

The ICS Link

A monthly newsletter for families at Independence Charter School

May 2008 Issue

The ICS Report Card- How do we score?

A for Achievement: A recent Philadelphia Inquirer special edition called *A Report Card on the Schools* placed Independence Charter School at a low performance level. The snippet of information given in this edition was not representative of the true performance of our school; it was only information for one grade level. In addition, it cited an incorrect percentile for the poverty rate. The accurate information regarding our student achievement rate is as follows:

We have reached AYP in each of the four years we have been eligible

Our school-wide PSSA average is 64% Advanced and Proficient in Mathematics and 63% Advanced and Proficient in Reading.

When taking just our 6th, 7th, and 8th graders separately, that is the kids who have been with us the longest, their performance rivals that of the state of Pennsylvania with both mathematics and reading at 70% Advanced and Proficient.

M for Mission: The essential element of a great charter school is commitment to the charter's stated Mission. Although we know that we will continue to perfect our language, social studies and citizenship programs, we stand out as a successful innovator regionally and nationally. How do we know?

Recognized as a National Charter School of the Year in 2007

Finalist in 2006 and 2007 for the Goldman Sachs International Education Prize

National History Day regional winners

Odyssey of the Mind regional winners

Over 500 kids on the wait list for 2008-2009

T for Transparency: Charter school law provides for greater independence, creativity and innovation. Because public dollars are used, charter school law also provides for stringent accountability including renewal every five years, yearly independent audits, and monthly public Board of Trustees meetings. ICS is a very transparent organization: monthly BOT meetings with agenda posted in advance and the public is welcome, an opportunity for the public to speak at these meetings, an opportunity for parents and teachers to participate in Board committees.

There are many other elements that contribute to a great ICS. I invite you to attend at least one Board Meeting this or next school year; I think you will be pleasantly surprised. They happen the second Wednesday of every month at 7pm. Our BOT meetings are posted on the website www.independencecharter.org

-Pr. Jurate

Congratulations to our Newsletter naming contest winner Judge Dopson (1st Grade) for his winning submission- "The ICS Link."

I.C.S. BULLETIN BOARD

Upcoming May Events

5/3-Silent Auction 6pm-10pm
5/7- PTA Meeting 6:15PM
5/14- Board of Trustees Meeting 7:00PM
5/22- International Festival
5/26- No School, Memorial Day
5/28-5/30- 5th Grade Camping Trip

Parents are reminded that all walker and driver students need to be picked up from ICS at daily dismissal time. The late pick-up charge is \$1 per minute for each minute the parent is late, starting from 3:55p.m. Parents are expected to pay this late fee when they pick up their child(ren).



Mark Your Calendars! Field Day '08

Grade K-2 Tuesday, June 10th (9:30-1:00)
Grades 3-5 Wednesday, June 11th (9:30-1:00)
Grade 6-8 Thursday, June 12th (10:00-2:30)

More details will be sent home during the next few weeks.

-The Field Day Committee

TOYS...VIDEO GAMES... CELL PHONES...and...HOODIES

TOYS...should not be brought to school. This includes "game cards". If your child is bringing an item for "show and tell" remind them that it must stay in their book bag.

VIDEO GAMES...may be played on the school bus *only* (not in the bus line or during arrival/dismissal). They must remain inside your child's book bag. They may not be carried in pockets.

CELL PHONES...must be turned off inside of the school building (not set to silent or vibrate). Cell phones are to be stored in your child's book bag or hidden in their pocket. They may not be worn on belt clips or around the neck. If your child carries their phone in their pocket remind them that no one can see it, or it will be confiscated.

HOODIES...may be worn to school and to the park. They may not be worn while in the school building, as is stated in the 2007-2008 Dress Code.

If your child is found with any of the above items, in violation of the rules, the item will be confiscated and brought to the Dean of Students. Parents will be able to schedule a time with the Dean of Students to come to school and pick up the item.

