



Integrated News

Boulder Community School of Integrated Studies

March 23, 2007



Principal's report

Dear Parents,

I think often of the fact that without significant parent involvement in BCSIS, we could never be the school that we are. Parents bring so much talent, time, generosity, and energy to BCSIS. They are an integrated part of virtually every aspect of the school. Please consider any way you might want to contribute to our community; there are many avenues for you to join us!

Volunteers in the Classroom: Parents fill the school each day to volunteer in the classrooms. Children become very familiar and comfortable with regular volunteers, and teachers benefit from the special talents of our parent community. We also need many volunteers to help with a variety of school events, such as picture day, vision testing, and more.

Ed Council/Community Meetings: Our Ed Council is an essential decision-making body in the school. The group is comprised of parents, staff, and administrative representatives. The monthly meetings include reports from parent/staff committees, including: District Accountability Council, Fundraising, and Finance/Budget committees. Twice a year, Community Meetings are held. All adult members of the school community are invited. We discuss the schools curricular program, important school events, decisions, parent participation opportunities, and more.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parents and teachers meet twice a year to discuss students' progress, unique needs and skills. At the end of the year, parents receive a comprehensive report which details each child's academic progress, creative expression, and social/emotional growth for that year.

Classroom Meetings and Community Building: Regular parent classroom meetings are held to communicate important curriculum and classroom information. The meetings build connections and understanding between parents and teachers. Several times during the year, classroom community events are held in order to promote strong classroom cultures. Some examples are: class picnics and potlucks, school plays or musical events, whole-family camping trips.

Festivals/Community Events: Throughout the year, the BCSIS community celebrates the seasons through our unique and beautiful festivals. The festivals include: The Opening Rose Ceremony, our Fall Lantern Walk, Spring May Pole Celebration, and more. In addition, we celebrate community through music and

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

March 26-30 (Mon-Fri) **Spring Break - NO SCHOOL**

April 2 & 3 (Mon & Tues) **Conference Exchange Days - NO SCHOOL**

April 7 (Sat) 11am. **Weeding in the Peace Garden**

April 11 (Wed) 3:30pm. **Lesbian/Gay Support Group** in Suzanne's classroom

April 11 (Wed) 6pm. **Spring Ed Council Community Meeting**

April 19 (Thurs) 6:30-7:30pm. **Incoming Kindergarten Parent Night**

April 19 (Thurs) 7-8:30pm. **Transition to Middle School Night** in the Open Space

April 20 (Fri) **Professional Development Day - NO SCHOOL**

April 30 (Mon) **Plant Sale order forms due**

May 1 (Tues) **Spring Festival - a BCSIS tradition** for students and families to welcome Spring. See comments in this newsletter about the festival

May 9-11 (Wed-Fri) **BCSIS Plant Sale**

May 17 (Thurs) **BCSIS Spring Carnival. Inaugural community-building event for students and families**

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Notes from the Ed Council

The following are the minutes from the Ed Council meeting of March 14:

• **Membership.** If you are interested in being a member of the Ed Council, please contact one of the co-chairs, Will Humke or Anna Stewart. The current group will stay together until May, when the new group starts.

• **Finances.** The full-participation campaign has received donations from about 52% of the families. This is below the expected goal of 75% of the families. The dollar amount of donations is within the expected range. We would like to see more participation because it means families are committed to and invested in the school.

The Bacaro fundraiser was a success and raised \$3,700. Thanks to the family that offered their restaurant and to Beth Parish for being the main organizer! The spaghetti dinner was also a success and raised \$1,500 for the 5th grade outdoor education class.

The Ed Council approved the purchase of 15 new wood desks for school. Since the District only provides simple metal desks, BCSIS has to pay for the wood desks.

• **Friends of BCSIS.** There will be a meeting to discuss the new model of volunteer coordination on Friday, March 23, 12:30-1:30pm in Phil's office. All are welcome. Discussion will center on creating a committee to organize the volunteering activities, creating a database in the school computer, changing the form to sign up to volunteer, acknowledging volunteers for both their time and money spent, and other topics.

• **Open Enrollment.** There was a great interest in BCSIS this year: 73 families had BCSIS as their first choice for kindergarten. All grades are full and with waiting lists. The eight Low Socio-Economic Status positions mandated by the desegregation plan were filled, with two confirmed as English as a Second Language. Community Liaison Emma Lyman and parent volunteers did a great job in advertising our school.

• **DPC and DAC reports.** Theresa Southard reported on the topics discussed at the last District Parent Council meeting. First item was the bond for remodeling the schools. The timeline is that a design team will be created in the school by the end of the school year. The team will meet in summer and fall to create the plans, which will then be submitted to the citizens oversight committee. Construction is expected to start between January and June, 2008.

The schools land trust was also discussed. Very few people know that when every state

in this country was formed, land was set aside for the schools. Colorado schools still own millions of acres, and that land can be used to generate additional funds for our schools. We have a large piece of land just east of Aurora, which could be sold or leased to developers.

