



October 9, 2008

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

CDS Book Club – You're Invited

Lucy Calkins' outstanding book *Raising Lifelong Learners* is making the rounds of the faculty these days and is the first pick of the new CDS Book Club, which will meet Wednesday, November 5. We even quote her in the introduction of our literacy handbook:

"...the qualities that matter most in science and math, reading and writing—initiative, thoughtfulness, curiosity, resourcefulness, perseverance and imagination—are best nurtured through the 'everydayness' of our shared lives..."

Lucy Calkins, a professor at Columbia Teacher's College in New York where she began the Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project in 1981, is a teacher's teacher. *Raising Lifelong Learners*, however, is for parents, the primary educators of our children. It is replete with details and offers up hundreds of ideas for how parents can assist their children with language development. "The Importance of Talking about Books" (pages 41-45) starts off with a vignette about how first grade teacher, Lydia, read to her class:

"As Lydia read, she paused often to look quizzically at the children. On cue, they'd respond. When Lydia paused on a certain page, a little girl with a tiny face and huge brown eyes stood up, walked to the book, and pointed to a heart, cut into the wood of a small cradle in the far corner of the family's living room. Lydia looked at the heart, the cradle, and the sleeping baby inside and said to the child, 'There's a little baby sister! You know something, as many times as I've read this book, I've never noticed the baby sister!'"

The anecdote goes on to reveal dialogue between many students, new discoveries made by the children and Lydia, and ultimately, the way that children invest in stories. One important theme found throughout the book is that reading is learned through the totality of the child's experience, not just what happens when they are confronted with little black marks on the page.

A child's experience is continuous—24-7—and the stories of their lives are constantly amassing in their brains. When they talk with someone about what they are experiencing, they are beginning to translate these experiences into language. If the people they talk to (and who better than parents) value their questions and observations, they help children attach to books and education occurs at the same time.

Parents can facilitate this process by the looks on their faces, the words they use and the quality of their questions, as a way to help children think complexly about their experiences and find words to describe them. "Children need to be inducted into the tradition of reliving and rethinking moments of

Hot Dates

Friday, October 10
8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly
Fourth grade presenting

Monday, October 13

Government holiday observed
No school
No extended program

Wednesday, October 15 &
Thursday, October 16
Photo Day

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



Thank You!

- To the fabulous CDS parents who helped kick off our admission tour season: Simone Bargaen, Akilah Bixler, Ana Brubaker, Manda Ederer, Viru Gupte, Kristin Henry, Paige Lang, Roger Nys, Elizabeth Seimarco, Ann Van Gelder and Tessa Wilcox.
- To our Friday coffee volunteers for bringing much needed caffeine and pastries: Jeannette Layden, Keri Lehmann, Marion and Ben Quinones, Tracy Kirkham and Joe Cooper, and Kara Schleunes.
- Correction: to Poppea Dorsam and Ted *Arleo* for leading the project to have a mirror installed on the Dolores Street median.

their lives. This isn't a minor detail in a child's education; it is essential," writes Calkins.

The book is an important reminder that we are our stories, and our ability to express these stories in words is one critical path to "finding your voice." Fortunately, we all have the opportunity to read this book and for the first time, discuss it with one another. Margaret Piskitel, Curriculum Coordinator, has chosen Calkins' book for the first meeting of the CDS book group, to which all CDS parents are invited. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 5 from 6-7:30 (see attached flyer for further details). Please join us for a discussion of Calkins' book and the many ways we can foster lifelong learners.

From the Classrooms

Middle School News

As reported in the "Friday Fix," a middle school e-mail update from Josée Mayette, Middle School Head, middle schoolers have been busy working on many projects and activities during the past few weeks:

- The Shakespeare Selective class went to Ashland, Oregon for the Shakespeare Festival and had a wonderful time.
- Sixth graders are constructing garden beds at the Homeless Prenatal Program.
- The eighth grade class visited the offices of the *SF Chronicle* and quizzed the editors.
- Seventh graders attended Lit Quake at the San Francisco main library and listened to a reading by Gennifer Choldenko from her book *Al Capone Does My Shirts*.

- Seventh and eighth graders were recently trained to register San Francisco voters. Look for them canvassing the neighborhood—democracy in action!
- The fifth grade has been spotted twirling, swooshing and lumbering through the yard as they reenact the mechanics of hurricanes. Watch out as they continue to study extreme weather patterns!

