

JOURNEY SCHOOL NEWS

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*Journey School * 23431 Knollwood * Aliso Viejo, CA 92656 * (949) 448-7232 *
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Dear Parents,

Five years ago when I was working at the Sacramento Waldorf High School, the chairman of the Mathematics Department approached me about his disappointment in the development of the math curriculum. As I listened, I thought that I had an easy solution to his concern that seniors were not receiving a full year of calculus. (I can tell you that there were several seniors who were not unhappy with this fact.) I offered my solution. We would combine the seventh and eighth grade classes for math and split them up into three groups with one group taking algebra so that they could navigate through a high school curriculum and arrive at senior year with the background to take a full year of calculus. He liked the idea and we concurred that this must be brought as a proposal to the faculty.

The idea was a popular one and yet some teachers worried that the eighth graders would not be ready. I reminded them that in the Waldorf curriculum, math does not need to take into consideration the same developmental steps as the language arts curriculum does. The eighth grade teacher felt concerned that just the right person be chosen to take on this new endeavor, and suggested that since this was my brainstorm that I be the person to initiate this deed. I had not thought that this solution was going to be one that I had to bring to conclusion, yet there I was some five months later standing in front of fourteen eager eighth graders.

I quickly realized that this was an incredible opportunity for me as well as well as the students for, after several weeks, I saw how these fourteen students were indeed a pleasure to teach. Most were boys, yet the three girls stuck together through that year working diligently to prove that they were equal to their male counterparts. The class was scheduled right after lunch and while they were tardy from time to time, they never lacked enthusiasm. They questioned everything and wanted to be challenged, yet often as my current math class does, they would ask, "What will we ever use this stuff for?" I sought answers to their questions and assured them that if nothing else, algebra would strengthen their logical thinking. They laughed at me but did not lose faith that this was all going someplace. By year's end, our bond had grown strong. They were strong math students, but moreover they had hearts of gold. Their kindness to me was overwhelming.

On a rainy Friday night last month, I traveled to Northern California to watch a good number of these students play one of their last high school basketball games. I enjoyed a pre-game dinner with them, drove to the game with them and enjoyed their conversation during their post game meal. My head arrived safely on my pillow at 1:45 am. As I lay in bed, I was thankful for the good fortune that my life has been blessed with. These eighteen year olds were as kind and loving to me as my own children. I tried to comprehend it and understand my good fortune. No clear answers arrived, just like the ones I tried to provide them with five years ago. What is clear is that my brainstorm allowed me to meet and fall in love with a group of students that have contributed to me becoming a better teacher, but more so, they have made me a better person.

My best to you...Tim Connolly, Administrator

Dear Mr. Administrator of Journey School,

What is the communication policy at the school?

At Journey, this policy is described in the Parent Handbook that was distributed in September. When issues arise, direct communication with the person with whom the matter has arisen with is our policy. This would mean making the time to communicate your thoughts and why you see this differently or disagree with the other person. The ideal is to do so face to face, but bearing the circumstances, a telephone call could work as well. If one feels that he or she cannot speak alone to this person then a facilitator or witness to the conversation can be invited so that both parties have someone to balance the conversation with and to keep matters on point. These conversations need to be respectful of course.

Sometimes when we feel frustrated with another person, we can seek out people whom we may feel comfortable complaining to, and perhaps to gain allegiance in our concerns. In my mind, this type of conversation goes toward gossip because it is not intended to understand the other person's position, but to merely prove once again that you are right and he or she is wrong. The alternative to this conversation would be to ask your talking partner to listen and provide balance to what you are feeling. One would want feedback that is conducive to fixing the problem, not making it worse. The talking partner might ask you to look at it from the other person's point of view, and to see how he or she thinks so that you may be awakened to new horizons or new ways of thinking. Then, with all things being equal, the goal would be to go back to the person you disagreed with and speak to them in such a way that you would in the least "agree to disagree" but to do so with respect.

In the end, this is the kind of communication we seek at Journey to strengthen the future for our children and to give them the tools necessary so that they can find new ways to travel down rather than the old ones that have caused too many hardships, disagreements and the battles we read about in history books.

From the Parent Cabinet

This spring the Parent Cabinet will be drafting an action plan for fundraising next school year. Part of our discussion includes turning one of our festivals into a fundraising festival (most Waldorf schools have a similar event). Our current thought is to have this festival first semester prior to Thanksgiving. This plan would require more effort from the parent body and would alter the Harvest Festival and possibly Fairie Market. **We Need Your Input and Ideas!** Please come on Thursday March 22nd to a fundraising meeting at 1pm in the Morning Glory kindergarten to discuss this plan.

The next Parent Cabinet meeting will be April 19th in the Morning Glory kindergarten and everyone is welcome.