Children who identify themselves as gay or lesbian or who have parents that are gays or lesbians have been identified as being at higher risk for playground bullying and even suicide. More education is needed at the schools to broaden acceptance of all types of families.

Sandy Crowell reported on the discussion about how to get parents more involved in math education that took place in the last meeting of the District Accountability Council meeting.

The Ed Council will look into promoting more regular parent's nights focusing on issues such as multi-cultural and inclusive education, math literacy, children and media, and differences in boys' and girls' learning styles.

• **Site Beautification.** The Shared Building Committee is discussing beautification of the front of the school. Lawn will be re-seeded but since the bond remodel will affect the front of the school, no changes will be made to the front face of the building now.

• **Bylaws.** Phil distributed copies of the modified Bylaws. They reflect the change from a Lead Teacher model to a Principalship model. The Ed Council will review the modifications and let Phil know of any needed changes by April 25th.

• **Name of the school.** It has come up several times that, although BCSIS is a meaningful name, it is difficult to memorize and pronounce. Several Ed Council members support a name change, either a complete overhaul, or a shortening to, for example, "Integrated Studies." To gain the input of the community of parents, teachers and staff, the Ed Council has prepared a survey, which will be distributed in the Friday folder. At this time, input will be sought just regarding the importance (or not) of changing the name. A process for the change will be worked on later.

The next Ed Council Community Meeting is on Wednesday evening, April 11, in the open space. This is the Community Ed Council meeting so please plan on attending.

Principal's report

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drama events, a Silent Auction and Talent Show, and more.

Community Outreach: Our staff, parent, and student communities are actively engaged in outreach programs that contribute to the greater community. Currently many of our classes are involved in communicating with our sister school, the Rock School in Uganda. Our intermediate classes have provided donations and assistance to a Navajo Tribe in Arizona for several years, while many of our primary classes generated funds for the Heifer Foundation, which supports families in Africa and South America.

Parent Education: Regular parent education evenings are held to spread awareness and knowledge about important educational practices. Examples include: promoting literacy development, constructivist math strategies, media awareness, writing and boys.

Thanks and have a wonderful Spring Break!

Phil

Congratulations 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade Classes!

The CSAP is finished! All of our students who took the assessment should be very proud. They made it through a long process with confidence and determination. Thanks to all of their families for supporting them through this process. And most importantly, we know they are wonderful, brilliant children... we don't need an assessment to tell us that!

Phil Katsampes
Principal, BCSIS
303-447-5506



Full Participation: What's it about?

As we bring our children to school each day, we are sharing our lives together. We are walking and breathing and smiling together, running and laughing and playing together.

BCSIS was started as a school that is centered in community. We share our school together. Our lives, our children's lives, our journeys of growing and learning take place inside, outside and around this building. We weave our cherished dreams and hopes together here. We all bring everything we have to our shared work of raising our children well, being great parents, being outstanding educators.

Because BCSIS is a community school, the Education Decision Council always looks for ways to join hands together, opening our hearts and minds to one another, and creating connection and support. Together we can bring about our dreams of healthy families, beautiful neighborhoods, thriving communities and one beautiful earth.

To support the arts-integrated curriculum of our school, additional funds are needed. The state, federal and district education budgets provide a tiny amount of funding per student for art and music. And as your fellow parents work on fundraising for our school, we think the only way to do it is—together.

Full participation means we want everyone to be part of



this, both hands, both feet, one heart, one mind. If you can give 25 cents or 25 hundred, we invite you—

we need you—to

participate fully in our school community.

So far this year, 52% of families have given a donation to the

school. Thank you to those who have found it in their budgets to support our children, teachers and school. The less positive news is that we are a long way from our goal of 75%. Please read the enclosed newsletter article on full participation to understand more. - With gratitude, Jennifer Shriver, Co-Treasurer, and Kim Green, Friends of BCSIS

β.P.S. Semester contributions and other donations can be given to the front office at any time. Checks can be made out to BCSIS. Credit cards are accepted as well. Friends of BCSIS is a non-profit organization and your donations are tax-deductible, based on your income and tax details. See an income tax professional for more information about your income tax and deductions.

Root for BCSIS!!

The BCSIS Plant Sale is happening this year on May 9, 10 and 11! You'll find annuals, baskets, perennials, vines, roses and grasses for your every



gar eed. Order for friends and family! Great Mother's Day gifts, too! Volunteers needed to assist on sale days (Wed 9am-noon or 3-4pm,

Thurs 8-9am or 3-4pm, Fri 8-9am or 1-3pm). Please call Rose Harnos-Holder at 303-581-1597 or email roseharnosholder@earthlink.net.

Calling all wild weeders!

Volunteers are needed to help weed and mulch the Peace Garden and front of the school. Let's meet on Saturday, April 7th at 11am in the Peace Garden. Bring a few garden tools and a couple of bags of red cedar mulch.

