



December 10, 2009

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Challenge

*She knows there's no success like failure
And that failure's no success at all.*
—Bob Dylan

The official concept for the year is identity, and yet for a variety of reasons the de facto concept—or perhaps one could say leitmotif—of this year seems to be challenge. At the opening assembly I unintentionally riffed on the word in response to Patrice's "We are all new." I remember saying something like "Your parents didn't send you here to be successful, but to learn and to learn through challenge. Your teachers are not trying to make it easy for you, but actually are trying to make it hard, so that you will be challenged and learn." It just popped out of my mouth unpremeditated.

The best part was the reaction of the students. Their faces and their body language seemed to say "Bring it on." Moreover, in the last three months I have seen that same body language and those same faces as I go around the school and watch them hard at work. I have walked in on and heard about teachers teaching lessons on making mistakes and the educational opportunities provided by failure. If this is the only thing I leave behind, then I have left behind something great.

A chunk of their challenges is social. Kids' first reason for coming to school is social, after all. Academics are a secondary reason from their point of view. All day long, at all grade levels, they experience interactions that challenge their social relationships. On any given day, for example, when one or more classes are on the playground, we might hear: "Hey, stop that." "That's not fair." "Don't do that to me." "No, pass ME the ball." "I'll give you the shovel when I am finished with it." "That's disrespectful." "I don't like it when you talk to me that way"—especially at CDS where we actively teach people to use their words and to stand up for themselves.

The standard protocol for interpersonal offense is for the offended to make some protest and for the offender to say "Sorry" and move on. Sometimes, the interaction rises to the level of a social challenge where the two will have to talk about it; and normally this is done in a way which makes it a learning experience for both victim and perpetrator. This process works because each person has a strong enough sense of themselves (identity?) to not only stand up for themselves, but also to know that the quality of their sense of self is in part dependent on their classmates.

Of the thousands of such learning experiences that happen daily, very few require adult intervention to make it a teachable moment, and very, very few of

Hot Dates

Thursday, December 10
4 p.m.
Basketball game vs. Kittredge
Boys & Girls Club

6-8:15 p.m.
Curriculum Night

Friday, December 11
8:30 a.m.
Friday assembly
Kindergarten (Luisa) presenting

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



Thank You!

- To Michelle Lapuz and Vivian Chu for helping the development office with a grandparent mailing.
- To the Wilburn and Corse families for donating new basketball uniforms to the CDS Bulldogs.
- To Mary Dennis, Viru Gupte, Kristin Henry, Leslie Hom, Todd Hosfelt, Shermalee Nicholson, Roger Nys, Laura Pliska, Beth Porter and Ann Van Gelder for leading admission tours.
- To Paul Moreno for helping with class photo day.
- To Janine Wilburn and Tina Corse for organizing the Book Fair last Friday. Guests were treated to great food, music and an excellent array of books.

those require help from a second adult like me, Rebecca or Josée.

When adults do get involved, the message must help the students see that they are playing the wrong game and that they can get into a new game—the game of stepping up to a challenge—the game of making mistakes and learning from them. This is the message we need to focus on: “You are great, as is. You are not great because you are smart, or good, or never make mistakes, or perfect, or achieve your goals, or are successful, or get the right answers, or win. Just make mistakes and learn. That’s the ONLY game in town. There is no other.” It is critical for the adults not to be ambivalent about the beauties (and the reality) of challenge, and not to be distracted by the mirage of success or the fantasy of failure.

From the Classrooms

December Collections

In celebration of the giving nature of both the parents and students at CDS, December is a time when the community collects things for those in need. Several classes are hosting drives for different organizations they are collaborating with. Collection bin sites are listed below, and can be found on the Community Learning Board near the reception desk.

San Francisco Food Bank

Nearly 150,000 people in San Francisco live with the threat of hunger. The San Francisco Food Bank provides

food to 22,000 households each week and needs your help.

- Host: Fifth grade
- Collection site: The lobby of St. Joseph’s Hall and the preschool porch
- What: Canned, boxed and bagged non-perishable food items
- When: Now until June 2010

San Francisco Firefighter’s Toy Program

The San Francisco Firefighter’s Toy Program is the city’s largest and the nation’s oldest program of its kind. The toy program serves individual families as well as community organizations, including shelters for abused women and children, inner-city schools, neighborhood groups, children’s cancer wards, and pediatric AIDS units.

- Host: Leaping Lizard class
- Collection site: Community Based Learning Board and Leaping Lizards classroom
- What: New or gently used toys
- When: Now until December 17

San Francisco Police Teddy Bear Collection

This program provides teddy bears (52,500 to date) to emergency agencies that work with children in crisis.