5th & 6th Grade Move-Up Night

Move-Up Night will occur on Tuesday, June 3rd at 6:30. The night is for incoming 5th and 6th grade parents (i.e., the parents of kids who will be 5th or 6th graders in 2008-2009). The purpose is to prepare parents and students for the many changes that will occur from 4th to 5th grade and from 5th to 6th grade.

Move up night is also for the 5th and 6th grade students themselves. However, students should not come unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Questions/Concerns- contact Tr. Kristen Long @ kristenl@independencecharter.org

The kindergarten classes will continue working hard on addition and subtraction throughout the month of May. All four classes are looking forward to their trip to the Zoo on May 19th. Tr. Monica's class had a special field trip to the Mill Creek Farm. We welcome all to come to the International Festival on May 22nd where we will show off our country study of Mexico.



Kindergarten



The First graders did a very good job with the Terranova test! During the month of May we will continue learning about the country of France, making conclusions from graphs, counting money and writing short paragraphs. Parents and guardians please help us by asking your child what time it is, counting money, and having your child reading every night.

First graders are very excited about participating at the children's festival on May the 9th; the children will be enjoying the vibrant music of the Andes. Muchas, muchas gracias to the PTA for funding this trip!

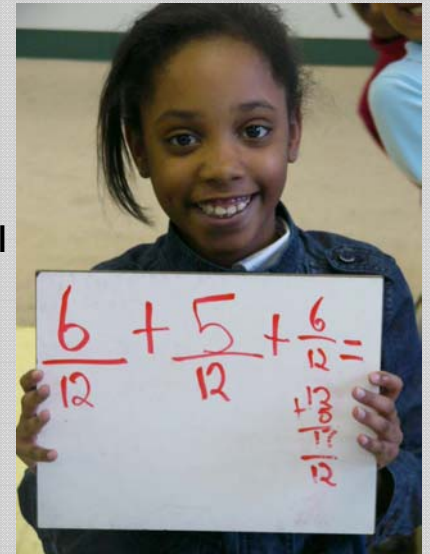
Grade 1

Greetings from second grade! Spring brings many events for us: Our upcoming fieldtrip to the Children's Festival will happen on May 9th. Students are, of course, very excited! The Fruit market continues to be a great success- thanks for all the help you've provided so far this year. The International Festival is coming to ICS. Here are some things that we will need for the fair on the 22nd of May: *Volunteers, lots of them! Please consider giving us some of your talents and time* Food samplings for students to taste, such as grapes (or any other fruits and vegetables from Chile). Second graders have been busy creating beautiful items to donate for the Silent Auction (May 3rd)- just ask your youngster for more information about this. We hope to see you there!



Grade 2

The third grade is in the middle of a five-week project with an outside artist. He comes in twice a week to make paper mache masks that fit each individual's face. These masks will be painted like Kenyan animals in support of our country study. We have also been finishing up a unit on mystery in reading and working with division and fractions in math class. We are busy preparing for the International Festival and will write Porquoi stories and study Kenyan animals.



Grade 3



We are beginning our adventure through the mysteries of the Egypt culture, religion, traditions and hieroglyphics. We will be ready to share with you everything that we have learned at the International Festival. In Language Arts in English, students are becoming great poetry writers. In Spanish they are reviewing grammar knowledge already studied and continue their monthly reading projects. In math after the study of long division they will study fractions.

Grade 4

The 5th grade has been busy this month. We've finished PSSA testing and are back on track with our regular schedule. Social Studies classes have begun their study of Greece which included a trip to Penn's Archeology and Anthropology Museum for a lesson, guided tour and an opportunity to view ancient artifacts.

We are going to the Philadelphia Zoo on May 5th. Our students will be going on a Scavenger Hunt to find animals that have adaptations that help them survive in the wild. (A note has gone home with details.) Make sure your child brings a bag lunch! Sue Gould, Director of Camp Onas, came to visit and talk about our trip to Camp Onas at the end of May. The children were excited by the slides and the prospect of going "camping" for 3 days. **DON'T FORGET THAT ALL PERMISSION SLIPS AND MONEY FOR THE TRIP ARE DUE BY MAY 9.**



Grade 5

Sixth grade Language Arts students are doing research on the genocide in Darfur as the basis for writing a research paper. We will also be doing a fundraiser for Darfuri refugees and are going to be working on an awareness booth for International Day. We will be starting a new core book, Esperanza Rising, and will be finishing our historical fiction guided reading groups.



