



January 29, 2009

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### Planting the Seeds

The closing paragraph of Till Kalleem's ('10) recent essay about *The Catcher in the Rye*, titled "Holden and Philosophy," goes like this:

Holden and Plato both have dualistic views about the world. Holden thinks you are either phony or true, and Plato thinks reality is either an unchanging Form (concept) or a changing appearance (experience). But I don't think that things are either black or white. I do think that there is grey. Things aren't just perfect or imperfect. There is no one definition of beautiful. When different people access the world of the Forms in their mind, they will see different "perfects" of beautiful. Some things just can't be defined in one way. I don't see how the world of the forms works as a model for how reality should be because there can never be a perfect reality for all experiences, all people and all time periods. As far as Holden goes, kids can be phony and sometimes adults can be brutally honest. So I really don't agree with Holden's ideas of children and adults. I don't think that kids are perfect and true and do things just because they want to. I know lots of kids around second grade who try to impress others for respect. They do things they normally would not do if no one was watching, just like adults. But I do agree that most adults have to be phony quite often in order to get by in life. I've had the experience when an adult is smiling in a situation that really is not the situation for smiling, and it annoys me. But I don't let it bother me. Adults might run through the rye and fall off the cliff but some of them hang on for dear life.

Most of us reading this would agree: Wow, Till can compare, make distinctions, read and use big words correctly, communicate with great authors and philosophers, and has important thoughts that are both age appropriate and valuable for people of all ages. Will Till major in philosophy? We don't know. She is a seventh grader. We do know that important seeds planted long ago are obviously taking root.

The Manchesters tell me that Jett ('19) has blossomed in just four months of CDS, saying things like "Look, Mommy, this is *similar* to that." (In addition to, "S.T.O.P. That spells stop.") Is Jett ready for kindergarten? Not at all. Jett just turned 4 seven days ago. Whatever challenges he will face, though, it looks like he has the equipment to work on the challenge.

Education is funny business. We plant seeds, but we don't always know what will happen with them. Sometimes they sprout like plants in a rainforest. Sometimes we see the blossoming of potential we didn't even know was there,

### Hot Dates

Friday, January 30

8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly

Eighth grade presenting

Wednesday, February 4

2008 taxes due for sliding scale  
tuition applications

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



## Thank You!

- To Julie and Al Stoll, Meaza Admasu and Fasil Fikreab, and Rachel Yeaman for supplying Friday coffee sustenance. Rachel, Meaza and Fasil even braved the wintery rain last week—thank you!

like flowers in Death Valley. We CDS parents and teachers are facilitating the growth of mental capacity, building neural networks that will eventually result in writing, reading, websites, teaching credentials and the discovery of life on Mars—just as the founders of our country were establishing structures, disciplines and dreams that would eventually create a better world.

How do we know we are tracking toward academic greatness? The hard measures don't tell us the most important things. Decades of research shows that there is no correlation between test scores and grades on the one hand, and any measure of adult effectiveness on the other. SAT scores only mildly predict grades freshman year in college. Moreover, progress through the academic curriculum of elementary school is by no means a straight line progression. One student is reading quite fluently, but having trouble remembering what she reads. Another reads very haltingly and feels stupid about it, but remembers and can talk very articulately about what he reads. They will both learn to read.

At our first Admission Open House this year, when asked about the caliber of the academics at CDS, Izzy Miller ('09) found himself telling a roomful of parents, "When I came here in third grade, I sucked at math and I was afraid of it, but my teachers helped me struggle with it and now I am taking algebra and I love it." When asked how well prepared CDS students are for high school, Teija Corse ('06) said, "CDS taught me to find the fun in a challenge and to love learning and the feeling of working it out and gaining understanding. Sometimes the work is hard in high school, but I just work harder. I guess I just like working hard." (Pretty self-possessed and articulate, too, don't you think?)

This puts quite a different spin on what we at CDS mean by "academic preparation." It wasn't that Teija had already learned at CDS everything they teach at Lick-Wilmerding. Rather, CDS instilled in her an attitude of perseverance which (along with a good foundation in reading, writing and arithmetic) blossomed into an A

student at Lick.

When we measure educational success by current levels of academic achievement, we are like Plato's prisoners in the cave looking at two dimensional shadows and taking them for reality. But I agree with Till's criticism of Plato that Authenticity, Integrity and Courage are rarely perfectly manifest in human behavior. We all need to move forward with courage to find our authentic selves—messy selves in an imperfect world.

*Please note that Till's entire essay is attached to the Weekly.*

## From the Classrooms

### Read-a-Thon Report Back

Last Saturday's "Reading is Your Passport to the World" read-a-thon was a huge success! 17 CDS elementary students participated, along with 30 Coro high school juniors (hailing from schools around the Bay Area). CDS students read with two different high school students over the course of the two-hour read-a-thon, choosing books about different cultures and countries around the world. After reading, they mapped their books on a large world map and created artistic "passports" together.

You can see pictures of the readers on Smugmug under "All School Events" at [http://cds.smugmug.com/gallery/7197152\\_K7eR6#P-I-15](http://cds.smugmug.com/gallery/7197152_K7eR6#P-I-15).

### First Semester Progress Reports

Please see the attached memo for more detailed information on changes to our progress reports this year. Currently we're in the middle of implementing a new technological solution for reporting, but we're not 100% there yet. Our goal is to set up an encrypted web page that you can log onto with a secure password where you can download and read your child's report. Since this is not in place yet, we will be emailing pdf's of

## 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](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cdscommunity).

