be assisted by Vi Le, current first grade associate teacher.

To lead our fourth grade class, we welcome Sebastian Robins, a bilingual teacher who taught fourth and fifth grade in San Francisco public schools for six years. He then became a SFUSD Instructional Reform Facilitator, coaching and supporting K-5 teachers by modeling effective, research-based practices and facilitating reflective forums for feedback and growth. We also welcome Nick Martin, currently a fifth grade assistant teacher at The Chestnut Hill School in Massachusetts, as our fourth grade associate teacher.

Middle School and Specialists

The middle school line-up remains the same (Melanie Liu, 5th grade; Kirk Bell, 6th grade; Doug Garfinkel, 7th grade; Terry Ashkinos, 8th grade), as does our specialist team.

After School

Anthony Nguyen, Jasmin Hoo and Christopher Gonzalez-Crane are all returning to the after school program next year. Dan Larson is in the process of hiring three new teachers.

Administration

We are thrilled to welcome Josée Mayette as our new Middle School Head. She joins us after serving as the Middle School Head at Chinese American International School for three years and as a middle school social studies teacher for six years.

In addition, we're happy to report that, although Margaret Piskitel will be leaving the Tadpole classroom, she'll be staying on as part-time Curriculum Coordinator. Amanda Richard, who has been serving as Capital Campaign Coordinator and will continue to assist with the Capital Campaign next year, will be moving to the Admission Office to work as the Admission Assistant. Finally, Mimi Maio, our Learning Specialist, has been on leave this spring but will be returning in the fall.

Goodbyes

It's always difficult to say goodbye, but we wish the following people well in their new adventures.

Madora Soutter, Hannah Ingram and Diane Larrabee are all leaving the Bay Area for new opportunities in New York City. Charlie Stephens will be spending the fall traveling throughout Europe. Dominique Kohl is in the process of determining what comes next. Robyn Moss is leaving to teach at the Presidio Hill School. Anne Campbell is leaving to devote more time to her coursework at San Francisco State University, and Christopher Mulvey is leaving to pursue full-time work.

When you see them around campus, join us in thanking them for their commitment and dedication to CDS.

Trustee News

As we prepare for the end of the school year, we'd like to thank our very dedicated and hard-working volunteer trustees for their tireless commitment to CDS. First, an enormous thank you to Tracy Kirkham who has served as Board Chair for six years! Having reached the term limit for Board officers, she is stepping down as Chair but will remain on as Chair Emeritus, reflecting her exceptional leadership and service on behalf of CDS.

Thanks also to the entire 2007-08 Board of Trustees for their service: Suzanne Abbey, Susi Alexander, Ray Baxter, Patrica Buse, Bob Curley, Rick England, Marianne Evans, John Hendrickson, Richard Hylton, Kit Land, Elizabeth McClellan, Jack Munson, Laura Pliska, Matt Schwartz, Michael Silver, Carol Swainson and Gayle Tsern Strang. Their leadership and enthusiasm is vital to the success of our school.

We're very pleased to announce next year's Board officers and welcome four new members to the 2008-09 Board of Trustees. The new Board officers are as follows:

- Matt Schwartz (Board Chair)
- Richard Hylton (Vice Chair)
- Gayle Tsern Strang (Vice Chair)
- Rick England (Treasurer)
- Marianne Evans (Secretary)

As you'll see from their bios below, the new board members bring with them a wealth of experience and leadership skills.

Ila Afsharipour is a Vice President in the Banc of America Securities' (BAS) Public Finance Group. He specializes in providing investment banking services to developers of affordable housing, state housing finance agencies and public housing authorities. Prior to joining BAS, Ila was part of Credit Suisse First Boston's Debt Capital Markets department. He graduated with a B.S. degree in economics and a concentration in international finance from the Orfalea College of Business at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Ila, his wife Stephanie and son Caedon live near the Haight Ashbury district in San Francisco. In his free time Ila enjoys tennis, basketball and running. Ila has served on the CDS Finance Committee since fall 2006.

