



October 15, 2009

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### Increasing Everyone's Authority

Julian, who is eight, is used to hearing a story before he goes to bed, but these days he asks his parents to let him teach them language arts and mathematics. (Place value, number logic, strategies for subtraction, etc. What could be more fun?) First grader Alex, sporting a tie of course, came up to me on the playground last week to tell me about the research he is doing on fish in order to find just the right pet for his family. Dominick, also in first grade, showed a story to his class which he had written in hieroglyphics and explained the language to his class and teachers. (I had no idea that one could write "Once upon a time" in hieroglyphics.)

Authority is a critical word in education. At CDS we could outline all of our activity as educators as the work of increasing the authority of each of our students. The root word is author. As children write, create, do, or say, our goal is that they do so with authority, and that these actions increase their authority by increasing their competence. Their participation in everything from class discussions to four-square serves the growth of their authorship. One can even shoot a basket with authority.

At any given point in our lives, each of us has authority, some more than others in different arenas. Yet it is a word that causes considerable confusion among teachers and parents in almost any school community. When "authority" came up at a two day retreat for experienced California Heads of School last month, a half-hour discussion ensued about the authority of a Head of School. As each Head talked about what the word meant to them, their statements were interspersed with the companion words control, power, and responsibility, and an eavesdropping ten-year-old would have concluded that there was no agreement in the room about the concept of authority. And yet we all have the same job.

One of the reasons authority has negative connotations is that the exercise of one person's authority can often compromise, undercut or undermine another person's authority. In a learning community, where our work is to increase everyone's authority, we have to be careful in the exercise of our authority. In four-square, for instance, the natural way for someone to win an argument is to say it louder, but increasingly kids are learning better ways.

Led by CDS students, we adults (parents, teachers, trustees and administrators) are all improving our ability to use our own authority to draw out authority in others. Every year, for instance, the quality of the conversation in meetings improves. People don't just speak up; they listen and then incorporate what someone else has said in their next contribution.

### Hot Dates

Friday, October 16  
8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly  
Third grade (Ginny) presenting

Saturday, October 17  
Families of Color Picnic  
CDS yard

Tuesday, October 20 &  
Wednesday, October 21  
Annual Fund Phonathon

Dates also posted on CDS website  
[www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html](http://www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html)



## Thank You!

- To fourth grade families for providing a delicious faculty breakfast last week!
- To Krista Carleson for taking photos at the Book Swap and to Bob Concannon for taking photos at a family farmer training.
- To Akilah Bixler, Amy Hecht, Leslie Hom, Jim Colopy, Jacob Glickman, Todd Hosfelt, Andrea Ow, Beth Porter, Lauren Schwartz, Ann Van Gelder and Jen Wana for leading admission tours.
- To Eric Young and Gentry Clements for hosting Friday coffee in the yard last week.
- To Rick England, Rick Ackerly, Donna Shibata, Marion Quinones and Andrew Henry for providing an informative PTTA meeting on Understanding CDS Finances and the Annual Fund. Thank you to all for attending!

The enterprise of increasing everyone's authority is tricky work. Saying "No" is a very important part of this work—defining and defending boundaries is critical to building an authoritative character who can function gracefully and effectively in the real world. And it has to be done in a way that is loving and encouraging. Sometimes this is very hard, especially when the exercise of one person's authority collides with another's. That is why it is critical that we make conflict a learning experience if we are to make a school a learning community. When two authorities conflict, it all comes down to whether the purpose of the conflict is winning or mutual learning. The latter is the essence of a learning community and the former does not belong.

## Board Corner

### The Head Search Process

*From the CDS Head Search Steering Committee: Marianne Evans, Richard Hylton, Tracy Kirkham, Rebecca Kroll, Laura Pliska, Matt Schwartz, Michael Silver, Sara Switzman and Chris van Löben Sels*

We are pleased to report that the Head Search Steering Committee has selected three Head of School finalists who will be visiting our school over the next several weeks. We are excited about the quality of our candidates and believe that the members of the CDS community will

share our excitement. Please reference the .pdf version of the *CDS Weekly* emailed to all CDS parents on 10/14/09, or a hard copy, for bios on all finalists.