## School Wish List

- The Country Fair needs your lemons! If you have extra lemons in your yard to share, bring them in and drop them off at the front desk. Soon, you'll be drinking fresh lemonade while watching the sheep get shorn at this year's Country Fair.

preK-4 reports to families who would like to receive them electronically. If you would NOT like to receive your preK-4 report via e-mail, please call or e-mail Kerry Parker at [kerry@cds-sf.org](mailto:kerry@cds-sf.org) or 861-5432 x312. If you do not have an e-mail address on file with CDS, a paper report will be sent to you automatically.

## Middle School Report Update

In the attached memo regarding progress reports, we reported that middle school progress reports would be sent home with children on Friday. Unfortunately, our efforts have been stymied by bugs in our new grading software and we've decided to distribute reports to your children on Tuesday.

We apologize for this delay; we realize you are eager to read about your child's progress and we are eager to communicate progress to you. We appreciate your patience and understanding while we upgrade our communication capabilities.

## From the Office

### Parent-teacher Conferences

Please note that the last day to sign up for parent-teacher conferences on the "Pick-a-Time" website (<https://www.pickatime.com/client?ven=11601461>) is Sunday, February 1.

### Reenrollment Process

Reenrollment contracts for families who have not applied for sliding scale tuition for the 2009-10 school year will be mailed home Friday, February 6. You will have one week to return the reenrollment contract with a 10% reservation deposit (due Friday, February 13).

The reenrollment process for families who have applied for sliding scale tuition is slightly different. The Access and Affordability Committee makes sliding scale tuition

decisions for returning CDS families during the month of February. Returning families who complete their sliding scale tuition applications on time will receive their reenrollment contracts with a sliding scale tuition amount during the month of February on a rolling basis as decisions are made. You will have one week to return the reenrollment contract with the 10% reservation deposit. At the end of February, the Committee will turn to making sliding scale tuition decisions for new applicants to the school and any late applying CDS families.

Questions? Contact Donna Shibata, Director of Finance & Operations, at [donnas@cds-sf.org](mailto:donnas@cds-sf.org) or 415-861-5432 x314.

## First Day of School, 2009-10

The first day of the 2009-10 school year will be Wednesday, September 2, 2009. Please reserve Monday and Tuesday, August 31 and September 1, for conferences and meetings with your child/ren's teachers.

We are in the process of working out other calendar dates for next year and will have a preliminary calendar with 2009-10 vacation dates by early spring.

## Sliding Scale Tuition

While the official deadline for applying for sliding scale tuition for 2009-10 has passed, if you have concerns about being able to afford to return to CDS next year, PLEASE consider applying for sliding scale tuition. Although the school accepts requests for emergency sliding scale tuition year-round, the Access and Affordability Committee will make 2009-10 sliding scale decisions for returning CDS families on a first

## Go Bulldogs!

### Basketball Scores

January 21, CDS vs. Live Oak  
CDS 29, LO 8

January 27, CDS vs. Lycee Francais  
CDS 31, LF 29

### Basketball Calendar

Thursday, January 29, 4:10 p.m.  
Presidio Hill, Boys & Girls Club

Tuesday, February 3, 4:10 p.m.  
Synergy, Boys & Girls Club

priority basis during the month of February. At the end of February, the Committee will turn to making sliding scale tuition decisions for new applicants to the school and any late applying CDS families.

If you've already applied for sliding scale tuition for 2009-10, don't forget to submit your signed 2008 federal income tax return, including all W-2s, 1099s and schedules, to the business office by Wednesday, February 4, 2009. If you submit earlier tax returns or W-2 forms only, your application will be considered incomplete. Unfortunately the Access and Affordability Committee cannot consider incomplete applications.

Questions? Contact Donna Shibata, Director of Finance and Operations, at 861-5432 x314 or [donnas@cds-sf.org](mailto:donnas@cds-sf.org).

## Family Farmers Needed

We're getting close to full farm coverage but still need a few more family farmers to cover the dates listed below. All you need to do is sign up with Misty Cummings at [mistyc@cds-sf.org](mailto:mistyc@cds-sf.org) or 861-5432 x321 and you'll be trained and ready to tend the farm and garden.

- April 6-10
- August 17-21, 31
- September 1, 7

## Events

### Country Fair Meeting

Come one, come all to the first Country Fair planning meeting of the year on Friday, January 30 at 9 a.m. All are invited to attend and help plan this fun annual event.

## Extended Program News

### February Vacation Camp

Please note the attached registration form for the February vacation camp, which runs February 17-20. Registration forms are due by Wednesday, February 11.

## Upcoming Dates

### Friday, February 6

Parent-teacher conferences

No school

Extended program camp available

### Monday, February 16

President's Day observed

No school; no extended program

### Tuesday, February 17 – Friday, February 20

February vacation

No school; extended program available

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

### Children's Day School

333 Dolores Street

San Francisco, CA 94110

415-861-5432 (ph)

415-861-5419 (fax)

[www.cds-sf.org](http://www.cds-sf.org)

Editor: Mary DeNardo, [cdsweekly@cds-sf.org](mailto:cdsweekly@cds-sf.org)

Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

Contact Mary to receive the Weekly via e-mail