

Week of October 6, 2008



CLAS

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Event Calendar (Note Revised Dates)

- ~~Oct. 6~~ Curriculum Night Pleasant Hill 6:30 PM-8:00 PM
~~Oct. 8~~ Curriculum Night Westchester 6:30 PM-8:00 PM
~~Oct. 9~~ Curriculum Night Middle School 6:30 PM-8:00 PM
CURRICULUM NIGHTS POSTPONED. READ BELOW
Oct. 13 – Pupil Free Day (no school-all sites)
Oct. 20 – Picture Day (All Sites)
Nov. 1 – Community Gathering-Edward Vincent Park in Inglewood 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Schoolsite-based Event Suspended in Favor of Virtual Version

Virtual Curriculum Nights Replace the Real Thing

As we adjust to three locations and fully understand just what it means be one school operating from three sites, we realize that we have to change some aspects of what we do. One change concerns Curriculum Night. As we begin to confront the parking challenges inherent at all three facilities, we realize that to attempt to have all the parents and families at any of the three sites assemble at once for such an event is not realistic. **So we will not be hosting our traditional Curriculum Night—the CLAS version of Back-to-School Night—that are scheduled for this upcoming week.** Instead, we will host virtual Curriculum Nights from our website.

What is a Virtual Curriculum Night? It will be an opportunity for you to explore and understand the renown CLAS curriculum without having to leave your home. From the comfort of your office, den, family room, bedroom, or wherever it is that you have your computer, you will be able to gain a sense of how teaching and learning happen in your child's CLASroom™. The same general overview and Powerpoint slide show that you would have seen at your child's school, will be offered to you in streaming and/or downloadable form. We hope to make this an informative, enriching learning experience, both in terms of our curriculum and using technology to access information in a way that you may not be familiar with.

We are planning to have all online resources that make up the Virtual Curriculum Night available for you to access by Monday, October 20. In the meantime, we will mail home standardized test score results—the Stanford 10 for last year's Kinder 5 and 1st grade students and California Standards Test (CST) scores for 2nd through 8th graders—this week.

GRADES 3, 4, & 5 WILL ATTEND CLAS ELEMENTARY-WESTCHESTER BEGINNING MONDAY, OCT 6

An important yet sweet reminder: beginning Monday, October 6, 2008, all 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade Scribes will attend the CLAS Elementary–Westchester site. This change is necessary due to us consolidating grades 3, 4, and 5 from the CLAS Elementary–Pleasant Hill site to the Westchester location because of lower than anticipated enrollment. Siblings of these students, enrolled in Kinder through 2nd grades are being moved as well.

Most schedules, routines, and offerings at the Westchester site are the same as at Pleasant Hill–CLAScare is offered from 7:00 AM until 7:45 AM; breakfast is served at each morning from 7:40 until 8:00 AM; morning affirmation begins promptly at 8:15 AM; and students arriving late must be signed-in in the main office.

The notable exception is morning drop-off and afternoon pickup. Due to traffic and lack of parking on Sepulveda Eastway, we currently are NOT providing valet pickup and drop-off for students. You must park your car curbside on Sepulveda Eastway, on La Tijera in front of the church, or if no parking is available in these areas, in the Office Depot parking lot across the street, and walk your children into the school. **Under no circumstances is parking allowed in the lot behind the Wachovia Bank, Bed, Bath, & Beyond, Wells Fargo Bank, and the other businesses to the north.** Please note that because of the added traffic during the afternoon dismissal pickup period we are extending the time for pickup to 4:00 PM.

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Another important exception (and benefit of the move) involves those of you who have enrolled your children in Champions! after school care. Unlike at Pleasant Hill, Champions at Westchester is open until 6:00 PM.

Be aware that you may need to leave home earlier in the morning to get your child to school on time for morning affirmation. Westbound traffic on Manchester Blvd. can be really heavy. Try alternate routes like La Tijera Blvd. to the north and Arbor Vitae to the south.

Thank you to the affected families for understanding and for remaining true to the CLAS vision despite any inconvenience the move may pose for you. We appreciate and are humbled by your loyalty and trust. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Mr. Jackson at ajackson@cultureandlanguage.org. Thank you.

Fall Cultural Festival To Be Part of Gathering This Year

COMMUNITY GATHERING ON NOVEMBER 1

Begin at 6:00 AM on a Saturday morning with 25 of the most gifted-on-the-grill dads from the CLAS community having hauled their BBQ pits and culinary secrets to Vincent Park and cooking the meat to sublime perfection. Have them joined by many more moms and dads who decorate the area, set up side dishes, drinks, and desserts, and serve as taste testers for the grillmasters. Bring a local radio station to fill the air with sweet soul music, plus feature a live band in the amphitheater. Add a magician, face painters, and lots of other fun activities. Then, most importantly, fill the park with more than 700 CLAS Community members in a festive event that feels like a family reunion and you have the 6th Annual CLAS Community Gathering.

The Community Gathering will be held on Saturday, November 1 at Edward Vincent Park in Inglewood from 11:00 AM until 3:00 PM. The first big CLAS Community event of the year, it is designed to bring the Community together in a fun, affirming, and validating spirit. In doing so, it is unlike any school event anywhere.

Because of the late start to the year we had to move the date of the Community Gathering back a couple of weeks. However, it allows us to “grow two trees from one seed” and combine our famous Fall Cultural Festival with the Gathering to make for an even greater event. An alternative to Halloween, the Fall Festival celebrates our cultural heritage and its ritual of donning masks and costumes as ceremonial objects. Rather than reinforce, not to mention economically support, mainstream culture by buying commercial costumes, students can only come in “Keep It Cultural” costumes. These costumes have to represent culture—either historical or contemporary figures, icons from Ancient Africa or other lands, or other cultural representations. There will be a contest with prizes awarded.

We are looking forward to this opportunity to affirm who we are and have fun. More information will be forthcoming in the coming weeks on how you can contribute. Mark your calendars.



ATTENTION! *Please note these special items of importance concerning you and your child. Thank you!*

1. **Be on time.** We believe in the cultural phenomenon of time being relative and timeliness as a learned behavior. This is why it is important that all students be on time each day. Too many students are arriving late and missing all or part of Morning Affirmation—the very important beginning to our instructional day. Set an example for your children. Be punctual. Get them to school on time.

2. **Be Courteous during Westchester Morning Drop-off and Afternoon Dismissal.** Please do not block traffic along Sepulveda Eastway in the morning or afternoon. If you see that cars are behind you do not stop to load or unload your precious cargo. Find a curbside parking space and if one is not available park in the Office Depot lot and walk across to drop off your child or pick them up. We have been notified by local law enforcement that they will begin to cite vehicles impeding traffic. Thanks for cooperating.

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