



## November 19, 2021: Grandparents & Special Friends

Dear CDS Community,

A year ago, we hosted our first-ever virtual Grandparents & Special Friends Day event. Our expectations were more than exceeded when, in the middle of the presentation, we realized we had guests from Sweden, the United Kingdom, India, Wales and Turtle Island, off the northwest coast of British Columbia, Canada! In some of our discussions after this wonderful community event, we asked ourselves, “How can we build on this in the future? How can we expand our connection to grandparents and special friends who are not here in San Francisco?”

That connection was felt again today during our yearly celebration of grandparents and special friends. This morning, we had guests joining from as far as India, Australia, Germany, England, Israel, and of course various places around the country. Below are some of the messages we saw in the chat this morning, which reaffirm our value of creating an inclusive community whose members connect with each other.

- *Thank you so much for this amazing program! I'm so impressed with the student performers and their teachers! Wonderful job!*
- *What a great opportunity to learn more about CDS. But I still want to meet the chickens and sheep!*
- *We are thankful for all the great teachers and staff at the school! We loved seeing you on the Zoom!*
- *That was such an uplifting program!*
- *As an educator for over 50 years, I marvel at all that you do!*
- *As always, an awesome event. Great performance by all the students! Bravo!*
- *Blessed to be a part of this beautiful family.*
- *And from a parent: Like so many, the grandparents in our family are distant and it's such a gift to have them see our kids in this context. It was so heartwarming to see grandparents chiming in from all over the world, too. Amazing use of technology!*

This week, one of my meetings was canceled, and although there were emails to write and projects to work on, instead I ran out of the office to spend some time with our students. I walked the hallways of the lower school and marveled at the beautiful and creative artwork and noted the growth in the writing since the beginning of the year. I then moved to the preschool and built a rocket ship and played with the water table. This break in my day allowed me to pause and reflect on the joy of learning and the importance of each stage in the learning journey to be celebrated and noted.

As I was leaving the yard, I heard a preschooler say, “My shoes are dirty, but I am not gonna panic!” Laughing, I reflected that the opportunity to pause and listen brought wisdom. In the coming days, I wish you joy where there are moments you can pause and listen to your children as you build a rocket ship, read a story, or play a video game with them. I am sure there will be some meaningful quotes! Maybe you can even get a little dirty and not panic.

As we break for a week, I am mindful of the various ways that one might celebrate or honor this time. We might cook meals with friends and family or we might mourn the loss of our ancestors. My habit during this time of year is to reflect on what I am grateful for, and I continue to be grateful for this community of learners, young and older.

Some of the resources that students shared today might provide opportunities for learning:

[Sogorea Te' Land Trust](#)

[The Indigenous Solidarity Network's Rethinking Thanksgiving Toolkit](#)

Have a wonderful week.

Warmly,  
Shelly