Grade 6



Seventh graders getting back into the swing of classes after their PSSA's. With a field trip to Wetlands on the horizon and the weather getting warmer, they're ready to get out there and explore!

Grade 7

This month, the 8th grade went on a field trip to Washington DC. Whilst there, they saw the Smithsonian Museum and The Native American Museum before going on an African American Heritage Tour that included The Lincoln Memorial and Howard University. They also attended the 7th and 8th grade dance, showing off their best dance moves and the latest fashions. A good time was had by all and some fantastic memories were created in the process.



Grade 8

News from the P.T.A.

Attention winners of Cherrydale Limo Ride & Lunch

Those who sold 40+ items during the Cherrydale fundraiser last Fall will be notified via their school folders as soon as a date is confirmed with the limo company. A special invite is coming your way!



ICS Variety Show is slated for Friday night, June 6th. Keep your eyes open for sign up forms at the front desk and coming home in backpacks. Please note that students need a parent's signature to perform.



Take Me Out to the Camden River Sharks Ballpark



ICS Family Day at Camden Riversharks ballpark is scheduled for Sunday, September 7th. Game starts at 1:05pm. More information to follow.



May 7th PTA Meeting Night is Children's Flea Market Night

- Do you have gently used children's clothing or toys that need a new home?
 - Too many knick-knacks in your child's room?
- Would your child like to make a little extra pocket money?
 - Let your child be both buyer and seller!

Then bring those past treasures to the PTA Children's flea market on Wednesday evening May 7th, at 6:15.

If you are interested in participating, please reserve your table for only \$5. Reservation forms are available at front desk, or simply send in a note with your name/child's name and \$5 to the attention of "PTA Children's Flea Market".

Proceeds from the table fee to benefit Children In Need fund.

Other PTA business to be covered include:

2008/09 elections, Variety Show update, and ICS day at Camden River Sharks

Pizza dinner will be provided, but feel free to bring other healthy snacks, water or desserts (desserts don't necessarily have to be healthy). Childcare will not be provided since this is a Family Night.

Officers for the 2007/08 School Year:

Susan Burrows, co- President, sjeburrows@earthlink.net, or 215-805-2621 Nikki Butler, co- President, niks_space@yahoo.com, or 267-456-3603
Donna Devore, Secretary, dmd5611@yahoo.com Leslie Burton, Treasurer, lburton@independencecharter.org
Tracey Hill, co-Treasure & go-to gal, traceyh@independencecharter.org
Conswelia McCourt, Membership, ptamom@conswelia.com, or 215-681-9657 Cristina Vea, Board Liaison, cvea@closednetworks.com

6th Grade Students- “Save Darfur Coalition”



A group of 6th grade students have created an ICS Save Darfur Coalition. Their purpose is to raise awareness in the ICS community about the crises in Sudan. They will be having numerous fundraisers over the next few weeks. Save Darfur bracelets and bake goods will be sold during the International Festival on May 22nd. All donations will be sent to savedarfur.org advocacy group. Please encourage your children to participate in our fundraisers to help the refugees from Darfur.

Thanks you-
Anya, Olivia, Tatiana, Cheyenne, & Arin

Silent Auction Huge Success or Looking forward to seeing you Saturday night, May 3rd (depending on when you will be reading this newsletter).

Regardless of the headline, we would like to extend a sincere thank you to all the families that supported the Silent Auction. Whether you solicited area businesses, contributed your own services or won auction items as the highest bidder – your efforts, enthusiasm and generosity are hands-down, quite amazing. The artwork and projects created by the students, with the help of parents and, of course, teachers are second to none. Congratulations to everyone for a good time, or have a good time everyone.



