



November 15, 2007

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Community-Based Learning

In September of 1998, the Head of Children's Day School and the Chair of the Board wrote a 21-page paper on the present and future of the school. It opens with this sentence: "Children's Day School begins its third year as an independent, non-profit institution positioned to become an important and recognized model of excellence within the San Francisco educational community." The paper makes it clear that the founders were motivated by the idea of creating a different kind of school, not just another private school.

The paper is laced with phrases such as "...movement toward a philosophy of early childhood and elementary education which is distinctive to Children's Day School;" "...very rare opportunity that has been given us to create a better kind of school for children and for the community it serves;" "...the moral imperative to create and support new models of education to serve diverse communities and bridge cultural, linguistic and socio-economic differences;" "child-centered, activity-based...academic concerns balanced with a focus on social and moral development of children;" "diversity, social justice and participation in the community;" "belief in the transformative power of education;" and "the value to children of making community concerns their own."

Although these words came from the mouths of Sandra Luna and Bob Curley, they expressed the hopes, dreams and deeds of hundreds of people who had been working since 1983 to build Children's Day School. Some of those people are still with the school today, not just with us in spirit. Their activity and conversations still inform who we are and what we do. By 1998 such activity and thousands and thousands of conversations containing words like these swirled like a nebulous around a gravitational center which became the school's genius. Today that nebulous has become a bright star.

This genius, of course, is being expressed daily and most delightfully in the activity, self-expression, collaboration, flexibility and confidence of our children. The milieu in which we all swirl is a culture, and it is this culture with so many expressions that is the delivery system of the CDS education.

At assembly last week the first grade put on a brilliant performance about reading. Their message, wonderfully conceived and exquisitely executed and delivered, was that we can read many things. We read words. We also read pictures, faces, stars, music and brail.

We read the school culture in our children, in how they treat one another, in how enthusiastic they are about learning, in how comfortable they are just being themselves and becoming all they can be. We read the school in our

Hot Dates

Friday, November 16
8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly
Kindergarten class presenting
9-10:30 a.m.
K-8 tour for CDS parents
9-10 a.m.
PTTA open planning meeting

Saturday, November 17
SSAT administered for eighth graders

Tuesday, November 20
4:30-6 p.m.
Committee on Inclusion and
Diversity Meeting
Faculty lounge
Make Up Photo Day

Wednesday, November 21
Grandparents & Special Friends Day
Noon dismissal
No extended program

Thursday, November 22 & Friday,
November 23
Thanksgiving break
No school
No extended program



Thank You!

- To all the volunteers who helped with admission related events this past week: Ray Cendana, Tina Corse, Amy Hecht, Kristin Henry, Barbara Kirkwood, Tina Leung, Jeanette Layden, Beth Mazie, Nerijs Mercado, Chitra Nayak, Roger Nys, Andrea Ow, Melanie Piech, Beth Porter, Duane Rivera, Janette Neves Rivera, Louis Schump, Elizabeth Seimarco, Michael Silver, Darya Soto, Ann Van Gelder, Carlos Vasquez and Melanie Wise.
- To Dee Dee Schroeder and Greg Mitchell for donating a laptop bag to the IT department.

middle school students: how responsible they are for each other as well as their own education, how they pursue high school under their own head of steam, pursuing their visions of what they want to do with themselves and how the eighth graders perform at graduation. We read the school in our graduates, in the stories about how they continue to be fearless learners in high school. We have done an outstanding job of educating them. They are prepared not just for high school but for life.

We can read the culture in how easily the school formed around the swirling issues of diversity and inclusion to take shape in the new Committee on Inclusion and Diversity. It is wonderful to see how quickly and gracefully our curriculum has moved out into the community, under the leadership of people like Michael Gast last year and Vanessa Lyons this year.

Sandra and Bob did not create the school's genius, they were just stewards of it. Though they each had their own personal reasons for becoming involved in this mission, it was their stewardship which moved the school toward greatness. The same is true for us today. Each of us has our own personal reasons for becoming involved in Children's Day School, and at the same time each of us has that same responsibility for perpetuating, building and growing the CDS genius and allowing new expressions of that genius to flourish. The ultimate goal of striving to be true to that genius is to make CDS a stronger educational institution in San Francisco—a beacon of education two and three generations from now.

The last sentence of the first paragraph of that 21-page paper says that the purpose of the paper is to “initiate

dialogue about the future of the school that considers the challenges we face within the context of a broader vision of what Children's Day School is and might become.” That is more or less my purpose in writing what I just wrote; i.e. to continue the dialogue at all levels and departments of the school about who we are and where we are going.

Our job in planning the future is to remember that each of us, while here for ourselves and for the children in our care, are also here as stewards of a vision. We are on a mission to continue the creation of an educational institution which is “an important and recognized model of greatness within the San Francisco community.”

Transforming St. Joseph's Hall

Another Foundation Update

We're happy to report that CDS received a \$50,000 grant last week from The Herbst Foundation to help fund the renovation of St. Joseph's Hall. Also, in early December the school will host a site visit with trustees from the Mary A. Crocker Trust. We hope to hear from them by the end of the year. Foundations have already contributed over \$200,000 to the *Building Our Future* capital campaign, and we hope to have more good news to report soon. If you have any questions, please contact Marion Quinones at 861-5432 x323.

