



December 3, 2009

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Don't Miss Math Curriculum Night Thursday, December 10

This article is guest written by Margaret Piskitel, Curriculum Coordinator.

Picture this: an elementary teacher standing in front of a group of eager mathematicians, a quart-sized bag of Snickers in one hand, Unifix cubes in the other. "Today, we're going to estimate how many Snickers are in this bag here. What do you notice about the bag of Snickers? This empty ziploc bag? These cubes?" she asks the group as she launches into a problem-solving lesson about estimation. The mathematicians begin to notice, examine and ponder how they can estimate the number of Snickers in the bag. As the teacher sets the mathematicians loose to explore the problem on their own, the room bursts into conversation. "Can I feel it?" "Can I see it again?" "What do you think we should do?" "Does that make sense?" "Well, when we estimated how many raisins were in the box, we used this method ..."

These eager mathematicians are working hard to understand the questions embedded in the math problem. They are using prior knowledge to approach the problem, applying and adapting a variety of strategies to solve the problem, experimenting with and considering the thinking and strategies of others, making a reasonable estimate of the solution, and refining and checking their work. You may recognize these disciplines from your child's progress report—they are the bedrock of our math program and the threads that weave together the mathematical learning and thinking that we encourage in our students on a daily basis.

The exercise described above was part of last year's all-school focus on our math curriculum (2008-09). The CDS faculty gathered monthly to explore math, and set a variety of goals, including: building a common math vocabulary, understanding the variety of approaches to math being taught at CDS, discovering areas of strengths and weaknesses in our math program, and sharing assessment strategies.

One way we worked toward these goals was to become students again and return to the experience of solving a new problem: choosing a strategy, showing in more than one way how you solved it, explaining in the language of math your approach, and taking a risk to share and explain your thinking, whether it was "right" or "wrong." These are the fundamentals of problem-solving and in order to better understand the challenges we present to our students on a daily basis, we embarked on this journey together.

At CDS we want our students to understand concepts deeply so they become

Hot Dates

Thursday, December 3
Make-Up Photo Day

Friday, December 4
8:30 a.m.
Friday assembly
First grade (Barbara) presenting
5:30-9 p.m.
CDS Book Fair
Books Inc.

Monday, December 7
4:30-6 p.m.
Committee on Inclusion and
Diversity meeting
2nd floor meeting room, 16th Street

Tuesday, December 8
6:30-7:30 p.m.
Sliding scale tuition workshop

Wednesday, December 9
Class Photo Day

Thursday, December 10
6-8:15 p.m.
Curriculum Night



Thank You!

- To everyone who helped make last week's Grandparents and Special Friends Day such a great success: preschool families provided bagels, fruit, pastries and juice; Jeanette Wilmerding, Fasil Fikreab, Stephanie Scarpulla and Jasmin Hoo helped during the event; and Susan Carp and Kristen Pena sold Ritual coffee. Many more people shared their time, greeted guests and made the morning extra terrific. Thank you!
- To Katie Buono, Mary Dennis, Viru Gupte, Kristin Henry, Amy Hecht, Michele Morgano, Shermalee Nicholson, Roger Nys, Andrea Ow, Louis Schump, Lauren Schwartz, Julie Stoll, Ann Van Gelder and Jeanette Wilmerding for leading admission tours.
- To Lisa Wally and Carlos Vasquez for representing CDS at the Our Family Coalition LGBTQ elementary school fair.
- To Colleen Fordyce for taking photos of the Halloween Parade.
- To Bob Concannon for taking photographs at Grandparents and Special Friends Day.
- To Akilah Bixler, Viru Gupte, Andrea Ow, Jen Wana and Rachel Yeaman for leading admission tours.

flexible, critical thinkers and thoughtful problem-solvers who rely on a variety of strategies and methods to understand mathematical concepts and solve mathematical problems. This problem-solving approach to math is what we want our students to explore and master—from preschool through eighth grade and beyond; students need to know arithmetic and other math problem-solving methods, and when to use each.

How do teachers accomplish this feat? One way is by consulting the newly-adopted CDS Math Handbook, the result of our many meetings, discussions and collaboration. The essential questions teachers grapple with on a daily basis as they develop their math teaching are the same questions we used when developing the Handbook:

- How can I make math come alive for my students so they understand its real-world context?
- How do people learn math?