From the Office

Online Giving

Just in time for the fresh, new Annual Fund mailing (hint: graphic design by kindergarten dad Luis Peña) parents will receive next week, the Giving pages of the CDS website (www.cds-sf.org/giving) have gotten an update and makeover. We've added terrific photos of the St. Joseph's Hall renovation taken by volunteer photographer David Wise, and in addition, CDS can now accept secure online credit card donations using Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. All you need to do is click on the big purple "Donate Now" button on one of the website's Giving pages to make a tax-deductible donation to CDS. Online gifts to CDS are processed by a non-profit called JustGive, and your donation will appear on your credit card statement as a charge to JustGive. For all online gifts, CDS pays a fee of 3% of each donation to JustGive. If you'd like to let us know in advance that you're making an online gift or if you have any questions about online giving, please contact Marion Quinones at 861-5432 x323.

Photo Day Volunteers Needed

We need four or five parents to help out with our upcoming photo days on Wednesday, October 15 and Thursday, October 16, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. You can work one or both days, for some or all of the time. Comb a few cowlicks, wipe a few faces, and help make sure that your child (and everyone else's) looks picture-perfect! Contact Ryan Lambert to sign up at ryanl@cds-sf.org or 861-5432 x312.

Mornings at CDS

We hear you, CDS parents and drivers! Getting your child dropped off at school is a hassle and a headache. Traffic backs up into Dolores Street from the "in" driveway, and all the way down the "out" driveway to the drop-off area. It takes a long time and a lot of patience to get through the line. We are working on a couple of medium-term improvements (striping the pavement to make two clear lanes, investigating whether

a white zone for drop off of big kids on Dolores Street might be feasible), but for the time being, starting next week, all of us who open doors in the mornings are going to try an all-out push to remind parents of some small steps that will help everyone. Please expect a gentle heads up from your friendly morning drive through attendants to:

- Pull your car forward all the way – past the preschool gate if there is space;
- Stay in your car – always! – and load it so that lunches and cellos and backpacks and stuff are in the passenger seats whenever possible; and
- Walk your children to school along the north sidewalk, rather than the south driveway.

This won't fix everything but it will help improve safety and efficiency for all. Thank you.

Extended Program News

Lights On After School

Next Thursday, October 16, CDS will participate in the 9th annual Lights On After School celebration. This national event highlights the importance of after school programming in children's lives. Students at CDS have been creating posters that express why they love the after school program and will join other local after school programs in a rally and march next Thursday around the Mission neighborhood. We hope many students will come out to tell the community why we need after school programming. In order for your child to participate, please sign and return the permission slip that will be sent home with your child. If you have any questions, please contact Dan Larson at 861-5432 x315.

Go Bulldogs!

Co-ed Volleyball Scores

October 6, CDS vs. KDDBS
Game 1: CDS 24, KDDBS 26
Game 2: CDS 25, KDDBS 21
Game 3: CDS 15, KDDBS 11

Co-ed Volleyball Calendar

Friday, October 10, 3:45 p.m.
CAIS, 150 Oak Street

Tuesday, October 14, 4 p.m.
Lycee Francais, 20th and Ortega Streets

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday, October 21 & Wednesday, October 22
Annual Fund Phonathon

Friday, October 24
Sibling application deadline

Saturday, October 25
12-2 p.m.
Alumni Reunion & High School Roundtable

Monday, October 27
Professional development day
No school
No extended program

Tuesday, November 4
3:30 p.m.
Green Task Force meeting
2nd floor, 16th Street building

Wednesday, November 5
6-7:30 p.m.
CDS Book Club meeting

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

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Children's Day School

Preschool – 8th grade

Parent-Teacher Book Group

Raising Lifelong Learners

by Lucy Calkins

Wednesday, November 5, 2008

6 – 7:30 p.m.

Do you wonder what you can do to help your child succeed at school, learn to read and write, understand math and do his or her homework? If so, please join us for the first meeting of our new Parent-Teacher Book Group! *Raising Lifelong Learners* is a book that provides many hands-on ideas and advice about how to help your child love learning.

We will have a lively discussion with parents and teachers about how to support your child's learning in a way that merges nicely with the CDS curriculum and philosophy.

In this first meeting we will discuss literacy, so please come prepared to talk about chapters 1–4. If your child is in upper elementary/middle school, we will also discuss chapters seven and eight.

We will discuss more topics and chapters at a later date.

The book is available at Amazon.com for \$11.53. In addition, three copies are available at CDS and can be checked out from Margaret Piskitel, Curriculum Coordinator.

Food and childcare will be provided

If you plan to attend, **please RSVP to Margaret Piskitel**, Curriculum Coordinator, at 861-5432 x349 or margaretp@cds-sf.org, so that we can plan for food and childcare.