

# THS BEAR TRACKS



July 7, 2010 Volume I

## From the Desk of the Head of School

This year has been remarkable in so many ways. What have struck me most about the children are the levels that they have reached in their personal and academic lives here. Far too numerous to cite, two examples are the IB Attitudes and the IB Units of Inquiry: The IB attitudes, initially merely words, are not only understood but accepted as important to a healthy school community by all, and the common language has provided common ground for problem solving and greater tolerance and appreciation of differences among us; the IB units of inquiry have provided the forum for focus on a central important idea with emerging questions best answered through integration of subject matter, research, mastery of particular skills, and most importantly, development of proficiency in higher order thinking. These studies have also given rise to action plans to make a difference in our communities.

We have the benefit of an amazing teaching staff; specialists every one, knowledgeable in his/her particular field. They are the ones who bring the knowledge of the subject(s) with the skills to draw out the best from the children. I can never say enough about how much they are appreciated. Together with the incredibly dedicated office staff, this team is truly phenomenal.

However, none of this “magic” would be possible without you and the support you bring to THS in so many ways. I want to thank you for this incredible opportunity you have given us to partner with you in this educational journey. We are truly honored.

I wish you the best that the summer can bring, especially: relaxation, playfulness, joy, and appreciation of the moments of sharing with your children.

With gratitude for all you do for the children and THS,

*Sandi Passalacqua*



## **“School”, “Teacher”, “Learner” and “Curriculum” for the 21st Century**

How should education be structured to meet the needs of students in this 21st century world? How do we now define “School”, “Teacher” “Learner” and "Curriculum"?

Schools in the 21st century will be laced with a project-based curriculum for life aimed at engaging students in addressing real-world problems, issues important to humanity, and questions that matter.

This is a dramatic departure from the factory-model education of the past. It is abandonment, finally, of textbook-driven, teacher-centered, paper and pencil schooling. It means a new way of understanding the concept of “knowledge”, a new definition of the “educated person”. A new way of designing and delivering the curriculum is required.

We offer the following new definitions for “School”, “Teacher” and “Learner” appropriate for the 21st century:

Schools will go from ‘buildings’ to 'nerve centers', with walls that are porous and transparent, connecting teachers, students and the community to the wealth of knowledge that exists in the world.”

Teacher - From primary role as a dispenser of information to orchestrator of learning and helping students turn information into knowledge, and knowledge into wisdom.

The 21st century will require knowledge generation, not just information delivery, and schools will need to create a “culture of inquiry”.

Learner - In the past a learner was a young person who went to school, spent a specified amount of time in certain courses, received passing grades and graduated. Today we must see learners in a new context:

First – we must maintain student interest by helping them see how what they are learning prepares them for life in the real world.

Second – we must instill curiosity, which is fundamental to lifelong learning.

Third – we must be flexible in how we teach.

Fourth – we must excite learners to become even more resourceful so that they will continue to learn outside the formal school day.”

So what will schools look like, exactly? What will the curriculum look like? How will this 21st century curriculum be organized, and how will it impact the way we design and build schools, how we assess students, how we purchase resources, how we acquire and utilize the new technologies, and what does all this mean for us in an era of standardized testing and accountability?

Imagine a school in which the students – all of them – are so excited about school that they can hardly wait to get there. Imagine having little or no “discipline problems” because the students are so engaged in their studies that those problems disappear. Imagine having parents calling, sending notes, or coming up to the school to tell you about the dramatic changes they are witnessing in their children: newly found enthusiasm and excitement for school, a desire to work on projects, research and write after school and on weekends. Imagine your students making nearly exponential growth in their basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, researching, scientific explorations, math, multimedia skills and more!

It is possible. It has happened, and is happening, in schools across the country and at THS.



## From the Board

Our next Free Friday BBQ at THS will be hosted again by the Board of Trustees. Please join us on August 27th between 3:00 -5:00pm in the school yard.

Let's have a nice welcome for our new THS Families!



## 20th Century Classroom vs. the 21st Century Classroom



USA 1960's typical classroom – teacher-centered, fragmented curriculum, students working in isolation, memorizing facts.

Time-based

Focus: memorization of discreet facts

Textbook - driven

Passive learning

Learners work in isolation - classroom within 4 walls

Teacher-centered: teacher is center of attention and provider of information

“Discipline problems” - no student motivation

Fragmented curriculum

Grades averaged

Low expectations

Curriculum/School is irrelevant and meaningless to the students.

Print is the primary vehicle of learning and assessment

Literacy is the 3 R's - reading, writing, math



A classroom at the School of Environmental Studies, aka the Zoo School, in Minneapolis. A perfect example of real-life, relevant, project-based 21st century education.

