



October 1, 2009

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Genius

A generation ago, the first definition of “genius” in most dictionaries was “the spirit of a person, place or institution.” In a more recent dictionary, however, the first definition of “genius” is a rare gift, talent or intelligence as in “one among us might just be a genius.” We have lost the whole idea that each of us **has** a genius. With this loss we have lost our way when it comes to raising and educating children.

When a baby is born, most parents are amazed at the miracle of it all and see their child as this incredible, mysterious creature who is becoming. They are amazed by her brilliance, enchanted by his character. A thought may blossom that what they have on their hands is some kind of genius. Often, this notion of the amazing genius of this particular child lasts right up until the child goes off to school. Until then, the two meanings of the word are merged.

At school, the child’s imperfections begin to show. They cry when they are dropped off, they don’t want to leave their mother’s side, they bite someone on the playground, they can’t count by twos, they can’t tell time on a clock, or OMG, they haven’t learned to read yet.

When a baby is born the doctor usually tells the parent that the skull of a baby is not all of a piece—the skull is little islands of bone that are in the process of growing together. This is a nice analogy for the human brain. Billions of cells are clumped into little islands of activity, and they are in the process of knitting themselves together. This process takes a very long time, cannot all be done at once, and the sequence of knitting varies widely from child to child.

All children are perfect AND they are unformed. We don’t actually get formed until much later. When I turned 52 I wrote my brother that finally I was playing with a full deck. Since then, I keep finding out that I am not yet there, even as I approach 65. It wasn’t until my father was 75 that he said, “I feel comfortable in my own skin.” Some of our graduates say it a lot sooner than that.

Because schools challenge a small subset of these neurological connections, some kids show up as more successful than others. Burdened by the ability-ism of our society, a class of students is at risk for becoming a hierarchy of intelligence as if intelligence were fixed. Parents and teachers easily fall into the trap of seeing their children as more or less gifted, and in this context the students, who are naturally making generalizations about themselves, are at risk for developing what Carol Dweck, author of *Mindset*, calls a fixed mindset about their ability. Thirty years of research has shown that these fixed mindsets are insidious and can do serious damage to future success, both of the “gifted”

Hot Dates

Wednesday, September 30

6:30-8 p.m.

Middle School Back-to-School Night

(Grades 5-8)

Friday, October 2

7:45-8:30 a.m.

Family Farmer Training

Farm and garden

8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly

Seventh grade presenting

9 a.m.

Fiesta quilters meeting

16th Street, 2nd floor meeting room

Sunday, October 4

11-3 p.m.

Book Swap

Yard

Monday, October 5

4:30-6 p.m.

COVID meeting

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



Thank You!

- To recent Friday morning coffee hosts for bringing delicious hot coffee and morning treats: Meredith Ashworth, Marianne Evans, Kristen Peña, Amanda Richard, Anne Stuhldreher and Tim Wirth.
- To Bob Concannon for taking photographs at the first two Friday coffees and assemblies.
- To Akilah Bixler, Katie Buono, Amanda Chapman, Vivian Chu, Jocelyn Colopy, Mary Dennis, Zahra Ghayour-Kelly, Viru Gupte, Amy Hecht, Kristin Henry, Justine Juson, Leon Kuan, Jeanette Layden, Michelle Lapuz, Tina Leung, Hank Lim, Michele Morgano, Shermalee Nicholson-Guillen, Sara O'Malley, Andrea Ow, Laura Pliska, Louis Schump, Lauren Schwartz, Ann Van Gelder, Jen Wana and Jeanette Wilmerding for attending the admission docent training.
- To Ray Baxter, Jeremy Bloch, Sam Hunt, Bill Littmann, Chris Luomanen and Bill Veiga for constructing a fence around the bungalow storage area on the south side of the property, finishing off the digging pit and building a wall in front of the storage shed on the yard, creating a new ball wall. Thank you for your hard work!

ones and those who have “learning differences.”