From the Classrooms

Community Event Night

Middle school students and their parents are invited to a screening of the movie *Erin Brockovich* at the Boys & Girls Club tomorrow evening from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Hosted by the sixth grade class, the event includes free food—make your own tacos and burritos! Middle school students have been studying water pollution and chose this movie to continue their discussions. See you there!

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.

School Wish List

- The IT department is currently looking for used laptop bags as well as desktop and laptop computers (both PC's and Apple computers). PC's should have a processor running at 2GHz or higher (it doesn't matter whether it is AMD or Intel), and Apples should have at least a PowerPC processor running at 2GHz or higher. PC's should be running a legitimate licensed version of Windows XP Pro, and Macs should be running a legitimate licensed version of OS-X, and should be provided with (wherever possible) their installation disks. if you have any of the above to donate, please contact Terry Hall at terryh@cds-sf.org. Thank you!

Middle School Dance

Mark your calendars for the middle school dance to be held on Friday, December 7 from 7-10 p.m. at the Boys & Girls Club. Students in grades 6-8 are invited to attend and will be joined by middle school students from The Synergy School and The San Francisco School. If you have any questions, please contact Christopher Gonzalez-Crane at 861-5432 x358.

From the Office

Free Pizza Lunch

Hurrah for the Annual Fund! We're happy to report that two thirds of CDS families have made time in their busy lives to make a gift or pledge to the CDS Annual Fund. Thank you, fellow CDS parents.

We're also happy to announce that the Leaping Lizard class has reached 100% participation and will receive the free pizza lunch. Congratulations to Leaping Lizard families for being early Annual Fund leaders, and to Jim Reynolds for a job well done as class captain. Several other classes are closing in on 100% participation: first grade (89%), Candy's kindergarten class (75%) and Starfish (74%). Strong participation from all classes makes a big difference when the school approaches outside donors such as foundations and corporations. Please make a pledge or gift if you haven't already and keep the annual fund spirit and energy strong.

COID Admission Subcommittee

The Admission and Outreach subcommittee of the Committee on Inclusion and Diversity (COID) will meet on Tuesday, November 27 at 4:30 p.m. in the faculty lounge. We will be working on developing strategies for reaching a broader group of prospective families as part of the CDS admission efforts. What works? What doesn't? What else should we be doing? Bring your ideas—everyone is welcome to participate. If you have any questions, please contact Aimee Giles at 861-5432 x322 or aimeeg@cds-sf.org. We hope to see you there.

K-8 Tour (for CDS Parents)

Curious to see what's going on in our K-8 classrooms? After coffee and the assembly tomorrow, join Rebecca Kroll and Aimee Giles on a CDS-parents-only tour of our K-8 classes from 9-10:30 a.m. We'll observe K-3 classes in action, tour the middle school classrooms (4th-8th grade students will be off-site at a performance) and speak with teachers about their curriculum. This is an excellent opportunity for you to see many of our classes at work and to ask questions. No RSVP is necessary – we hope you join us.

Photo Proofs

Photo proofs from Mugshots have arrived this week and were sent home via backpack. Orders can be returned to the school by Wednesday, November 21 or placed online without any deadline.

Make up photo day is scheduled for Tuesday, November 20. There is no charge if your child missed getting their picture taken last month. There is a \$10 fee for re-shoots made payable to Mugshots Photography. Contact Ryan Gordon at ryang@cds-sf.org if you have any questions.

Conference Childcare

Please note that childcare will be available during your parent-teacher conference time slot on Thursday, November 29 and Friday, November 30.

Events

Grandparents & Special Friends Day

Our annual Grandparents and Special Friends Day will be held on Wednesday, November 21 from 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m. Guests are invited to enjoy continental breakfast in the yard (weather permitting), spend time in the classrooms and attend a musical assembly at 11:30. Dismissal for all students will be at noon, following the assembly, and will take place in the classrooms and at double doors. Preschool pick up will take place at noon at the preschool gate and will be walk-in only. Please note that if you'd like your grandparent or special friend to pick up your child, you need to send in an authorization note before Wednesday, November 21.

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?

- Laura Pliska, President, (415) 641-5116 or laura@sfbabyworks.com
- Patrick Everett, Classroom Liaison Coordinator, (415) 609-4055 or patrick@everettnilsson.com
- Ann Van Gelder, Community Outreach Coordinator, (415) 647-8561 or anndirkg@hotmail.com
- Michael Silver, Diversity Coordinator, (415) 203-0776 or silvermas@aol.com
- Sara O'Malley, Parent Involvement Coordinator, (415) 348-8841 or sara@omalleyhylton.com
- Karen Randig, Secretary, (415) 824-1784 or krandig@msn.com
- Tanja Beck, Middle School Representative, (415) 377-8756 or tbeck@zephyrsf.com
- Robyn Moss, Teacher Representative, (415)-861-5432 x389 or robynm@cds-sf.org

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday, November 27
4:30 p.m.

COVID Admission Subcommittee Meeting
All parents are invited to attend
Faculty lounge

Thursday, November 29 & Friday, November 30

Parent-teacher conferences
No school
No extended program

Thursday, December 6

7-9 p.m.

Parent Education Night and Middle School Forum

Friday, December 7

7-10 p.m.

Middle School Dance for students in grades 6-8
Boys & Girls Club

Wednesday, December 19

11 a.m.

Winter Performance
Noon dismissal
Extended program available

Thursday, December 20 – Friday, December 21

Winter vacation
No school
Extended program available

Monday, December 24 – Tuesday, January 1

Winter vacation
No school
No extended program

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

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