



November 20, 2008

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Steady As She Goes

The question of the ultimate size of Children's Day School has been up for discussion this fall and was one of the main topics for consideration at the recent Board Retreat on November 8.

In a variety of ways this question has been up for discussion since 1996 when the school embarked on its voyage of creating an elementary and middle school based on the educational principles of a thriving CDS preschool. As the quality of the upper grade faculty and program became more and more obvious in the last five years, the challenges of space became more and more pronounced. Thanks to the brilliant dedication of a dream-team of space finders: architects, developers, builders, fundraisers, financial wizards and real estate people, in the last five years we have met these challenges with 3,600 square feet of bungalow space for the preschool, and in the last 10 months the acquisition of 16th Street which allowed us to devote two classrooms to each of our K-2 classes and give the middle school a beautiful home in St. Joseph's Hall.

Now that we have two sections of kindergarten, first and second grades, the trustees addressed the question again: are we charting a course toward a two section school? Or, will we continue to let natural attrition reduce class size so that the upper grades only need one classroom? Also, what about our immediate needs? If there are two sections of third grade next year, where will we put them? Is the current location of the music room, the Spanish room, the library permanent? What about additional space for art, environmental education? What about outdoor play space? And so on.

The day-long discussion produced important results. Our current course of having two sections in K, 1 and 2 and one section in 3 through 8 is uncertain. To plan based on an enrollment model which counts on families leaving the school is to work against ourselves. We are striving to deliver a quality of education which is irresistible—where the needs of each child are met and our graduates go on to great high schools and confidently thrive there. Furthermore, a school with two sections of each grade has some advantages for the quality of education, and a larger school gives us some economies of scale which can make it easier for us to fulfill our mission.

Perhaps more importantly, the retreat made it clear that addressing the challenges of the present and the vision for the future are not mutually exclusive, but indeed mutually supportive. While the first priority is to focus on our present needs, addressing these needs is the next step in exploring the feasibility of a two section school.

We have a lot to work with in addressing our immediate needs. We are only

Hot Dates

Thursday, November 20
Make-up photo day

Friday, November 21
8:30 a.m.
Friday assembly
Kindergarten (Jen) presenting
9-11 a.m.

K-8 classroom tour for CDS parents

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

Wednesday, December 3
4:30-6 p.m.
Fiesta volunteer meeting
2nd floor, 16th Street building



Thank You!

- To Lisa Cottle and Matt Biggar for bringing coffee and breakfast goodies to Friday morning coffee.
- To admission tour volunteers for leading tours with prospective parents: Ana Brubaker, Amanda Chapman, Zahra Ghayour-Kelly, Amy Hecht, Todd Hosfelt, Anisha Mason, Roger Nys, Kristen Pena, Jason Perkins, Louis Schump, Ann Van Gelder, Carlos Vasquez and Tessa Wilcox.
- To Barbara's first grade families for providing a wonderful array of breakfast treats at last week's faculty breakfast.
- To Tanja and Vivien Beck for attending the Clarendon Middle School fair and enthusiastically recruiting prospective middle school applicants.

beginning to maximize the 6,000 square feet in I6th Street. There are many possibilities for creative uses of this space. Many possibilities also arise when we consider the ultimate fate of our bungalow classrooms. In addition, what is the best use of the Boys & Girls Club? What about other neighboring institutions? As we investigate these opportunities we will not only be addressing present needs but also exploring the feasibility of a two section school.

Leading up to the Board Retreat were three years of intense discussion, both informal and formal, among teachers, administrators, parents and trustees. At the retreat, the Board considered many aspects of the question including the effect of school size on the culture of the school to our ability to deliver programmatic excellence, individualization, economic and racial diversity, to economies of scale and faculty compensation, to access and our ability to ride out a recession. We considered a range of concerns, from the student/teacher ratio to the student/animal ratio, over forty items in all.

There are still many unknowns, concerns to be addressed and contingencies to be investigated. The location and appropriateness of reasonably priced space will, of course, always be a critical question. What the trustees have done as stewards of the long term health of the school—the school a generation from now—is to encourage us to think big as we address our immediate needs. We have many exciting things to talk about, and there will be many opportunities for each of us to get involved in helping to create the future of the school. That's the most exciting thing of all.

