



April 30, 2021: The Joy of Friday Assembly

Dear CDS Community,

There are so many moments of joy during any given week at CDS, and one of my favorites is Friday Assembly. Even those last few minutes of planning before we start have provided some funny moments. On those occasions when some of our student presenters join the meeting early to go over details, they have a chance to see our last minute, sometimes frenetic, preparations. *So who is doing the opening again? Don't forget to turn off annotation. Remember to record! Everyone is in the waiting room, come on, let's start!*

Still, while these virtual assemblies have been a highlight for the past thirteen months, I cannot wait for our first in-person assembly in the fall. I don't know about you, but I plan to have some tissues in my pocket that morning. Being together with everyone on the yard will truly be a moment to remember.

One of the main purposes of our Friday Assembly is to showcase some of the amazing learning your children are experiencing in our program. It's also a great opportunity for students to become comfortable with public speaking and to practice being in front of an audience. This year, we have covered a broad range of topics. As I look back on the many presentations, it's easy to see how Friday Assembly is such a clear celebration of our lived mission, beliefs, and values.

We heard about Passion Projects from the first graders. We were challenged to take action after hearing from our middle school changemakers. We learned about voting rights from our third graders. We thanked the facilities team for the amazing projects they have built from scratch to keep our students safe. The fifth graders taught us about protest art. We Bungalow Boogied and the kindergartners shared the joy of Letterland with us.

We honored Black History Month Forever, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Cesar Chavez, and said goodbye to Ruth Bader Ginsburg. We celebrated Indigenous Peoples' Day, Diwali,

Kwanzaa, Christmas, Hanukkah, Lunar New Year, and other cultural observances. Just this morning, we learned what happens to that sheep wool after it's freed from the warm bodies of Sunny and Frisco. With just six weeks to go in this school year, we have heard from all the cohorts but a small handful and we will soon celebrate Harvey Milk. And in those last minutes of assembly, I love seeing students and grown-ups alike dance, dance, and dance! We will have to figure out how to continue this dancing fun when we return to in-person assemblies.

One thing we have learned in the pandemic is that out of crisis there often arise new opportunities. We have seen this with many of the Zoom assemblies and events, allowing us to broadcast our program and experience to homes all over the world, in fact. It has been particularly fun to see some of our grandparents and special friends joining us each week.

In our planning meetings on Thursdays, after we run through the classroom projects that will soon be shared, we then spend a few minutes talking about different options for the music. We started to notice sometime in the fall that many of you were commenting in the chat about the music selections; the technology and communications teams have been keeping a running list of all the songs. Rico has been such a great DJ, and we have plans to send out the playlist before the school year ends. Be on the lookout for a mix we are calling "Music of Virtual Assemblies."

I hope to see you all next Friday and until then, I wish you all a wonderful weekend.

Warmly,
Shelly