Outcome-based

Focus: what students Know, Can do and Are Like after all the details are forgotten

Research-driven

Active Learning

Learners work collaboratively with classmates and others around the world- The Global Classroom

Student-centered: teacher is facilitator/coach

No “discipline problems” students and teachers have mutual respectful relationship as co-learners

Integrated and Interdisciplinary curriculum

Grades based on what was learned

High expectations - “If it isn't good it isn't done”. We expect, and ensure, that all students succeed in learning at higher levels.

Curriculum is connected to students' interests, experiences and authentic assessments.

Multiple literacies of the 21st century

## **A WORD FROM OUR TEACHERS**

### **Kindergarten Teacher, Michelle Garcia:**

We are so proud of the Kindergartners for all their achievements this year. They really shined at the Kindergarten Promotion and Service Project Assembly. This trimester we are presenting them the Rain Forest Reflection Award. They have reflected on how to sustain the rain forest environment. They raised money to save some endangered animals and learned to reuse wood products from the rain forest.

### **First Grade Teacher, Jodi Buckles:**

What an amazing year of discovery we've had in First Grade! The soon-to-be Second Graders have made leaps and bounds in so many areas. They are successful readers, accomplished speakers, creative writers, blooming artists, gifted mathematicians and hands-on scientists. We've had fun exploring, inquiring and investigating during our International Baccalaureate Units of Inquiry We are Each Unique, Water Systems, Creative Arts, Wacky Weather, Livelihood Choices and See What's At the Seashore. Thank you THS community for your continued support, encouragement, inspiration and kindness. Have a wonderful,

relaxing summer! Warmly, Mrs. Buckles

### **Second Grade Teacher, Tina Chase:**

The last week of school was a whirlwind of events for the second graders! They finished some writing they had been working on about the States Program and Parade (three paragraphs), they practiced and practiced and practiced for their service presentation (UNICEF) and then performed it, they attended the Whale Day events and learned a lot about whales, they were rewarded for their efforts at the Academic Awards Assembly, and then they packed up their things and moved out of second grade.

### **Fourth Grade Teacher, Cristin Talley:**

What a wonderful learning year we have had in fourth grade! In reflecting upon our IB units, the most popular science-oriented unit among the class was Sharing the Planet where we studied ecosystems. The most popular social studies-oriented unit was Where We Are in Place and Time where we learned about the history and cultures of Fort Ross. The most popular book we read was Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH. Students also really enjoyed our "play dough" economics activities, and one child commented, "I liked working with the classmates to try and make a company using supply and demand."

### **5th Grade Homeroom Teacher & 5th/6th Humanities Teacher, Amy Caldwell:**

What a great year! Portfolios went home on Friday with all students. In that portfolio parents will find much of the writing from the year.

### **7th Grade Homeroom Teacher & 7th/8th Math, Science and Economics Teacher, Ann Scheder-Bieschin:**

The 7th and 8th grade finished up the year with great project presentations for science and a lot of fun as they realize what great teams they have become. We had some fun in math with word problems and probability as we wound up the year.

### **8th Grade Homeroom Teacher & 7th/8th Humanities Teacher, Corey Paulson:**

Thank you and have a nice summer!



## Laughter at THS

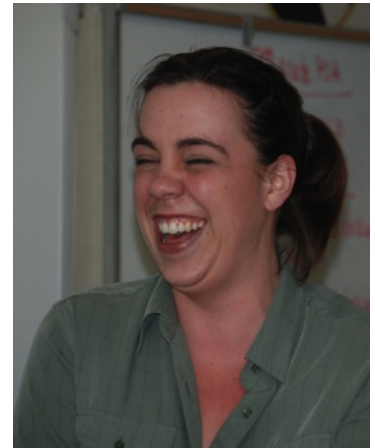
Think big thoughts but relish small pleasures. ~H. Jackson Brown, Jr



Laughter is the shortest distance between two people. ~Victor Borge



Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face. ~Victor Hugo



With the fearful strain that is on me night and day, if I did not laugh I should die. ~Abraham Lincoln

Many thanks to Jonathan Marvin for sharing his great photos of our THS Community!

# TEACHERS CORNER



## Teacher Bio

Deborah Fish

Spanish

Spanish teacher DEBORAH FISCH (Doña Deborah) has been teaching Spanish to children in grades Pre-K through eighth, as well as adults, through her own business, "Mobile Maestra" for the past decade. She employs the Total Physical Response (TPR), as well as the Language Experience Approach (LEA) which results in a lively, engaging classroom atmosphere full of music, movement and games. Doña Deborah draws from an eclectic background of theater, children's educational television performance (Mrs. Twizzleton's Magic Garden), creator/performer of Sonoma Song Service - Singing Telegram Delivery, and Dixieland jazz band singer.