As described in earlier updates, there will be various opportunities to meet the candidates and hear about their backgrounds and thoughts about what they can bring to CDS. We strongly encourage you to attend these meetings and to provide your feedback to us. There will be forms available (on-line and hard copies) for you to share your thoughts with us. Also, while this is a time for all of us to hear from the candidates and pick the best possible match for CDS, it is also a time to share with them the many distinctive things about our school and community. Our candidates are being pursued by other schools, and we want CDS to be their first choice!

Times to meet the finalists:

#### Wednesdays, October 21 & 28, and November 4

- 11-12: 1<sup>st</sup> 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: 2<sup>nd</sup> parent forum, Melanie's room
- 6-7:30: Reception with trustees, Eco lab

#### Thursdays, October 22 & 29, and November 5

- 8:30-9:30: 3<sup>rd</sup> parent forum, Melanie's room
- 9:30-10:15: Meeting with PTTA officers, 16<sup>th</sup> Street meeting room, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- 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.

Thank you for your participation and please feel free to contact any member of the Search Steering Committee if you have any questions or comments about this very important process.

## From the Classrooms

### From the Teddy Bears

“We are having a ‘Teddy Bear Drive.’ We are collecting new teddy bears to donate to police and firefighters to give to children who are really scared in an emergency. Please bring teddy bears to school by November 6 and we will take them to the police and firefighters.”

### From Mr. Doug

“I’ve been walking to school since the start of this year. I’d easily fallen into the habit of driving to school, either because we were running late with breakfast and lunch making at home or because I had stuff to bring to school. It seemed so silly – all that carbon dioxide and wasted energy just because I wasn’t ready to go fifteen minutes earlier. So this year I changed my habit. Suddenly, I’m arriving at school with my thoughts settled and arranged. When my daughter and I walk together (about half the time) we have extra time to chat and to notice what is happening in our neighborhood. I arrive energized and ready for the day. The sun shining in my eyes becomes a greeting from the new day rather than a driving hazard. The weather matters, and so does my choice of shoes. I thought I was giving up fifteen minutes for a worthy goal. Instead, I’ve won a special slice of time every morning. Take it from me and take a walk.”

## From the Office

### Operators are Standing By...

In preparation for the upcoming phonathon next Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, all parents will soon receive a letter from Rachel Yeaman, parent of Callum (K) and Oliver (Teddy Bears), asking for a donation to the CDS Annual Fund. Accompanying Rachel’s letter is a copy of the 2008-09 CDS Annual Report, which contains financial and fundraising information as well as tales from our alumni and many lovely photos of CDS kids in action. Families new to CDS will also receive a booklet written by the National Association of Independent Schools, *Gifts That Give Back*, which answers questions about different types of fundraising (annual fund, capital campaign, matching gifts and more) and volunteering at independent schools. Please take a few minutes to read these materials and be prepared to support CDS, as well as our all-volunteer corps of parent and trustee callers, when your phone rings next week. The CDS Annual Fund supports this

year’s operating expenses and the many outstanding people and programs that make CDS special. Last year, 86% of CDS parents made gifts to the Annual Fund totaling \$119,000; this year’s parent goal is \$125,000. Thank you very much for your generous and enthusiastic participation.

### Flu Reminder – Stay Home

A reminder that if your student comes down with a flu-like illness, including symptoms typical of seasonal flu – cough, fever and body aches – please have him/her stay home from school. We ask for parents/guardians’ cooperation this year in adhering to this guideline. Keeping sick students home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with the entire school community. Students should remain at home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone. While at home, students can keep up with their assignments by emailing their teachers or checking Edline (for middle school students). Thank you for your cooperation.

### The Big Rumble

CDS is participating in the statewide earthquake drill called *The Big California Shakeout* on Thursday, October 15, at 10:15. Everyone at school will *drop, cover and hold* for 2 minutes 45 seconds, the length of the simulated drill. The drill will be announced by citywide sirens, as well as by our internal school sirens. Following the drill, teachers will spend some time

## Go Bulldogs!

### Co-ed Volleyball Scores

October 6, CDS vs. Lycee Francais

Game 1: LF 25, CDS 23

Game 2: LF 25, CDS 12

October 8, CDS vs. San Francisco School

Game 1: CDS 25, SFS 23

Game 2: CDS 25, SFS 14

October 13, CDS vs. SF Friends School

Game 1: CDS 25, SFFS 14

Game 2: CDS 25, SFFS 23

### Co-ed Volleyball Calendar

Thursday, October 15, 4 p.m.