Contact Julie Ireland at 303-443-8154 or julieireland@comcast.net if you can help.

Bake Sale money goes a long way

In an effort to combat hunger at the Rock Foundation School in Kampala, Uganda, the children in the Africa Club are able to use some of the proceeds



of the December bake sale to fund 30 lunches for the neediest children. Thanks to everyone's participation, these children

will be provided with a nutritious and filling meal every day this term! A big new cooking pot will also be purchased with some of the bake sale money. Letters from kids at the Rock Foundation School indicate that they feel and appreciate our support.

Thirty of the students at our sister school have been identified as particularly needy—most are orphans. If you are interested in sponsoring one of them, \$135 covers school fees, a uniform, school supplies and daily lunch for one child for a whole year. There is no overhead as there is with many charities, and your donation is tax-deductible. You will be able to correspond with your sponsored child. Such letters will provide him or her much hope and feelings of support, and your family with a meaningful friendship. Contact Bay Roberts at bdr2005@comcast.net or 303-447-8836, or visit rockfoundationschool.org.

News & Notes

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Support for gay and lesbian parents

A new support group for gay and lesbian parents and their allies, with the aim of assuring the success and wellbeing of their children at school, is starting at BCSIS. The first meeting is Wednesday, April 11, at 3:30pm in Suzanne's 3rd grade classroom. If you have any questions, please contact the parent liaison, Cynthia Carosella, at 303-748-3037.

Paper crunch

It's the time of year that we are in desperate need of copier paper for our school. If you would like to contribute to an urgent need, we can use reams or cases or truckloads—whatever you can spare—to be brought to the Main Office. Our High Peaks parents usually supply us for the entire first semester, and it requires a great deal of paper to supply a school for the entire year, so this would be a tremendous help to our teachers and our staff. We thank you so much for your generous help and support!

Spring Festival is....

The Maypole and the crowns were amazing and just filled me with the wonder of spring. It was my first festival last year. My children were both joyful and really engaged in the marking of the new season. They noticed flowers and tree buds in a whole new way. I think it may be my favorite BCSIS festival. Having the bookends of the Fall and the Spring Festivals really give the kids a deeper sense of passing through the seasons—the coming of darkness and shorter days and our ability to create light... Then the renewal and color and lightness of spring. ESPECIALLY this YEAR!!!!!! - Marya Read

I love the tradition of creating flower crowns—we pick flowers before school to use in the crowns, and share

the flowers others have brought. Children love to make them and wear them. We crown each child with beauty—and are reminded of the glory of spring and the fragility of life. The most beautiful activity of the Spring Festival is the dancing at the Maypole. The past two years we have been blessed by sparkling spring days for celebrating the festival. It is a special time to celebrate the beauty of youth and the blossoming of children. What a joyful expression of life! - Robyn Churchill Rathweg

Happy Spring!! What I remember from six years of the Spring Festival is that each class makes fresh flower wreaths and there is a group that Jan May has do the Maypole dance. One year it was in the open space but outside is great. I have the cutest pictures ever of Holly and the wreaths! - Ann Huggins

Highlights for our family and Spring Festival are soaking in the rejoicing feeling throughout the school in full color with flower wreath making (for teachers and staff too!). Also, we love watching the grades work together with the younger ones playing music and dancing outside (wish for sunshine), and culminating with the 5th graders doing an interwoven "sword" dance led by Jan. Wow. It's a good day to bring the camera and take a few hours to be at school if you can. Last year, the maypole dancers got to perform for the Mayor and others in Denver! - Sonja Toutenhoofd

BCSIS Email List

If you have BCSIS-related news, please send a message to sonja-marc@earthlink.net. It gets approved by Phil and then sent to our community at large, about 75% of parents.

Rally against global warming

BCSIS parents, Bay Roberts and Scott Reuman, are organizing a rally against global warming, Walk for a Change, on April 14 at 11am. It starts

at Scott Carpenter Park and ends at the Band Shell with speeches, music and information. This is a family event and kids are encouraged to walk. Contact Bay at 303-447-8836 for additional information.

Bolder Boulder registration

Whether the Bolder Boulder is a tradition in your family or you are thinking about signing up for the first time, join the fun of participating with your BCSIS community. When you register, sign up for the "NB" wave which is for runners and walkers and then look forward to starting with familiar faces. Go to www.bolderboulder.com for additional registration information. More info to come as the date draws nearer, but now is a good time to sign up.

Multiplication across the grades

This a dynamic presentation featuring Ruth Parker, Ph.D. for parents, educators and community about improving mathematics education. It takes place April 12, 6-8:30pm at Platt Middle School Auditorium.

Annual transition to middle school evening

The annual Transition to Middle School evening will be on April 19, 7-8:30pm in the Open Space. All High Peaks and BCSIS parents are welcome. Dr. Jan Hittelman, local teen expert, will gear this evening to your questions. Email challenge@high-peaks.org if you would like to have a specific issue addressed.