From the Office

Family Farmers Needed

Thank you to all who have signed up to be a family farmer. The dates below are still available. You'll see summer dates and fall dates; we're scheduling far in advance so that family farmers can be trained before Misty goes on maternity leave. To sign up for dates and/or be trained, contact Misty Cummings at mistyc@cds-sf.org or 861-5432 x321.

- February 14-15, 20-22
- April 4-12
- June 11-12, 15-17
- July 3-5
- August 17-21, 24-28
- September 1, 5-7

Free Money for CDS!

Yes, you can make contributions to CDS simply by shopping at numerous stores both in San Francisco and online. Just go to www.escrip.com to register your credit and retail cards and every time you shop, CDS will receive a percentage of your total purchase amount. Many stores participate including Safeway, Mollie Stone's and Andronico's, along with Planet Organics, a grocery delivery service. You can even shop online at hundreds of stores including Macy's, Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

Get your family and friends around the country to sign up and designate CDS, and they can also contribute without costing them a dime. How easy is that? Sign up now and shop for CDS!

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.

Digging Deeper – CDS Tour

Curious to learn more about what's going on in our K-8 classrooms? After coffee and the assembly on Friday, November 21, from 9-11 a.m., join Rebecca Kroll, Margaret Piskitel, Josee Mayette, Aimee Giles and a few current elementary and middle school students for a tour and discussion of the CDS academic program. We will start with an overview of our K-8 programs and end with a school tour. This is an excellent opportunity for current CDS parents to see our K-8 classes in action and to ask questions. No RSVP is necessary – we hope you join us.

Events

Grandparents & Special Friends Day

Our annual Grandparents and Special Friends Day will be held on Wednesday, November 26 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 11:25. Please note that students will return to the classrooms after assembly and can be signed out there until noon, at which time teachers will bring remaining elementary students to double doors for sign out. Middle school students can be signed out at the black gate and preschool pick up will take place at noon at the preschool gate and will be walk-in only. 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.

Fiesta 2009

Save the Date

Mark your calendars now for our annual all-school celebration and auction fundraiser to benefit sliding scale tuition, Fiesta 2009! This year's party will be held on Saturday, March 28, 2009 at Mighty, a nightclub in the heart of the SF design district that is owned and operated by Teddy Bear parents Isabel and Sean Manchester. Mighty boasts a 6,000 square foot expanse of beautiful hardwood floors, 22 foot high ceilings, exposed brick walls and gigantic wood pillars and beams throughout. Think urban industrial warehouse meets crystal chandeliers meets rollicking fundraiser for a great cause. For more information about the space, go to www.mighty119.com.

Co-chairs Pat Rose and Andrea Reynolds are planning a great party and auction. New this year we'll be running our first-ever online silent auction, which will make donating, bidding and winning easier and more efficient for all. Stay tuned for more details, mark your calendars and jump in to help make our annual fundraising party a great success.

Fiesta Call for Volunteers

Please join us for a Fiesta kick-off meeting on Wednesday, December 3 from 4:30-6 p.m. in the second floor meeting room of 16th Street. We need lots of help and talent—designers, creative solicitors, copywriters, help the night-of, envelope-stuffers, party planners and more.

Please note that free childcare is available in the extended program if you sign your child up with the front desk in advance.

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, or Angie Jolie at ajolie@morillojolie.net.

PTTA Questions or Ideas?

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

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday, December 9

6:30-7:30 p.m.

Sliding scale tuition workshop

Thursday, December 11

Parent Education Night

Friday, December 19

11 a.m.

Winter Performance

Noon dismissal

Extended program available

Sliding scale tuition applications due

Monday, December 22 & Tuesday, December 23

Winter vacation

No school

Extended program available

Wednesday, December 24 – Friday, January 2

Winter vacation

No school

No extended program

Dates also posted on CDS website
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

Editor: Mary DeNardo, cdsweekly@cds-sf.org

Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

Contact Mary to receive the Weekly via e-mail