I am not proposing that we **believe** that each child has a soul, a spirit, a unique character, a genius or a calling. I am insisting that we **act as if** each child has one. Forty-some years in education has taught me that acting as if a child has a genius will liberate us from worrying so much about how far they fall short of being a genius. We can keep noticing how perfect they are at being themselves, and encourage them to do what they need to do to harmonize their genius with the requirements of the environment.

It is our job to keep challenging these imperfect students and to continue believing in their perfect genius. We can confront them daily with how much they don't know, and how much they have to learn, and send them home tired at the end of the day from all the struggles, and even failures, we have subjected them to. But if we play our cards right—if we do our job as educators—we send them home comfortable in their own skin, and with enough ego strength to get back in the game for yet another beautiful day.

Board Corner

Head Search Update

We are pleased to report that the Head Search Steering Committee met on Saturday, September 26 to evaluate the top seventeen applicants wishing to serve as the next Head of CDS brought to us by our search consultant Stephen DiCicco of Educational Directions, Inc. To narrow the field, the Search Committee sought those who, by training and experience, best displayed the desired professional and personal characteristics as detailed in our Position Statement at <http://www.cds-sf.org/about/headofschoolsearch.html>.

Through this process, we identified six outstanding candidates who will be interviewed by the Head Search Steering Committee next week. From these six candidates we hope to identify our top three for the CDS community's evaluation. We thank you in advance for your cooperation in respecting these six applicants' privacy should you happen to run into them on campus. We are excited about the prospect of meeting and further evaluating these individuals in person; however, some of them may not have made their interest in CDS known to their current institution at this time.

The three finalists will be announced the week of October 12. Each finalist will visit CDS for two full days, giving our board of trustees, students, faculty, staff and parents opportunities to meet and spend time with them. The finalist visits will take place on October 14-15; October 21-22 and November 5-6. Please review the schedule below to determine which forum(s) you can attend. These on-campus forums will be the time when the entire community can interact with, and provide feedback on, our finalists to the Head Search Steering Committee. Based on this feedback, the Committee will present the three finalists to the Board of Trustees, which hopes to make a decision and offer to the next Head of School by the end of November.

Wednesdays, October 14, 21 and November 4

- 11-12: 1st parent forum, Colette's room
- 12:15-12:30: Lunch with third and fourth graders, yard
- 12:30-1: Lunch with middle school students, yard
- 3:45-4:30: Faculty forum, Terry's room

- 4:45-5:45: 2nd parent forum, Melanie's room
- 6-7:30: Reception with trustees, Eco Lab

Thursdays, October 15, 22 and November 5

- 8:30-9:30: 3rd parent forum, Melanie's room
- 9:30-10:15: Meeting with PTTA officers, 16th Street second floor meeting room
- 11:30-1: Drop-in lunch with faculty and staff, Ginny's room

Candidates are also invited to join us (if they can) at our Friday morning parent coffee and all-school assembly on the CDS yard from 8 – 9 a.m.

Inclusion & Diversity at CDS

Are you passionate about supporting diversity? Did you know that CDS was founded to educate children of diverse backgrounds? If so, you might be interested in the Committee on Inclusion and Diversity (COID). If you want to work with fellow parents, teachers, staff and board members around issues of diversity, please join us at our next meeting on Monday, October 5 at 4:30 p.m. We'll discuss the upcoming Families of Color Picnic on Saturday, October 17. All are welcome to attend.

From the Classrooms

From the Green Task Force

It's a new year and a new opportunity to go green! In this spirit, the CDS Green Task Force is working on **waste-free lunches**. Here are some options to consider:

- Pack cloth napkins instead of paper.
- Use a thermos for juice and milk instead of individually packaged drinks.
- Real utensils or compostable utensils are a great way to eliminate plastic from lunches.

Trying to rid our **lunch** boxes of little baggies, juice boxes and plastic wrap, we went looking for some alternatives:

- <http://www.wrap-n-mat.com> It's a mat that turns into a pouch and is washable.
- <http://www.kidskonserve.com/> This site includes lots of information and a great kid's blog.
- http://www.3greenmoms.com/Our_Products.html

- <http://www.reusablebags.com/store/>
- <http://www.laptoplunches.com/> These things can get expensive, with the idea that they'll last for a long, long time. This company offers price breaks if more than one box is purchased at a time; maybe some families want to get together and place an order for multiples?