Lisa O'Neill PC chair

Council Update

Since the beginning of January, the Council has met five times with the sixth one having just occurred this past Thursday. The topics have varied but the main focus has been on admission policies, aftercare and the budget for the 2007-08 school year. It is typical that the budget and employment contracts dominate the agenda for the next months, as it is necessary that we arrive at a balanced budget with all the variety of needs to keep the school directed in a healthy way. The Council along with the faculty will be weighing in on topics such as:

- Increase in specialty class offering, including Foreign Language
- Rent increases for the new campus
- Salary increases for faculty and staff
- Increase in the office staff
- 8th grade graduation for 2008
- First Grade Teacher for 2007-08
- Possibility of a third kindergarten

Lastly, the most recent Council meeting was held at the request of parents to discuss the on-going litigation that the school is involved in. The Council took input from those present as well as clarified questions about the matter so that misinformation or in some cases, no information, was addressed.

At the moment the legal case with Ms. Edwards is still pending toward the appeals board ruling. The Council has attempted to analyze the matter with eyes wide open to keep the financial and emotional integrity of the school first in its thoughts.

On behalf of the Council.....Tim Connolly

Annual Giving

We are excited to announce that you will be receiving a request for annual giving in the mail this week. Your gift is greatly appreciated and necessary for the growth and success of the school!

Connollys to Colorado

Just a reminder to let you know that Patti and Tim will be mentoring at the Waldorf School of the Roaring Fork in Carbondale, Colorado the week of March 19-23. As you may recall, they spent a similar week last October at the school. They can be reached through email. Essential conversations will be handled by Julie Giffin, Michele Bennett and Shoon Ortiz while Tim is away.

Eurythmy Assembly

Please come to our Eurythmy assembly that will take place next Thursday, March 15 at 1:45 in the Performing Arts Center of the Wood Canyon School. The eurythmy portion will feature the 3rd and 4th grades, and the balance of the assembly will feature poetry and music by the other classes. Please feel free to invite special friends and grandparents.

Tim Connolly

Dear Parents,

Please have your children dress in Eurythmy assembly attire on Thursday March 15th. Eurythmy assembly attire consists of a dark colored bottom (black is preferred but navy blue or brown will do) and a white shirt or blouse. Girls with long hair should wear it tied back.

Thank you, Ms. Amy

Alliance for Public Waldorf Education

Formerly known as WIPSA, this association of charter schools using Waldorf methodologies is growing and inching toward formation. In the past six weeks, the private Waldorf School association (AWSNA) has contacted the state education department to ask them to not refer to us as Public Waldorf Schools as part of AWSNA's intent to not have the schools infringe on their trademark. The Alliance responded by deciding to request legal opinion about the trademark issue and thus far, the law seems to favor the charter schools use of the term. As I have written, the Waldorf private school movement has taken the position that our schools may water down the curriculum as well as provide competition for employment of teachers and compete for students who otherwise might attend a private Waldorf school.

Journey's Council has taken the position that we are not interested in litigation on this matter. We feel that we will continue to educate parents, modify what we say and yet continue to teach a curriculum that we feel very good about. Clearly we feel that we can, if necessary, communicate about what we do, attract new families and teachers without infringing on the trademark. In the meantime, the Council has asked that I continue on the steering committee for the Alliance as well have contributed to expenses for the Alliance so that the full formation can become reality.

I will report more to the community in the weeks to come after I attend the next committee meeting for the alliance on March 31.

On behalf of the Council.....Tim Connolly

The students and faculty of Journey School invite you and your friends
and family to our

First Annual

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL March 28th

Grades 1-7 students must be at school at 5:00 pm
Performances start at 5:30 pm

The Festival will begin with artistic presentations in the Wood Canyon performance hall. The outdoor "Global Restaurant" will then open with 9 different ethnic dishes to sample. 10% of the proceeds will benefit our local Food Bank and 90% will benefit our children's educational experience!

ADMISSION FEES~

FULL PASSPORT (sampling of all 9 dishes and an extra dish)

\$8 pre-purchased (beginning March 7) or \$10 at the door

MINI PASSPORT (sampling of 5 dishes)

\$4 pre-purchased (beginning March 7) or \$5 at the door

Please contact your child's teacher, your class parent

or Coco Cuddyer at 713-6003 or cuddyer@cox.net if you have any questions.