- Host: Teddy Bear class
- Collection site: Community Based Learning Board and Teddy Bear classroom
- What: New teddy bears
- When: Now until December 17

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.

Homeless Prenatal Program

Seizing the motivating opportunity created by pregnancy and parenthood, HPP joins with families to help them recognize their strengths and trust in their capacity to transform their lives to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty.

- Host: Green Task Force and second grade
- Collection site: Community Based Learning Board
- What: New and gently used clothing for infants, children and adults; freshly laundered maternity clothes; strollers, baby carriers and slings; car seats, books and plastic and paper grocery bags; new (unopened) toiletries, formula, baby food, disposable diapers.
- When: Now until December 17

From the Office

Family Farmer Dates Available

Please note that the following dates are still available for family farmer duty. Don't miss your chance to tend to our beloved chickens and sheep. Contact Misty Cummings (861-5432 x321 or mistyc@cds-sf.org) to sign up:

- February 13-15
- February 18-19
- April 12-15

H1N1 Vaccinations

The San Francisco Department of Public Health is holding an H1N1 Swine Flu Mass Vaccination Clinic open to San Francisco residents who fall into high-risk priority groups on **Tuesday, December 22 from 10 a.m.-7 p.m.** at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium (99 Grove Street in Civic Center Plaza). High-risk priority groups include:

- Pregnant women
- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age
- People who live with or provide care for infants less than 6 months of age
- Health care and emergency responders with direct patient contact

- Adults ages 25-64 with medical conditions that put them at risk for complications from influenza (heart, lung or kidney disease, asthma, diabetes, or weakened immune system)
- Children less than 10 years old needing their second dose of H1N1 vaccine (first dose of vaccine must have been received before December 1st).

For more information, go to <http://www.sfcddp.org/flu vaccine.html>.

Extended Program News

Winter Arts Festival

Everyone is invited to this year's After School Winter Arts Festival on Friday, December 11 at 4:30 p.m. at the Grace Fellowship Community Church. The festival will include performances by the guitar class, violin and cello classes, the Story Theater Club, and artwork by the Building Club, World of Wonder and the Puppet Club. For more information, please contact Dan Larson at danl@cds-sf.org, or 861-5432 x315.

Winter Vacation Camp

Don't miss your chance to enroll in winter vacation camp, which will be held on December 18 from 12-6 p.m., and on December 21-23 from 8-6 p.m.

Preschool Camp: Weather & the Seasons

Join Ms. Danielle, Ms. Rebekah and Ms. Ngoc for fun activities in the preschool bungalows! They'll be reading everyone's favorite weather book, *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*, and conducting art projects and learning activities based on the reading. Don't miss out on the chance to make rain art using umbrellas and water, wind art utilizing blow dryers and paint, and, of course, cook steaming plates of spaghetti and meatballs.

Go Bulldogs!

Bulldog Basketball Calendar

Thursday, December 10, 4 p.m.

CDS vs. Kittredge, Boys & Girls Club

Basketball season is underway—come on out and support the Bulldogs!

K-8 Camp: Buildings, Castles, Forts and More!

Come join the after school staff as we build, build, build—using our imaginations to turn popsicle sticks into medieval castles, create skyscrapers out of sugar cubes and transform the playground structure into a fortress of woven twigs. We'll close out camp by creating an edible holiday house, complete with carrot-legged and raisin-eyed people and gingerbread walls.

Please register by December 11 online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CPXXTXQ>, or turn in a paper form to the front desk. Registration is complete once payment is received.

Questions? Contact Dan Larson, Extended Program Director, at 861-5432 x315 or danl@cds-sf.org.

PTTA Update

Coffee Update

Remember that coffee beans make a great gift! The week before the holiday break, look for the coffee gift table at morning drop-off. Pick up a CDS tote bag filled with 3 bags of coffee for \$50 or a mug with one bag of coffee for a quick \$18 gift! Green gifts that support a good cause are the best kind.

Remember that if you don't drink coffee, you can still give to the cause. Cash is King at Coffee Bean Headquarters and we greatly appreciate any gift of any amount. All proceeds go the Holiday Faculty & Staff Gift Fund.

Because of the holiday break, coffee delivery will take place on 12/17 and on 1/4. In January, we will resume normal delivery on the 15th and 29th of the month.

We have a new email, too. Please direct your questions and comments to coffee@cds-sf.org.

Upcoming Dates

Friday, December 18

Winter Performance

Noon dismissal; extended program available

Sliding Scale Tuition applications due

Monday, December 21 – Wednesday, December 23

Winter vacation

No school; extended program available

Thursday, December 24 – Friday, 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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