- What concepts should be introduced and explored at which ages?
- How can my classroom best support the children's learning of mathematics?
- How can I coach my students to think critically, logically and flexibly to figure out a reasonable and increasingly efficient method for the situation and then make sure their answer makes sense?

This Handbook will serve as a guide for CDS teachers as they create and plan their math curriculum each year. It reflects the research on best practices that shape the CDS approach to teaching and learning. The outcomes in each grade are based on the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards, focal points and research about best practice and child development. It is set up to help teachers address the range of concepts students should be exposed to and also illuminates the approaches and assessments teachers use to teach and gauge students' growth and progress.

So, please help us celebrate this accomplishment and see for yourself how our math curriculum builds, year by year, at our upcoming Parent Education night, *Illuminating the CDS Curriculum: Spotlight on Mathematics*, **next Thursday, December 10 from 6-8:15 p.m.** We hope to see you there!

From the Classrooms

Green Task Force News



Is your child ready to move on from training wheels, readying you to join the ranks of families biking to school? If so, there's a free workshop sponsored by the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition on Sunday, December 6 from 1-2:30 p.m. for any parents wanting to teach their children to ride a bike. Join SFBC Board member and biking mom, Jean Fraser, in car-free Golden Gate Park for a group effort to get our kids riding without training wheels. Bring bike, helmet and a snack to share. Meet at JFK Drive, west of Conservatory Drive, in GG Park. Please note that in the case of rain, the event will be canceled.

If you or your child is interested in joining the growing Green Task Force and making a difference for CDS and our earth, please contact either Misty Cummings (mistyc@cds-sf.org) or Molly Meng (mollym@cds-sf.org). We have meetings once a month, but work hard to be green every day!

December Collections

In celebration of the giving nature of both the parents and students at CDS, December is a time when the community collects things for those in need. Several classes are hosting drives for different organizations they are collaborating with. Collection bin sites are listed below, and can be found on the Community Learning Board near the reception desk.

San Francisco Food Bank

Nearly 150,000 people in San Francisco live with the threat of hunger. The San Francisco Food Bank provides food to 22,000 households each week and needs your help.

- Host: Fifth grade
- Collection site: The lobby of St. Joseph's Hall and the preschool porch
- What: Canned, boxed and bagged non-perishable food items
- When: Now until June 2010

San Francisco Firefighter's Toy Program

The San Francisco Firefighter's Toy Program is the city's largest and the nation's oldest program of its kind. The toy program serves individual families as well as community organizations, including shelters for abused women and children, inner-city schools, neighborhood groups, children's cancer wards, and pediatric AIDS units.

- Host: Leaping Lizard class
- Collection site: Community Based Learning Board and Leaping Lizards classroom
- What: New or gently used toys
- When: Now until December 17

San Francisco Police Teddy Bear Collection

This program provides teddy bears (52,500 to date) to emergency agencies that work with children in crisis.

- Host: Teddy Bear class
- Collection site: Community Based Learning Board and Teddy Bear classroom
- What: New teddy bears
- When: Now until December 17

Homeless Prenatal Program

Seizing the motivating opportunity created by pregnancy and parenthood, HPP joins with families to help them recognize their strengths and trust in their capacity to transform their lives to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty.

- Host: Green Task Force and second grade
- Collection site: Community Based Learning Board
- What: New and gently used clothing for infants, children and adults; freshly laundered maternity clothes; strollers, baby carriers and slings; car seats, books and plastic and paper grocery bags; new (unopened) toiletries, formula, baby food, disposable diapers.
- When: Now until December 17

From the Office

CDS on Facebook and Twitter

It's true: you can now become a fan of CDS on Facebook, or follow CDS on Twitter! To become a fan of CDS, simply go to <http://www.facebook.com/cdssf>. You'll find school news and events posted there.

To get the latest news from CDS via Twitter, you can find us www.twitter.com/cdssf for general news or www.twitter.com/cdssfannounce for emergency announcements only. (To receive announcements you'll need to click "send request" to be approved to receive them.) You can choose how you want to receive these updates: to your cell phone or e-mail account, for example.