Andrew Henry is a Senior Derivatives Trader at PEAK6 Capital Management, a proprietary options trading firm and hedge fund based in Chicago, where he has worked since 2006. Prior to working for PEAK6, he was the founder of Henry Capital Management and an options market maker for Group I trading. He has been in the options trading business for 14 years and has been a member of the Chicago Board of Trade, Chicago Board Options Exchange, and the Pacific Coast Options Exchange. Andrew has a B.S. in finance from Indiana University and studied Japanese at Sophia University in Tokyo, Japan. He is the parent of Miles

(CDS '18) and George (CDS '19) and was active on the CDS Committee on Inclusion and Development Committee.

Darya Soto is an immigrant from Santiago, Chile and is fluent in Spanish. Darya is a physician who obtained her B.S. and medical degree from UC San Diego, and her specialty training in pulmonary and critical care medicine at UCSF, where she was a professor of medicine until 2007. She currently is beginning her own medical practice in Marin. She has served in the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion at CDS since 2007. She has a son, Liam (CDS '14), who has been at CDS since preschool. Other important aspects to her life are family, athletics, environmental protection and socio-economic equality.

Chris van Löben Sels is a software professional focused on product management and strategy. He is currently group product manager for Adobe LiveCycle Tools and Foundation, part of the Adobe Enterprise Suite. Prior to joining Adobe Systems, Chris served in a variety of product management and alliance strategy roles at PeopleSoft, Inc. and, after PeopleSoft's acquisition, Oracle Corporation. Chris is a graduate of the Head-Royce School in Oakland, California. From 2004 to 2007, Chris served as president of the Head-Royce Alumni Association and a member of the Head-Royce Board of Trustees. In 2007-08, Chris served as a non-trustee member of the Board's Finance Committee. Chris received a B.A. in American studies from Georgetown University and a M.B.A. from the Haas School of Business, University of California at Berkeley. He is married to Laurie van Löben Sels; together they have two sons at CDS, Tjaard ('16) and Soren ('20).

Preschool Admission Age Change

After over a year of discussion with the preschool faculty, we have decided to change the cut-off date for incoming preschoolers. As many of you know, our cut-off date is currently 3 by December 31 (i.e. 2 years, 8 months by August 31 of the child's first year at CDS), which means that some students attend CDS preschool for three years. Starting in the 2009-10 school year, incoming preschoolers will need to be 3 by August 31; CDS will no longer enroll children younger than 3 in our preschool. We will continue to have 3 mixed-age preschool classes.

This change is being driven by our educational program and the best interests of the students. We are finding that preschool at CDS more effectively engages each

student when the range of ages is somewhat smaller, and when students attend for at most two years. By adjusting the birthday cut-off date by four months, teachers will be able to provide more challenges to older preschoolers, some of whom turn five shortly after school starts, while still making the most of the benefits of mixed-age classrooms for all preschoolers. We are confident this change will strengthen the overall preschool experience and improve students' transition to kindergarten.

We chose August 31 as our new cut-off date to match our kindergarten cut-off date, which is 5 by August 31. We've learned through years of experience that children need to be grouped according to all of the following maturities: cognitive, social, physical and emotional. Our experience has shown us that young students placed ahead of their chronological peer group frequently find themselves at a disadvantage later in their development in one way or another.

We know this change will affect families with younger siblings with fall birthdays and acknowledge the challenges inherent in juggling child care and preschool and work schedules. We hope families will understand the need to make this change to improve the school for the long term, and we encourage parents with questions to speak to Aimee Giles, Director of Admission (aimeeg@cds-sf.org or 415-861-5432 x322), Rick or Rebecca, or any of our preschool teachers.

Quilt Prints are Here

If you purchased a quilt print at the Fiesta, please come and pick up your lovely print during the 16th Street Open House tomorrow! Immediately following Friday Coffee and assembly, head over to the second floor of the new building to claim your print. If you need to arrange an additional time to pick up your print, please contact Mary DeNardo at maryd@cds-sf.org. Because the prints are fragile, they will be housed at 16th Street.

