



November 6, 2008

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### The Secret Sauce of Great Teaching

Parents and teachers alike often ask me, 'How can we teach our children to write?' This is a question not only about writing but also about teaching. Teaching is always a mystery. It is never exactly clear how one person can teach another. Randy Bomer, my colleague at Teachers College, points out that this is especially true if we are teaching someone to do something. We cannot really 'give' a child the ability to talk, swim, sing, or to write because ultimately it is the other person (in this instance, the child) who must do the talking, swimming, singing, or writing. In the end, our influence will inevitably be indirect. So it is with writing; all we can do is to create the conditions in which children can learn to write.

—Lucy Calkins, *Raising Lifelong Learners*

At the core of the educational business is this paradox: parents and teachers strive mightily to get something to happen which only the child can make happen. Education is the intricate art of getting others to do things on their own, almost without them knowing that you are causing it.

At our Curriculum Open House last Wednesday night, CDS teachers demonstrated their skills. In classrooms throughout St. Joseph's Hall, teachers teamed up in pairs to demonstrate centers or activities that are so engaging kids can't "help" but learn. The report back from our visitors and our own parents is that the demonstrations were uniformly impressive. In Barbara and Celia's presentation, for example, one of the centers challenged students (in this case adults) to bridge a six-inch river with cuisenaire rods—the longest rod being just four inches. One visitor was so proud of the math/balance/gravity/physics solution he had created that at the end of the session he went out into the hallway to find his wife so he could show her. It seems the lessons were challenging even for adults.

This is how we must teach if we want to turn out students who possess a high degree of mastery *and* still love to do their work. These ingredients have to be cooked up in a special sauce, however. The culture of the educational environment has to be one where it is okay to be your own unique, weird self, so that you don't have to pour the usual amount of psychic energy into measuring up, being afraid or wondering if anyone will like you.

The crowning glory of the whole evening, therefore, was the panel discussion by our alumni and eighth graders who spoke about their experiences as CDS students and how well-prepared they were for high school. For nearly two hours they answered dozens of questions from prospective parents such as:

### Hot Dates

Friday, November 7  
8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly  
First grade (Barbara) presenting

Monday, November 10 &  
Tuesday, November 11

Parent-teacher conferences  
Extended program camp available

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



## Thank You!

- To all who've donated supplies to the after school program: Susi Alexander, Susan Chastain, Danielle Conrad, Poppea Dorsam, Mickie Kerr, Carlos Vasquez, Olivia Starr and Katie Hernandez. The response has been overwhelming and incredibly helpful!
- To another great group of admission tour volunteers: Ana Brubaker, Mary Dennis, Amy Hecht, Kristin Henry, Todd Hosfelt, Paige Lang, Anisha Mason, Lauren Schwartz and Ann Van Gelder.
- To admission volunteers for helping with last week's Curriculum Open House, one of our biggest admission events ever (over 130 attendees): Mary Dennis, Zahra Ghayour-Kelly, Kristin and Andrew Henry, Justine Juson, Tina Leung, Carlene Lim, Beth Mazie, Nerius Mercado, Paul Moreno, Travis Pacoe, Beth Porter, Elizabeth Seirmarco, Darya Soto, Julie and Al Stoll, Ann Van Gelder, Carlos Vasquez and Rachel Yeaman.
- To Luma Dahlbacka, Alycia Freeman, Cristina Hernandez, Marion Quinones and Beau Timken for providing coffee and baked goods at last week's Friday morning coffee.
- To Angie Jolie for taking pictures at our Halloween Parade and sharing them with our Communications Office. Check them out at the CDS smugmug website (linked to from our new homepage).

Q: Close your eyes and imagine yourself in high school (if you are not already there). How can you tell the CDS students from the others?"

Izzy Miller ('09): The CDS students are the ones with their hands up, and they are not just giving answers, they are asking good questions, and not just that, they might be taking a subject to a deeper level, or elaborating on someone else's answer.

Q: For those of you who have gone on to high school, how do you wish CDS had prepared you better?

Nancy Martinez ('07): At first I was afraid I wouldn't be prepared for a big high school. I was really shy when I came here in sixth grade. But I learned how to speak up and stand up for myself. I learned how to be a friend. We all became friends and learned how to work things out. I was worried about going on to a big school, and it was

hard at first, but what I learned at CDS made me strong.

Q: What's your fondest memory of CDS?

Teija Corse ('06): My fondest memory is a teacher.

Some highlights from other responses include:

"I love the work in high school. I'm supposed to love school. I've loved it all my life. I got it from CDS."

"I was not good at math when I came here in the third grade. Now I am good at math and I'm looking forward to more algebra in high school."