Thank you to Silent Auction Committee members who pulled it all together with grace and good humor: Dawn Ang, Leslie Burton, Susan Burrows, Nikki Butler, Michelle Coats, Donna Devore, Maureen DiStefano, Sabrina Fecher, Gia Guadagnino, Tracey Hill, Lynn Hunt, Jessica Jacquay, Stephanie Kindt, Maureen Long, Marcie Lichtman-Lentz, Conswelia McCourt, Tr. Mireya, Maria Palladino, Caren Seltzer-Devine, Megan Steelman, Cristina Vea, Maureen Wellner

~ Summer Camp Program Options ~

Penn Gems

(Girls in Engineering, Math, and Science)

What: Calling all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade girls! Join them for a week of hands-on science, math, and engineering at UPENN. Discover how engineers change lives. Make new friends and learn from Penn students. Work on your own animation project. **Where:** Penn Campus

When: 9am-4pm, August 4th – August 8th

How: Applications are available online at www.seas.upenn.edu/~awe/outreach.html or contact Michelle Grab at 215-573-6487 ASAP!

Cost: \$500 for the week, but financial assistance is available.

Camp Sojourner, Girls' Leadership Camp

What: An overnight week-long camp in the Pocono Mountains (transportation provided to and from Philadelphia). The focus is on team building, developing leadership skills, appreciating the natural environment, and expressing yourself through creative arts. The camp helps girls to be strong, confident leaders who reach for their dreams and who make a positive impact on the world. **Where:** New Jersey School of Conservation in the Pocono Mountains **When:** all week, including overnights, August 3rd – August 10th **How:** Applications are available online at www.girlsleadership.org or contact Alish Berry at 215-951-0330, x2180 ASAP! Acceptance is first come, first serve. **Cost:** Sliding scale of \$110-\$500 for the week and some full scholarships are available.

Intro to the Performing Arts Camp

What: A six week camp for 6 to 10 year olds with an expressed interest in the performing arts. Campers will take classes in singing, acting, and creative movement. **Where:** Four locations within Philadelphia **When:** July 7th – August 15th, 9AM - 2PM **How:** Applications are available online at www.phila.gov/recreation/performing_arts/introduction_to_the.html or contact Tom Digman at 215-685-2217. The camp fills up quickly. **Cost:** \$180 for six weeks

Young Performers Theater Camp

What: A six week camp for 9 to 18 year olds with an expressed interest in theater. Campers choose a major (Dance or Theater) and receive instruction and support in that area. The camp culmination is a dance production and three different plays, according to your child's age and major, at the Annenberg Center's professional stage. **Where:** The Annenberg Center at UPENN and the Settlement Music School **When:** July 7th – August 18th, 9AM - 2PM **How:** Applications are available online at www.phila.gov/recreation/performing_arts/Young_Performers_The.html or contact Tom Digman at 215-685-2217. An audition is required. **Cost:** \$180 for six weeks and an additional \$100 for costumes, DVDs, and Phillies tickets.

Summer Art Camp

What: A three week camp for 8 to 18 year olds with an interest in Art. Campers select either the Sculpture Program or the Painting Program. Classes are limited to 12 campers each. **Where:** Fisher Park, 5th and Spencer Avenue **When:** July 7th – July 25th or July 28th to August 15th, 9 AM – 2:30 PM

How: Applications are available online at www.phila.gov/recreation/camps/summer_art_camp.html or contact Valerie Arhondakis at 215-685-2871. Deadline is May 9th.

Camp Girard 2008

What: Camp Girard is an educational and recreational summer experience for youth entering kindergarten through eighth grade. Established in 2002, Camp Girard served only 60 campers. Now the camp has grown to serve 400 students during the summer. **When:** July 7-August 15th 8:00am-5:30pm

How: Apply online @ www.girardcollege.com

A Message from the Board of Trustees

The ICS community has been hearing a lot about fundraising in recent months. At the April PTA meeting, those in attendance heard a presentation about reasons that charter schools need to fundraise within their parent community. Raising funds from outside the parent community is, of course, a priority as well. At the April Board of Trustees meeting, parent Maren Gaughan gave a presentation about ICS's plan to establish a fundraising Board; a main goal of establishing this separate, specialized Board will be to have long-term development plans that will eventually do away with lots of mini fundraisers that are currently needed to pay for a lot of the "extras" that make ICS extraordinary.