First Annual INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL March 28th

Dear Journey School Parents and Teachers,

Our 1st International Festival is coming up and we are pretty excited about it! This information is about the festival and its jobs:

- When: Wednesday, March 28 (1st – 8th grade students, please arrive at 5 pm.)
We will start the performances at 5:30 pm promptly.
- What: Performances given by each grade are from Japan (kindergarten teachers are sharing a puppet play), Mexico (1st), Ireland (2nd), Middle East (3rd), USA (4th), Greece (5th), Russia (6th), and Kenya (7th). Dinner will follow.
- Where: Wood Canyon Performing Arts Center and outside our classrooms for dinner.
- Cost: \$8 (9 dishes) or \$4 (5 dishes). PLEASE BRING A MESS KIT.

Your class representatives and your child's main lesson teacher will be asking you to help in the following areas:

- Setting up the food booth
- Purchasing/picking up ingredients (see below on how to have groceries donated)
- Cooking
- Serving Shifts
- Cleaning up

Ingredients may be donated by local grocery stores. With a donation letter and a big smile, many stores will give you a gift card. Please pick the donation letter up in the school office.

We also need some volunteers for setting up and cleaning up the eating area. Please let me know if you would like to help.

It will be a fun night!

Love Coco

JOURNEY SCHOOL COMMUNITY FORUMS

FEBRUARY-MAY 2007

APRIL 2
7:00-8:30 pm

PARENTING MADE EASIER WITH UNDERSTANDING THE TEMPERAMENTS

Patti Connolly will speak about how parents can use their knowledge of the four temperaments to make their parenting easier. The four temperaments, basic personality styles in their essence, were first identified in the Middle Ages but still are a huge help to adults in understanding and working with children and each other. This Community Forum Talk will take place in the Eurythmy Room.

APRIL 25
7:00-8:30 pm

WHY SHOULD I SAY NO TO MEDIA?

Did you know that there is scientific evidence demonstrating irreversible detrimental effects on the brain from electronic media use? Come find out! With Liz Clark, First Grade Teacher.

MAY 17
9:00 - 10:00 am

PARENT'S EURYTHMY

Come experience eurythmy for yourself. You will be led through a progression of the grades, sharing both tone and speech eurythmy with Amy Schick, Eurythmy teacher.

DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED UNLESS FEE IS NOTED
ALL FORUMS WILL BE HELD AT JOURNEY SCHOOL

23431 Knollwood, Aliso Viejo, California 949.448.7232

Congratulations Donald Garcia!

Our own Donald Garcia (father of Montana 4th grade and Nicolette 6th grade) was appointed to the Aliso Viejo City Council last week. Donald was selected by the council on a 3-1 vote. Well done Donald!

Third Grade Class, Youth Garden Grant Award Winners

Congratulations to the third grade class. They received a \$250 gift card to the Home Depot for garden enhancements. There were 600 applications submitted and Journey School was one of the 200 chosen. Thanks to the Home Depot and the National Gardening Association.

Lice Check Completed

This Thursday and Friday the Journey School students and staff were checked for lice by the "Lousey Nitpickers". Only one student was found to have "nits" but that student was treated, rechecked and declared lice free the next day! Please continue to check your children at home.

JASP

In the Council meeting held on Thursday, March 8th it was agreed that there will be no changes made at this time to the current JASP schedule.

JOURNEY SCHOOL PARENT SURVEYS

Please look for the "Parent Survey" in your mail next week. Your comments and suggestions are valued!

MAY FESTIVAL DAY SET FOR MAY 4TH

Journey School's May Festival is set for Friday, May 4 at 11:45 am with a school wide lunch provided for the students, the choosing of the May King and Queen, Maypole dancing and old fashioned games. The students will make their flower crowns in the morning with their teachers. All parents are invited to attend. More information will be coming to you soon!

Thanks, Patti



Important Dates

- March 13**
Classroom Walk Through for interested parents
8:15 - 10:40 a.m.
Parent Study Group on Adolescence
7 p.m.
- March 14**
Class Photos and individual retakes
11 a.m.
- March 15**
Informal Grades Assembly
1:45 p.m.
- March 19 - March 23**
6th and 7th grade CORE testing
- March 20**
1st grade field trip
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- March 22**
Fundraising Planning Meeting
1 p.m.
- March 23**
7th grade track meet at WSOC
- March 27**
Classroom Walk Through for interested parents
8:15 - 10:40 a.m.
Parent Study Group on Adolescence
7 p.m.
- March 28**
INTERNATIONAL FOOD FESTIVAL
5:30 p.m.
- April 2**
3rd grade class meeting
6 p.m.
Lecture on Temperaments by Patti Connolly
7 p.m.
- April 3**
Classroom Walk Through for interested parents
8:15 - 10:40 a.m.
Prospective Parent Evening
7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Parent Study Group on Adolescence
7 p.m.
- April 5**
6th grade play
1:45 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
- April 6**
Early dismissal
NO JASP
- April 9 - April 13**
Spring Break
NO SCHOOL
- April 18** - *Open enrollment ends*