SF Friends School (Team B), Boys & Girls Club

reviewing basic earthquake safety procedures and precautions. For more information on city and state planning efforts, please visit the following websites:

- <http://www.thebigrumble.org/>
- <http://www.shakeout.org/>

## Family Farmer Openings

The following dates are still available for family farmers. Returning and/or recently trained farmers can e-mail or call Misty at [mistyc@cds-sf.org](mailto:mistyc@cds-sf.org) or 415-861-5432 x321 to sign up:

- December 30-31
- January 1-3
- February 13-19
- April 12-15

## Events

### CDS Families of Color Picnic

Please join us on Saturday, October 17 at noon in the yard for the CDS Families of Color Picnic. This event is designed as an affinity gathering for families, teachers and administrators of color—including multiracial families, trans-racially adoptive families, Asian, Latino and African American families, but all people are welcome!

Anyone who wants to spend a couple of hours with families from other grades and classes just getting to know each other better outside of school are invited. This is a chance to make connections with other families, and support and celebrate the experiences and perspectives of kids and families of color in the CDS community.

Basic picnic food and drinks will be provided, but if you can, we encourage you to bring a potluck dish to share. It can be a favorite family recipe or just something your family loves to eat. Please e-mail Akilah Bixler at [bixler+14@comcast.net](mailto:bixler+14@comcast.net) if you would like to help organize or set up the event.

### Why a Families of Color Picnic?

The Picnic for Families of Color grew out of a chance encounter on the first day of pre-school. “Wow, you look just like me!” one child said to the other. Indeed, both girls were wearing the same dress, but they also just

so happened to be children of mixed-race. Much adulation ensued and a friendship was born. The idea behind the Families of Color Picnic is certainly not to exclude anyone, but to give parents and children of color the opportunity to meet and share their experiences, thoughts and ideas with one another. “Has your daughter ever come home and asked why her hair is different than the other girls?” “Do you ever feel weird when your parents speak with you in Spanish in front of the other kids?” “What if we got together for a play date and the kids can practice their Mandarin?” There is great comfort in knowing you are not alone and in helping to create an environment that supports and embraces our differences. We invite all families of color to join us on Saturday, October 17 for great food, stimulating conversation and most importantly, good fun!

## PTTA Update

### Meeting Update

Please note that the scheduled November 10 PTTA meeting about “The Inclusive CDS Community” will be postponed until February 9. There will be no PTTA meeting in November.

## 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?

- General e-mail, [CDSPTTA@yahoo.com](mailto:CDSPTTA@yahoo.com)
- 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)
- Stephanie Scarpulla, Faculty Appreciation Coordinator, (415) 999-6227 or [bluebirdcollection@gmail.com](mailto:bluebirdcollection@gmail.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 [cgs.tourvolunteering@gmail.com](mailto:cds.tourvolunteering@gmail.com)
- Kristen Peña, Parent Involvement Coordinator, (415) 244-1411 or [Kristen@glugcollection.com](mailto:Kristen@glugcollection.com)
- Meredith Ashworth, Preschool Representative, (415) 254-0229 or [meredith@glugcollection.com](mailto:meredith@glugcollection.com)
- Kate Flynn, Middle School Representative, (415) 305-6625 or [k8fln@aol.com](mailto:k8fln@aol.com)
- Andrea Reynolds, Fiesta Chair, (415) 860-7556 or [andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net](mailto:andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net)
- Danielle Gutherie, Country Fair Chair, (415) 515-7994 or [danielle@vegaproject.com](mailto:danielle@vegaproject.com)

## Upcoming Dates

**Friday, October 23**  
Sibling applications due

**Sunday, October 25**  
(note new date and time!)  
11-1 p.m.  
Alumni Reunion

**Monday, October 26**  
Professional development day  
No school  
No camp available

**Wednesday, October 28 & Thursday, October 29**  
Rescheduled Photo Days

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

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