And here are some great food ideas for kid lunches:

- <http://www.familyfun.go.com> Click on "back to school."
- <http://www.thedailygreen.com>

Finally, remind your hungry eaters that apple cores, bread crusts, banana peels and all food stuffs go in the green compost bucket at school. And if your child gets Kid Chow, the plastic bags and juice boxes are compostable, the paper bag is recyclable and the ice pack goes in the garbage.

Thanks for helping us reduce our waste at lunch time.

From the Office

Annual Fund Training

If you have only one night a year to volunteer at CDS, please consider joining other parents and trustees for a lively evening of camaraderie, dinner and tangible progress during the annual parent phonathon on October 20 and 21. No experience necessary, just enthusiasm for CDS and a fondness for connecting with other parents and getting things done. If you're considering volunteering for the phonathon and would like to know more about the difference that fundraising makes to CDS each year, please come to an informal **phonathon**

Go Bulldogs!

Co-ed Volleyball Scores

September 29, CDS vs. Presidio Hill

Game 1: CDS 25, PH 14

Game 2: CDS 25, PH 19

Co-ed Volleyball Calendar

Tuesday, October 6, 4 p.m.

Lycee Francais, 1201 Ortega Street

Thursday, October 8, 4 p.m.

The San Francisco School, Boys & Girls Club

training meeting on Friday, October 9 after assembly. We'll meet on the second floor of the 16th Street building to review materials that will be mailed to all parents, including hot off the presses copies of the 2008-09 *CDS Annual Report*, and answer questions about volunteering for the phonathon.

The PTTA meeting from 5:30-7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13 will also feature presentations from members of the CDS Board of Trustees on school finances and the annual fund. And there will be time for last minute volunteer training on the evenings of the phonathon, before we start making calls. Bottom line -- whether or not you can make it to the meetings on October 9 or 13, the phonathon gratefully welcomes volunteers, new and veteran. Please get in touch with Marion Quinones (marionq@cds-sf.org) with questions or to sign up. Thank you!

Sick Child Etiquette

Please help us provide our reception desk staff with the appropriate information regarding your child when home sick, or when out of school for any reason. The reception desk staff (415-861-5432 x310 or frontdesk@cds-sf.org) would love to be provided with succinct information that includes, in this order:

- Child's name
- Grade or teacher
- Symptoms or absence excuse
- Parent name

Thank you for helping us work efficiently and effectively.

Quilt Meeting

Love to sew? Want to help with this year's class quilts? The Fiesta quilters are recruiting quilters, sewers and helpers. If you'd like to help, please come to the first quilt meeting of the year on Friday, October 2 at 9 a.m. (following assembly) in the second floor conference room of the 16th Street building. See you there.

Become a Family Farmer

Interested in fresh eggs for Sunday morning brunch? Itching to get to know our resident sheep and chickens? Simply sign up to be a family farmer and you'll have the opportunity to care for our beloved animals. Misty Cummings will be scheduling farmers for weekends and

holidays from November-April and will provide a family farmer training on Friday, October 2, from 7:45-8:30 a.m. Please note that returning farmers are welcome to e-mail or call Misty to sign up for specific dates, while all new farmers will sign up for dates on the day of the training. If you can't make the October training, the next training will take place in March. You can contact Misty Cummings at 861-5432 x321 or mistyc@cds-sf.org.

Environmental Education Films

Please note two upcoming film opportunities about environmental education.

- Monday, October 5, 6 p.m., California Academy of Sciences: *When Learning Comes Naturally*, a new film made for public television about environmental education efforts at several schools around the country, including the San Francisco School. Contact Sara O'Malley, Parent Education Coordinator, at Sara@OMalleyHylton.com or 415-348-8841 for ticket information.
- Wednesday, October 21, 6 p.m., Koret auditorium, main library: *A Simple Question: the Story of STRAW*, an inspiring film about students and teachers restoring a watershed. CDS third and sixth graders partner with STRAW. For more information about STRAW, go to http://www.bay.org/watershed_education.htm.