Ms. Fisch worked as the Director of Graduate Events for Summit Inc. - an experiential motivational, self-development organization. She earned a BA in Spanish Literature and Culture, studied at a Translator's University in Spain, and has attended sessions at The Monterey Institute of International Studies. She has been happily married for 20 years to Ed, President of Fisch Bros. Drilling in Sebastopol.



## Teacher Bio

Corey Paulson

7th & 8th grade Humanities and History

Humanities teacher COREY PAULSON was born in the Pacific Northwest and is excited to have returned to the Pacific Coast to teach at The Healdsburg School. After attending independent schools for most of her life, Corey received her bachelor degree in History at the University of Washington. A Dean's List scholar, Corey focused her studies on American history and the relationships between history and the literature of the period.

After graduation, Corey realized that she wanted to use her education to foster the love of learning in others. She began teaching middle and upper school history at an independent school, The Overlake School, in Redmond Washington. She left the school to obtain her master's degree in Religious Studies at the University of Colorado. When she is not working, Corey enjoys cooking, hiking, and playing with her daughter.

## Education Hot Topics

What high-quality education research says about ...

### *Extended School Days and School Years*

How much time do US. students spend in school?

In 1983, when *A Nation at Risk* was published, the national average length of the U.S. school day was 6.5 hours and the school year averaged 180 days (1,170 hours per year). *A Nation at Risk* recommended (among other things) increasing the amount of time students spend in school to address shortcomings in student performance and academic preparation. According to a survey by the Council of Chief State School Officers, more than a quarter century after *A Nation At Risk*, the amount of time students spend in school remains relatively unchanged.

How does the amount of time U.S. students spend in school compare to other nations?

Exact comparisons are difficult to come by. According to a recent OECD report, "OECD countries show an average annual amount of total compulsory instruction time in classroom settings of 770 hours for 7-to-8-year-olds, 810 hours for 9-to-11-year-olds and 896 hours for 12-to-14-year-olds. The average annual number of compulsory instruction hours is 910 for the typical program in which most 15-year-olds are enrolled." Data for students in the USA is missing from this report.

Does more time in school matter?

Several scholars have argued that simply extending school time in and of itself will not produce the desired results. Larry Cuban, a Stanford University professor of education, has argued for example that what matters most is not the quantity but the quality of time students and teachers spend together in the classroom (2008).

In a 2000 meta-analysis of the impact of school, teacher, and student-level variables on achievement, McREL concluded that student achievement can be strongly affected if schools optimize their use of instructional time.

In 1998 WestEd researchers Aronson et al. examined the research on time and learning and arrived at three conclusions:

- There is little or no relationship between student achievement and the total number of days or hours students are required to attend school.
- There is some relationship between achievement and engaged time, that subset of instructional time when students are participating in learning activities.
- The strongest relationship exists between academic learning time and achievement.

However, in recent years some notable extended time initiatives have produced gains in test scores, graduation rates, and college attendance, including the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP), which increases the amount of time students spend in school by nearly 60%, and Massachusetts 2020.

Conversely, a \$100 million effort in Miami to extend school days by one hour and add 10 days to the calendar produced no significant benefits.

In its Expanded Learning Time Toolkit, the National Center for Time and Learning asserts that adding more time to the school calendar can be effective, but only when it accompanies a larger effort to rethink the process of schooling:

"Successful implementation of expanded learning initiatives occur in tandem with other reform strategies



and practices that take place through the redesign process. Without conjoining expanded learning time with the redesign principle, more time risks being 'more of the same' and a promising school improvement strategy becomes a band-aid... Lengthening the school day, school week and/or school year for any significant amount of time requires leaders to rethink school reform in a way that is not incremental."

How might additional time help to improve teaching and learning?

The National Center for Time and Learning cites five potential benefits to extending school time, including:

1. Making it possible for students to spend more time on task
2. Allowing teachers to delve into subject matter in more depth
3. Encouraging more student engagement through project-based learning and elective courses
4. Building in time for more teacher-student interaction
5. Creating time for teacher planning and professional development

What arguments are made against increasing the amount of time students spend in school?

In 2008, the Center for American Progress published Taking Stock of the Fiscal Costs of Expanded Learning Time, addressing the increased costs associated with extending the school day and/or the school year. These costs were found to be primarily associated with the ways in which teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals, and other staff are deployed to support the longer school day and, if relevant, how compensation changes as a result. This report concluded in part that, "Since expanding learning time makes little sense without purposeful use of this time and effective instruction, schools and districts will need to design powerful curriculum and to ensure teacher understanding and skill with this time."