"I learned to love learning."

"CDS helped me voice my opinion."

"People always included me."

Their self-possession, bright-eyed confidence, and relaxed, thoughtful answers to so many questions made us all—even those of us who are not surprised—drop our jaws in wonder. The students demonstrated knowledge of physics, philosophy, algebra and Shakespeare; moreover, they possessed self-knowledge. On his way out, one parent said to another: "Wow these kids are going to change the world." Having overheard them, I said, "That's the idea."

## From the Office

### SPEAK

Children's Day School is a participating member in SPEAK, a coalition of San Francisco K-8 schools that have joined together to enhance parent education. All parents are invited to SPEAK's *free* fall talk titled "Successful Kids: Redefining Goals" on Wednesday, November 19 from 9-10:30 a.m. at the Greek Orthodox Annunciation Cathedral at 245 Valencia Street (at 15<sup>th</sup> Street). The event will include three distinguished panelists who'll discuss redefining measures of success beyond just test scores and grades to encompass character, well-being, emotional intelligence, authenticity and accomplishment. For additional details, please see the attached flyer, contact Rebecca Kroll at [rebeccak@cds-sf.org](mailto:rebeccak@cds-sf.org) or 861-5432 x311, or go to [www.challengesuccess.org](http://www.challengesuccess.org).

## School Wish List

- The after school Building Club needs nails, popsicle sticks, pvc piping of any length, feathers, yarn, packing supplies, paper towel/toilet rolls and small pieces of wood. If you have any of the above items to donate, please drop them off at school. Thank you.

## Family Farmers Needed

Want to learn more about our beloved chickens and sheep and take home farm fresh eggs for Sunday breakfast? Simply sign up to be a family farmer 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 in no time. The following dates are available for future family farmers:

- December 27-29
- January 24-25
- February 6, 14-15, 20-22
- March 9
- April 4-12
- June 11-12, 15-17

## Welcome Back, Diane!

We are thrilled to announce that Diane Larrabee is back in San Francisco (her move to NYC didn't work out as planned), and returned to work at CDS this week. Please help us welcome Diane back to CDS.

## Events

### Grandparents & Special Friends Day

Invitations were mailed this week to all grandparents and special friends for our annual Grandparents and Special Friends Day on Wednesday, November 26 from 10:15 a.m. to 12 noon. If your grandparent or special friend has not received an invitation, please check with Mary in the Development Office ([maryd@cds-sf.org](mailto:maryd@cds-sf.org)) to make sure that we have the correct information and address on file for them.

Guests are invited to gather in the yard (weather permitting) for coffee and a short presentation, 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 26.

## Extended Program News

### Sign-Out News

Please help us keep students safe and track after school usage by signing your child out every day. CDS requires the signature of a guardian or authorized pick-up person every time a student departs campus. Even if you were not planning on having your child in after school, the student must be signed out from after school at the front desk if he or she was not signed out during dismissal at double doors.

### November Camp

Space is still available for full or half-day care during the November 10 and 11 parent-teacher conferences. Registration forms are available at the front desk and on the CDS website. If you have questions, please contact Dan Larson at [danl@cds-sf.org](mailto:danl@cds-sf.org).

## PTTA Update

### Wraps & Greens

Thank you to all the families who supported the Wraps & Greens Sale benefitting the faculty holiday gift fund. The sale is now complete and orders will be arriving in early December. The PTTA will let you know when to pick up your orders for those arriving at the school. If you missed the sale but still want to contribute directly to the faculty holiday gift fund, you can drop off a check payable to "Children's Day School" with the subject line "Faculty Holiday Gift Fund." Thanks for your support of the wonderful teachers and staff.

## Go Bulldogs!

### Co-ed Volleyball Scores

November 4, CDS vs. SF Friends School

Game 1: CDS 25, SFF 23

Game 2: CDS 25, SFF 19

## 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.

We're always looking for additional volunteers—if you're willing to sign up to bring morning sustenance, please contact Friday morning coffee coordinators Wendy Bokhorst-Heng at [wdbheng@gmail.com](mailto:wdbheng@gmail.com), or Angie Jolie at [ajolie@morillojolie.net](mailto:ajolie@morillojolie.net).