Over the past year the Board has been working to streamline its committee work and to differentiate between issues that are specifically the responsibility of the ICS staff and those that should be handled at the Board level. Clarifying the roles of the Board and staff was one of the goals in the strategic plan adopted by the Board in April 2007. At the April 2008 meeting, the Board approved the mission statement of the Policy Committee. Under this mission, the Policy Committee will ensure that existing school wide policies and their implementation are periodically reviewed, and it will provide a forum and process for determining whether new policies should be created or existing policies modified. Also in April, the Board unanimously passed a resolution thanking the law firm of Cozen O'Connor for the invaluable and extremely generous pro bono legal services they provide to ICS on a regular basis.

At its May 14th meeting, the Board anticipates adopting the final 2008-2009 school year calendar. As noted in a recent update from the CEO, it has already been determined that the first day of classes for students in first through eighth grades will be Monday, September 15th; the first day for kindergartners will be Wednesday, September 17th. In addition, we expect several Board member nominations to be considered at the May meeting. We are still accepting Board nominations! Please contact Board President Rebecca Baehr at rhbaehr@yahoo.com, and Community Relations Chairperson Joana Davis-Diaz at boricudad@msn.com, to make nomination recommendations. As always, the public is welcome to attend monthly Board meetings, which are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7p.m. at the school.

Warmly,

Rebecca Baehr

President, Board of Trustees

“Home Sweet Home”

*A Monthly Update on the progress of our new home at 16th & Lombard-
-Robin Kohles, Owner’s Representative*

Over 80 parents, teachers, staff and neighbors donned hard hats and took a sneak peek through the new building construction site as a part of ICS' Hard Hat Walk Through tours the past weeks. Guests heard about the history of the Durham building along with ICS' exciting plans for it's rebirth. Thank you to everyone who helped make the events happen including our tireless tour guides: Cara Carroccia, Matt Drexler, Steve Gendler, Jurate Krokys, Kathy Kurtak, David Mazzacco, Conswelia McCourt, Rosina Miller, Kristin Nocco, Ellen Pannell, Joe Winchester and our energetic organizer Stephanie Kindt.

Thanks to the brilliant idea of Middle School student Wanya Anderson, the earth day dress down day raised \$400 for some greening of the new school's yard. More info to follow....

Construction Update: The building is progressing nicely. This past month major equipment such as the elevator, boiler, roof top equipment was installed (requiring closing of Lombard Street for a crane), the new stair tower was built and the roof membrane applied. The exterior walls of the addition are going up with the "skin" of brick, stucco and metal panel to follow (see photo). Inside the existing building, classrooms are receiving final paint, colors are starting to appear and are looking great.

Remember to buy a brick. Engrave your name on it, honor someone special, add a quote. For more info go to www.independencecharter.org.



BUY A BRICK

Become a part of ICS forever....

These bricks will be used in a special walkway, similar to the one pictured, running along our new addition. In the years to come, you will be able to bring your children and grandchildren to see your name and theirs names as a permanent legacy of Independence Charter School.



Brick Details - This *Vitralase® Engraved Brick* is just \$100.00! The bricks are 4"x 8" and are engraved with your personal message, using state of the art laser technology. This will ensure strength and durability for many years to come.

Mini Brick Replica! - In addition, if you purchase an engraved brick, you have the opportunity to purchase a miniature replica of the original. This mini brick serves as great gift or everyday commemoration of your contribution to our new home. The mini bricks are 1 1/2"x 3"x 5/8" and cost an additional \$15.