Make-Up Photo Day

Please note that make-up photos will be taken on Thursday, December 3. In addition, class photo day will be held on Wednesday, December 9.

eScrip and OneCause

Did you know that you can donate money to CDS simply by shopping at your favorite stores via eScrip and OneCause? Visit www.escrip.com to sign up and register your credit cards, and each time you shop at places like Safeway, Macy's, Mollie Stone's or Mugshots, a portion of your total will be donated to CDS. Please note that if you registered several years ago you may need to log on and renew your membership so that the school continues to receive proceeds.

Another way to contribute is through OneCause at www.onecause.com. Simply go to "Join" and fill out the requested information and then go to "Choose a cause/school" and type in Children's Day School. Once you've chosen CDS you can register your credit cards, invite friends and families to register and begin shopping. The site lists a variety of merchants you can shop with from Amazon to Target to eBay.

SST Information Night

What is sliding scale tuition (SST)? Should we apply – and if so, how do we do that? Come learn more about our sliding scale tuition on Tuesday night, December 8, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Members of the Access and Affordability Committee – Donna Shibata and Aimee Giles – will be on hand to answer your questions and explain how this process works. No RSVP is necessary, but if you have questions feel free to contact Aimee Giles at 861-5432 x322 or aimeeg@cds-sf.org.

Events

Book Fair

It's holiday shopping time! Please join us this Friday, December 4 from 5:30-9 p.m. at Books Inc. (in the Opera Plaza) for the CDS Book Fair. You'll be able to shop for friends and family and support the CDS PTTA at the same time. Best of all, 20% of all revenue will go directly to the faculty and staff holiday gift fund. Childcare will be provided at school and Mr. Rick will make a guest appearance. See you there!

Extended Program News

Winter Arts Festival

Everyone is invited to this year's After School Winter Arts Festival on Friday, December 11 at 4:30 p.m. at the Grace Fellowship Community Church. The festival will include performances by the guitar class, violin and cello classes, the Story Theater Club, and artwork by the Building Club, World of Wonder and the Puppet Club.

For more information, please contact Dan Larson at danl@cds-sf.org, or 415-861-5432 x315.

Fall Enrichment Classes

Fall enrichment classes are winding down. Please note the end dates for the following classes:

Monday

- Anna's Art: 12/14 + 1 makeup class to be scheduled
- Cupcakes, Cookies and Candy: 12/7
- Knitting: 12/14
- Spanish Conversation: 12/7
- Tree Frog Treks: 12/7

Tuesday

- Acrosports: 12/1 (makeup class)
- Spanish Cooking Club: 11/24

Wednesday

- Build an Electric Guitar: 12/2
- International Appetizers: 12/2
- Yoga: 12/2

Thursday

- Bugout: 12/10
- Chess: 12/10

Friday

- Creative Dance: 12/11

Please note: for music class end dates, please contact Dan at danl@cds-sf.org or the instructor directly.

PTTA Update

Coffee Sales

Thanks to the help of coffee volunteers Kristen Peña and Susan Carp, all Ritual coffee beans sold out on Grandparents and Special Friends Day, making November a record month for coffee sales. If you are still thinking about ordering coffee, place your order soon, before the holidays!

Coffee feedback has been great so far:

“I never forget to buy coffee at the store anymore!”

“Ritual is delicious. Glad I tried it.”

“Every school should implement this fundraiser!”

Please e-mail Stephanie Scarpulla at bluebirdcollection@gmail.com or 415-999-6227 if you have questions, comments or feedback.

Board Corner

COID Meeting

The Committee on Inclusion and Diversity (COID) will meet on Monday, December 7 from 4:30-6 p.m. in the 2nd floor meeting room at 16th Street to discuss diversity and inclusion in the curriculum and beginning plans for the MLK Jr. commemoration in January. All are welcome to attend!

Upcoming Dates

Friday, December 18

Winter Performance

Noon dismissal; extended program available

Sliding Scale Tuition applications due

Monday, December 21 – Wednesday, December 23

Winter vacation

No school; extended program available

Thursday, December 24 – Friday, January 1

Winter vacation

No school; no extended program

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

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