Join the Parade!

Each year, a dedicated group of CDS parents, trustees, teachers and staff, and children march in the San Francisco LGBT Pride Parade. This year, the 38th annual parade will be held on Sunday, June 29 along Market Street. Join this year's parade behind the CDS banner and be part of the fun. For more information about joining the CDS contingency or becoming a safety monitor, please contact Carlos Vasquez at xvasquez@aol.com or (415) 564-9734.

Events

End-of-Year Events

Passing the Torch Ceremony

Everyone is invited to the Passing the Torch Ceremony on Thursday, June 12 from 8:30-9:30 a.m. At the ceremony in the yard students from each grade will share words of wisdom and give advice to the incoming classes. Please join us!

Class of 2008 Graduation

The Class of 2008 graduation ceremony will be held next week on Thursday, June 12 in the CDS yard. Graduation will run from 3:45-5 p.m. All parents are invited to attend and bring their children with them; please note that there will be no extended program available that afternoon. **Any child who stays past dismissal must be accompanied by a parent.** For Leaping Lizards only, different arrangements will be communicated via liaisons regarding pick-up as they are the eighth grade class buddies and will be part of the ceremony. In addition, there will be no parking available in the CDS parking lot. Please plan ahead and take public transportation, walk, bike or carpool. We hope you'll join us in celebrating this year's graduating class and all of their achievements!

Extended Program News

Middle School Summer Camp

There are still spots available in this summer's middle school arts camp for students entering grades 5-9. Led by Terry Ashkinos, Christopher Gonzalez-Crane and Melanie Liu, sessions I and II will include a Photography Seminar and a Creative Writing Workshop. Session I runs from June 23 – July 3 (\$540) and session II runs from July 7 – July 18 (\$600). Sign-up forms, including course descriptions, are available at the front desk and on our website. If you have any questions please contact Dan Larson at [danl@c ds-sf.org](mailto:d anl@c ds-sf.org).

PTTA Update

End-of-Year Wrap-Up

This has been a fantastic year for the CDS community. The PTTA leadership goals this year were to develop better communication between the Board of Trustees and parents, and to engage all constituencies in realizing our goals of diversity and inclusion. We have had

tremendous success due in no small part to the 2007-08 PTTA parent leaders: Tanja Beck, Patrick Everett, Sara O'Malley, Laura Pliska, Karen Randig, Michael Silver and Ann van Gelder. These parents dedicated themselves to coordinating liaisons, planning events, co-chairing the Committee on Inclusion and Diversity, recruiting new families, running meetings, disseminating information and helping parent volunteers find the right way to share their talents with all of us. The CDS community is grateful for all you have done to enhance our school.

We expect next year to be equally exciting and productive under the leadership of next year's PTTA parent leaders:

- Robin McClarren, Faculty Appreciation Coordinator
- Sara O'Malley, Parent Involvement Coordinator
- Laura Pliska, President
- Karen Randig, Secretary
- Darya Soto, Diversity Coordinator
- Carlos Vasquez, Classroom Liaison Coordinator

In addition, we will have a Middle School Representative and a Preschool Representative to ensure that parents from all three levels of the school are included. We are close to finalizing a preschool representative but still need a Middle School Representative. If you are interested, please contact Laura Pliska at laura@sfbabyworks.com.

Finally, in order for us to plan for next year, we would appreciate you taking the time to give us feedback on the 2007-08 PTTA meetings by completing a brief survey at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=3pAYtXSTRMVC56oHzMFyeg_3d_3d. A paper copy of the survey can also be found at the front desk.

Have a terrific summer. We look forward to seeing you at the 2008-09 Welcome Picnic on Saturday, September 13!

Upcoming Dates

Monday, June 23 – Thursday, July 3
Summer Camp Session I

Monday, July 7 – Friday, July 18
Summer Camp Session II

Monday, July 21 – Friday, August 1
Summer Camp Session III

Monday, August 4 – Friday, August 15
Summer Camp Session IV

Tuesday, September 2
First day of school

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

Children's Day School

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