



January 14, 2010

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### The Content of Character

Approaching the birthday of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., I rediscovered a paper he wrote as a student at Morehouse College in 1947, entitled "The Purpose of Education"

([www.drmartinlutherkingjr.com/thepurposeofeducation.htm](http://www.drmartinlutherkingjr.com/thepurposeofeducation.htm)). The central thesis is: "We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education." Although this is not a new thought, it bore repeating then, and over sixty years later it not only bears repeating, but also some further examination. The conviction that for schooling to be an education, teachers and students must attend to character, has been on the table since ancient Greece. However, since King wrote the paper, the idea that education might have something to do with "character" has, at best, fallen to the margins of our thinking. By the time American students are juniors in high school, the default definition of success is good grades, SAT scores and admission to status colleges.

If we care about how our young people will actually fare in college, and if we care about the future of this nation, our core task is to redefine success for students, parents and schools. Denise Clark Pope and the educators at Stanford University's "Challenge Success" program ([www.challengesuccess.org](http://www.challengesuccess.org)) have done research on this and are trying to change our way of thinking. They recommend setting the bar higher and adding Character, Health, Independence, Connection, Creativity, and Enthusiasm to the goal of Academic Achievement.

One of the reasons we have drifted away from character as a critical component of education is that we have drifted away from its original meaning. For centuries, character was a person's core, their divine spark or calling. The Greek *kharakter* means the mark that the gods put on your soul at birth. It is the *you* that is becoming. Education was leading that character out into the world to function effectively and gracefully within it. Education of character is education itself.

Today, functioning gracefully and effectively in the world includes resiliency, creativity and discipline. It includes the ability to sort through data, construct knowledge and learn how to express that knowledge in a way that is useful to others. Success in the world today requires knowing how to differ with someone and make that difference a creative learning experience. To be educated, a person needs collaboration skills.

In "The Purpose of Education" King writes, "The late Eugene Talmadge, in my opinion, possessed one of the better minds of Georgia, or even America. Moreover, he wore the Phi Beta Kappa key. By all measuring rods, Mr.

### Hot Dates

Friday, January 15  
8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly  
Teddy Bears presenting

3:45 p.m.  
Basketball game vs. CAIS  
150 Oak Street

Monday, January 18  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
observed  
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)



## Thank You!

- To Akilah Bixler, Fasil Fikreab, Lauren Schwartz, Ann Van Gelder, Jeanette Wilmerding and Eric Young for helping with the Saturday preschool family visit day.
- To Tina Corse and Lauren Schwartz for their ad hoc help with Tuesday's admission tour.

Talmadge could think critically and intensively; yet he contends that I am an inferior being. Are those the types of men we call educated?" Today, this kind of statement would reflect a deficiency in "character education," as in, "It is bad to be prejudiced against another human being." Today, character education is often relegated to the sidelines. At best, it might be a required course in a high school curriculum. In most grade schools it is sidelined under something called "the social-emotional." But I maintain that Eugene Talmadge was not a bad character, and he did not have bad character education. He had a bad education.

The education of character has become synonymous with moral education, and some years ago at Harvard (perhaps still today) Robert Coles' course on morality was nicknamed "Guilt 101." Learning to do the right thing is fundamentally what education is all about, but doing the right thing includes correct spelling, grammar and math facts, too. It includes more than not being prejudiced; it includes the skills of rigorous research. It includes telling the truth, of course, but it also includes learning the disciplines of determining what is true and what is false and what words to use to communicate that determination. It includes epistemology. It includes good social problem solving, to be sure, but it also includes solving a mathematics problem or figuring out how to communicate so that you are not misunderstood. It includes helping others out, but it also includes all the skills of functioning effectively in a group. For our children to be educated, character must be seen as the essence of our job.

The full functioning of each unique character: that is the ball parents, as well as schools, must keep their eye on. *Genius* was the Roman word for that inner spirit, and until recently, genius was something that each of us has. Genius, "the spirit of a person, place or institution," is the voice of our character, and we must listen to it. For best results, we who are responsible for the education of children will organize all that we do around helping that voice become more and more eloquent.

## From the Classrooms

### Earth Friendly Friday Tally

On Friday, January 5, student members of the Green Task Force counted some of the students and staff who came to school in the following earth-friendly ways:

- WALK - 13 staff and 12 students
- MUNI - 4 staff and 23 students
- BIKE - 5 staff and 4 students
- BART - 4 staff and 2 students
- CARPOOL - 2 staff
- SCOOTER - 1 student
- TOTAL - 70

Since there are undoubtedly other earth-friendly commuters who passed under the radar, the actual number is even higher! If you always come to school by foot, carpool, MUNI, BART, bike or scooter, please e-mail Elsa at [elsat@cds-sf.org](mailto:elsat@cds-sf.org) so that the Green Task Force can have a more accurate record. Thanks for going green!