### PTTA Questions or Ideas?

- General e-mail, [CDSPTTA@yahoo.com](mailto:CDSPTTA@yahoo.com)
- Laura Pliska, President, (415) 641-5116 or [laura@sfbabyworks.com](mailto:laura@sfbabyworks.com)
- Robin McClarren, Faculty Appreciation Coordinator, (415) 235-0295 or [robinmcc@speakeasy.net](mailto:robinmcc@speakeasy.net)
- Sara O'Malley, Parent Involvement Coordinator, (415) 348-8841 or [sara@omalleyhylton.com](mailto:sara@omalleyhylton.com)
- Karen Randig, Secretary, (415) 824-1784 or [krandig@msn.com](mailto:krandig@msn.com)
- Andrea Reynolds, Preschool Representative, (415) 860-7556 or [andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net](mailto:andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net)
- Darya Soto, Diversity Coordinator, (415) 812-1715 or [daryasoto@yahoo.com](mailto:daryasoto@yahoo.com)
- Carlos Vasquez, Classroom Liaison Coordinator, (415) 987-6501 or [xcvasquez@aol.com](mailto:xcvasquez@aol.com)

## Upcoming Dates

**Tuesday, November 18**

5:30-7 p.m.

PTTA meeting: The Inclusive CDS Community

**Wednesday, November 19**

9-10:30 a.m.

SPEAK talk: "Successful Kids: Redefining Goals"  
Greek Orthodox Annunciation Cathedral  
245 Valencia Street at 15<sup>th</sup> Street

**Saturday, November 22**

SSAT administered at CDS for eighth graders

**Wednesday, November 26**

Grandparents & Special Friends Day

Noon dismissal

No extended program

**Thursday, November 27 & Friday, November 28**

Thanksgiving vacation

No school

No extended program

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

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Contact Mary to receive the Weekly via e-mail

**Speak** is a coalition of San Francisco K-8 Schools that have joined together to enhance parent education. Our goal: Enrich the education and learning experience for our families, our children and our communities.

**FALL**  
2008

# Speak

SPEAKERS FOR PARENTS EDUCATORS AND KNOWLEDGE

## Participating Schools

Brandeis Hillel Day School  
Cathedral School for Boys  
Children's Day School  
The Hamlin School  
Katherine Delmar Burke School  
Live Oak School  
Presidio Hill School  
San Francisco Day School  
San Francisco Friends School  
The San Francisco School

## Successful Kids: Redefining Goals

Today we live in a high-pressure, high-stakes environment that is pre-occupied with the easily observable measures of success, such as grades, trophies, and prestigious school admissions. While often romanticized as a simple and carefree time, childhood and adolescence are, in fact, a time of intensive growth and development and this narrow vision of success often impedes healthy maturation. As a result, we see an unacceptably high level of impairment among our children, even among those seen as "successful." Our distinguished panel will argue that success is complex, and that character, well-being, emotional intelligence, authenticity, and accomplishment are all necessary components of success. They will present the research data and outline how parents can reassess their view of success and make choices that support their children's healthy development. **Our Featured Speakers:**



**Jim Lobdell**, M.A., is an educational consultant and co-founded

Teachers' Curriculum Institute, widely regarded as the nation's most innovative publisher of K-12 social studies curriculum. He authored several teaching methodology books, including *Bring Learning Alive! Engaging All Learners in the Diverse Classroom* and advised school districts nationwide on teacher-training and site-based reform.



**Madeline Levine**, Ph.D., is a psychologist with over 25 years of

experience and is the author of the New York Times best-selling book, *The Price of Privilege: How Parental Pressure and Material Advantage are Creating a Generation of Materialistic and Unhappy Kids*, and two books on child development and the media: *Viewing Violence* and *See No Evil*. Dr. Levine is regularly featured on national media, including such programs as The Early Show, The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer and National Public Radio.



**Denise Clark Pope**, Ph.D., has taught for the past 8 years at the Stanford

University School of Education. She directs SOS: Stressed-Out Students project, a research and intervention effort to help K-12 schools counter the causes of academic stress. She lectures nationally and has appeared on The Today Show, CNN and other national media. Her book, *"Doing School": How We Are Creating a Generation of Stressed Out, Materialistic, and Miseducated Students* received the Notable Book in Education by the American School Board Journal.

**Free** and open to all parents and educators

**Wednesday**  
**November 19**  
**9am**

at the Hall of the Greek Orthodox Annunciation Cathedral  
245 Valencia Street  
@15th, San Francisco

Plus the short film  
**Slipping Behind**  
by filmmakers Vicki Abeles and Julie McDonald

An in-depth profile of American children and the challenges they face "Slipping Behind" asks the question "are we preparing our children to lead meaningful, productive lives?" The filmmakers take this question to top experts in education, economics history, public health and psychology as well as offering an intimate look at real families.

**Coming on**  
**March 23, 2009**

**Michael Gurian** author of the New York Times bestseller *Nurture the Nature*, and co-founder of the Gurian Institute talks about the latest brain research in child and adolescent development and the tools parents need to uncover their child's core nature: **Nurture the Nature of Children**