Silva (2007) identifies other hidden costs—namely to parents, employers, and a wide range of industries that are dependent on the traditional school day and year.

Grassroots "save summer" organizations in a number of states actively work to preserve traditional school calendars in order to maintain family summer vacation time.

Please let us know your opinion in regards to more hours added to the school day/year.



## Safari West Field Trip

Santa Rosa's sometimes forgotten treasure!

## **THS Awards - 3rd Trimester**

### *Fourth Grade*

Adele Biehl – High Honors  
Sean Bolliger – High Honors  
Dylan Kattengell – High Honors  
Brendan Loftus – High Honors  
Brittany McCutchan – High Honors  
Samantha Meyer – High Honors  
Annie Smith – Honors/Head of School

### *Fifth Grade*

Dhyana Brylka – High Honors/Head of School Connor  
Cates-Phillips – Honors  
Camryn Finnan – Honors  
Max Grover – High Honors  
Hallie Hostetter – High Honors  
Casper Max – High Honors  
Victor Sotelo – High Honors  
Alexandra Tett – High Honors

### *Sixth Grade*

Cole Anderson – High Honors  
Yoneo Arai – High Honors  
Julia Dayton – Honors  
Maggie Flores – Honors  
Simon Fruth – Honors  
Colby Groom – Honors  
Sofie Johnson – Honors  
Tristan McCutchan – Honors  
Lailah Meyer-Long – High Honors/Head of School  
Eric Palmer – High Honors  
Reed Palmer – Honors  
Nolan Pisors – Honors

Mollie Tingle – Honors

Zachary Vallery – High Honors/Head of School  
Philip Wilkinson – High Honors/Head of School  
Julie Yparraguirre – Honors

### *Seventh Grade*

Erika Bolliger – Highest Honors/Head of School  
Hannah Holden – High Honors  
Peter Lindee – Honors  
Haley MacPhail – High Honors/Head of School  
Adrienne Sarasy – Highest Honors  
Ashton Smith – Honors

### *Eighth Grade*

Ian Black – Honors  
Lindsay Buckel - Highest Honors/Head of School  
Kaitlin Carroll – Head of School  
Patrick Loftus – High Honors  
Lily Max – Honors  
Sylas Montgomery – Highest Honors/Head of School  
Lucas Takacs – Honors  
Emma Tynan – High Honors  
Alex Wood – High Honors/Head of School

### *Perfect Attendance*

Alexis Custer-Topai  
Isabella Brunner  
Carissa Pisors  
Yoneo Arai



## Compassion at THS

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion. ~Dalai Lama



There is no greater loan than a sympathetic ear. ~Frank Tyger



Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see. ~Mark Twain



The most important trip you may take in life is meeting people halfway. ~Henry Boye





## Service Projects

The 4th and 7th grade classes' service project this year was to support Habitat for Humanity. We supported the current build in Healdsburg on University by: 1) providing lunches on Wednesdays for the volunteer builders during the months of April and May, 2) holding a teacher/parent volunteer build day, and 3) raising \$435 through 2 fundraising events - the money will go to purchasing doors for the 2 houses.

Since one of the kindergarten's units of inquiry is studying about the rainforest, our class felt it was important to help save an endangered rainforest animal. Mrs. Garcia and Mrs. Inness narrowed it down to four amazing rainforest animals, the red-eyed tree frog, the tiger, the toucan and the sloth.

We had a classroom vote and decided to raise money for the toucans! However, the response to the bike-a-thon was so great that we are now proud to say that we donated money to all four! In order to raise money for the toucans we partnered up with a remarkable organization, World Wildlife Fund, and conducted a bike-a-thon. The students went around the designated track at THS as many times as they could on their bikes in thirty minutes.

If you would like more information on World Wildlife Fund please refer to their website at <http://www.worldwildlife.org/home.html>. In all our class donated over \$650 to the World Wildlife Fund!

## Congratulations Levi and Geddy Frey!

Levi and Geddy raised over one thousand dollars for the Hanna Boys Center. They collected this money in lieu of birthday presents and are being nominated for Philanthropists of the year award. Congratulations boys, we are so very proud of you!

## ADMISSIONS UPDATE



We are ecstatic to be welcoming families to our expanding community not only from Sonoma County but from Wisconsin, Illinois, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Washington and Southern California too!

**Wednesday, August 18th**

**First Day of School**

Please send inquiries in regards to Bear Tracks to [bettina@thehealdsburgschool.org](mailto:bettina@thehealdsburgschool.org).

We'd love to hear from you!