## From the Office

### We're Serious...We're Towing!

CDS teachers and staff face a vexing problem – cars from the neighborhood parked in CDS parking spots. Notes and conversations have not changed behavior, so we have made arrangements with a towing service. If you park in a CDS spot in our parking lot between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday-Friday, and your car is not identified as a CDS vehicle, you run the risk of being towed – please take note if you have an urgent need to "borrow" someone else's space without telling that someone (or our receptionists) about it!

If you are parking in the Dolores Street white zone from 7:45-8:30 a.m., Monday – Friday, you run the risk of being ticketed by the SFPD. Thank you for your cooperation.

## School Wish List

- The after school program needs glass jars with lids, magazines and bamboo steamers. Please bring materials to the front desk or contact Jasmin Hoo at [jasminh@cds-sf.org](mailto:jasminh@cds-sf.org) with any questions.

## Sliding Scale Tuition

While the official deadline for applying for sliding scale tuition for 2010-II has passed, it's never too late to apply! 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 2010-II sliding scale decisions for returning CDS families on a first 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 2010-II, don't forget to submit your signed 2009 federal income tax return, including all W-2s, 1099s and schedules, and the CDS 2009 Tax Return Certification form, to SSS by Wednesday, February 3, 2010. If you submit earlier or incomplete tax returns or W-2 forms only, your application will be considered incomplete. Unfortunately the Access and Affordability Committee will not consider incomplete applications.

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

## 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](mailto:mistyc@cds-sf.org)) to sign up:

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

## Class Pictures

Class pictures are ready! We tried out a new photography company this year for our class pictures (Schoolhouse Candid's). Click on the link below to see the pictures and to order prints. Please let Aimee Giles ([aimeeg@cds-sf.org](mailto:aimeeg@cds-sf.org)) know what you think of the pictures, and of the ordering process. Orders are due by January 25, 2010.

<http://schoolhousecandid's.smugmug.com/Chidrens-Day-School> (The password is mission83).

## Events

### Country Fair Meeting

Calling all Country Fair volunteers! We'll be having our first Country Fair volunteer meeting on Friday, January 15, at 9a.m., after assembly. We hope you can make it.

If you would like to help or have a talent you'd like to share but can't make the meeting, please e-mail Danielle Guthrie at [danielle@vegaproject.com](mailto:danielle@vegaproject.com), or Dave Klaus at [klausthepd@hotmail.com](mailto:klausthepd@hotmail.com).

## Go Bulldogs!

### Basketball Scores

January 7, CDS vs. CACS  
CDS 37, CACS 5

January 8, CDS vs. SF Friends (Blue)  
SFF 45, CDS 24

### Basketball Calendar

Friday, January 15, 3:45 p.m.  
CAIS (Red), 150 Oak Street

Tuesday, January 19, 4 p.m.  
Lycee Francais, Boys & Girls Club

Thursday, January 21, 4 p.m.  
SF Friends (White), Boys & Girls Club

**Come cheer on the Bulldogs; they are 3-1!**

## 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.

### PTTA Questions or Ideas?

- Robin McClarren, President, (415) 235-0295 or [robinmcc@speakeasy.net](mailto:robinmcc@speakeasy.net)
- Rebecca Grey, Secretary, (415) 269-0996 or [rgrey@pillsburylevinson.com](mailto:rgrey@pillsburylevinson.com)
- Carlos Vasquez, Classroom Liaison Coordinator, (415) 564-9734 or [xvasquez@aol.com](mailto:xvasquez@aol.com)
- Meredith Ashworth, Faculty Appreciation Coordinator, (415) 254-0229 or [meredith@glugcollection.com](mailto:meredith@glugcollection.com)
- Sara O'Malley, Parent Education Coordinator, (415) 348-8841 or [sara@omalleyhylton.com](mailto:sara@omalleyhylton.com)
- Ann Van Gelder, Admission Volunteer Coordinator, (415) 647-8561 or [cds.tourvolunteering@gmail.com](mailto:cds.tourvolunteering@gmail.com)
- Kristen Peña, Parent Involvement Coordinator, (415) 244-1411 or [Kristen@glugcollection.com](mailto:Kristen@glugcollection.com)
- Kate Flynn, Middle School Representative, (415) 305-6625 or [k8fln@aol.com](mailto:k8fln@aol.com)
- Lauren Schwartz, Preschool Representative, (415) 495-5757 or [schwartzbaum@mac.com](mailto:schwartzbaum@mac.com)
- Andrea Reynolds, Fiesta Chair, (415) 860-7556 or [andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net](mailto:andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net)
- Danielle Guthrie, Country Fair Chair, (415) 515-7994 or [danielle@vegaproject.com](mailto:danielle@vegaproject.com)

## Upcoming Dates

Friday, January 22

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

Friday, January 29 & Saturday, January 30

Kaleidoscope Theater performance

Monday, February 1

Teacher work day

No school

No extended program

Tuesday, February 9

5:30-7 p.m.

PTTA meeting

Monday, February 15

President's Day observed

No school

Extended Program Camp available

Tuesday, February 16 – Friday, February 19

February vacation

No school

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)

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