PTTA Update

Coffee Club

Please look for the Coffee Club table at Friday morning coffee in the yard on October 2! Our first order will be placed to Ritual and Coast Roast Coffee next Tuesday. We've updated and attached the Coffee Club order form for your convenience.

If you have questions or comments, please e-mail Stephanie Scarpulla at bluebirdcollection@gmail.com, or call 415-999-6227.

All proceeds from the CDS Coffee Club go to the Faculty and Staff Holiday Gift Fund.

Book Swap Donations

Don't miss the first CDS Book Swap this Sunday, October 4 from 11-3 p.m. If you'd like to donate books to the book swap, please drop them off during morning drop-off for the remainder of the week. Please note that you don't need to donate books to get books! You can simply show up on Sunday and try out some new authors and talk books with parents and friends. See you there.

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

Upcoming Dates

Friday, October 9

9-10 a.m.

Annual Fund phonathon training

Monday, October 12

Government holiday observed

No school, no extended program

Tuesday, October 13

5:30-7 p.m.

PTTA meeting: CDS Finances and the Annual Fund

Tuesday, October 13 & Wednesday, October 14

School photos by Mugshots

Saturday, October 17

Families of Color Picnic

Tuesday, October 20 & Wednesday, October 21

Annual Fund Phonathon

Friday, October 23

Sibling applications due

Sunday, October 25

(note new date!)

11-1 p.m.

Alumni Reunion

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

Children's Day School

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Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

Contact Mary to receive the *Weekly* via e-mail



CDS PTTA Coffee Club Order Form

Benefitting the CDS Faculty & Staff Holiday Gift Fund

| Name | Contact Info |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| | |
| Child's Backpack Name & Class | Comments |
| | |

| Item | Price Per 12 oz Bag | Quantity Per Month | Total |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Coast Roast Organic French Roast <small>Dark and delicious with a strong, sweet roast flavor.</small> | \$13.00 | | |
| Coast Roast Organic Master Blend <small>Superb 5 bean blend.</small> | \$13.00 | | |
| Coast Roast Organic Guatemalan <small>Smooth & Rich from the mountains around Lake Atitlan.</small> | \$13.00 | | |
| Coast Roast Organic Swiss Water Decaf <small>Simply the most delicious decaf ever!</small> | \$14.00 | | |
| Ritual La Folie, Organic, Guatemala <small>Flavors of dutch cocoa, dried apricot and molasses</small> | \$13.95 | | |
| Ritual Finca Monte Rey Bambu, Organic, El Salvador <small>Flavors of dutch cocoa, dried apricot and molasses</small> | \$13.50 | | |
| Payment Information (Circle One): <input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card | | Monthly Total | |
| CC # _____ Exp Date _____ Billing Address _____ | | Annual Total | |

Credit card will be charged the monthly amount on the 20th of each month. Send checks to CDS (payable to Children's Day School) by the 15th of each month, with "PTTA Coffee Club" in the memo line.

Coffee Club is a year-round subscription and requires a 30-day cancellation or change notice. Please contact Stephanie Scarpulla at 415-999-6227 or bluebirdcollection@gmail.com with any change requests, questions or comments.

Coffee does not come ground. Try grinding it yourself! Freshly ground coffee makes for a perfect cup!

The Wallace Stegner Environmental Center of the
San Francisco Public Library presents



ENVIRONMENTAL FILM PREMIERE

A Simple Question

Wednesday, October 21, 2009
6–7:30 p.m.

Koret Auditorium, Main Library, Lower Level

World premiere of *A Simple Question: The Story of STRAW*, an inspiring 35 minute film about students and teachers restoring a watershed, from its origins in 1992 as a fourth grade class-project into a remarkable program that has restored over 20 miles of habitat, galvanized the local community, and led to significant educational innovations.

Kevin White and David Donnenfield, the San Francisco based filmmakers, and several participants in the documentary will be available to answer questions after the film.



Green Stacks

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All programs at the Library are free.



San Francisco Public Library

0817-23197

Main Library 100 Larkin St. (at Grove) (415) 557-4277 sfpl.org