Deadlines and Info - **May 23rd, 2008 will be the closing date for placing orders.** Please do not wait until the last minute to

place your order. Our goal is to have the bricks delivered and ready for installation by August 1st, 2008!

For more info visit www.independencecharter.org

(Order Form – Detach and Return in the Enclosed Envelope)

Engraving Information

Your 4"x 8" brick can have up to 20 characters (this includes spaces and punctuation). For an additional \$20 we can engrave a second line of up to 20 characters. *Please make sure your engraving information is spelled correctly.*

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1st Line - \$100

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2nd Line (add \$20)

Number of Mini Bricks - \$15 each: _____ Total: \$ _____

Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____

Please make all checks payable to *Independence Charter School*
105 South 7th Street Philadelphia, PA 19106

To order by credit card:

Go to www.independencecharter.org and click "Donate Now."

Enter "ICS Brick Walkway" in the *Designate* line, **and** your 20 (or 40) character engraving in the *Dedicate* line (character count includes spaces and punctuation).

Click "Add to Basket" and complete your order.

For questions, contact Matt Drexler at mattd@independencecharter.org or 215-238-800 ext. 2500.

Order Online @ <http://www.independencecharter.org/>

May Lunch Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Nutrients
Assorted Fresh Fruit Variety of fat content White or Chocolate or Lactaid milk offered daily	2 nd Entree Choices: Mgr Choice Pizza, Cheese Steak Sandwich Meatball Sandwich, Peanut Butter & Jelly On White, Grilled Cheese Sandwich	Menu items are subject to change based upon availability	1 CHEESESTEAK SANDWICH ON PHILLY ROLL FRENCH FRIES APPLE SAUCE	2 FRENCH BREAD PIZZA OR TURKEY HAM & CHEESE HOAGIE ON PHILLY ROLL & PEAR CUP	Cals 780 Fiber 6.5 g Iron 83.8 mg Calcium 1413.9 mg Prot 33.4g T.Fat 25.1g S.Fat 8.8g
5 NACHO GRANDE W/BEEF MEXICAN RICE BAKED CORN SCOOPS & SALSA HAPPY CINCO DE MAYO!!!!	6 CHICKEN PATTY ON BUN W/ LETTUCE & TOMATO POTATO ROUNDS APPLE SAUCE	7 TURKEY TACO MEXICAN CORN	8 HAMBURGER ON A BUN LETTUCE & TOMATO FRENCH FRIES FRUIT COCKTAIL	9 4x6 PIZZA PEACH CUP OR CHICKEN SALAD ON BABY KAISER ROLL	Cals 756 Fiber 9.6 g Iron 4.4 mg Calcium 1652.9 mg Prot 33.6g T.Fat 22.4g S.Fat 7.3g
12 CHICKEN NUGGETS GREEN BEANS DINNER ROLL	13 4x6 PIZZA FRUIT COCKTAIL	14 SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALL TOMATO SAUCE TOSSED SALAD, ASSORTED DRESSING, GARLIC BREAD	15 CHEESESTEAK SANDWICH ON PHILLY ROLL FRENCH FRIES APPLE SAUCE	16 TURKEY HAM & CHEESE ON PHILLY ROLL SANDWICH PEACH CUP <u>Early Dismissal</u>	Cals 719 Fiber 8.3 g Iron 35.9 mg Calcium 1287.8 mg Prot 31.8g T.Fat 21.9g S.Fat 7.8g
19 HOT DOG ON A BUN FRENCH FRIES VEGETARIAN BEANS	20 NACHO GRANDE W/CHICKEN STEAMED CORN BAKED CORN SCOOPS	21 CHICKEN FRICASSE FLUFFY RICE GREEN PEAS	22 TURKEY HOAGIE ON STEAK ROLL POTATO ROUNDS	23 STUFFED CRUST PIZZA OR ITALIAN HOAGIE ON PHILLY ROLL & PEACH CUP	Cals 729 Fiber 9.9 g Iron 27.4 mg Calcium 1086.6 mg Prot 36.6g T.Fat 20.3g S.Fat 7.3g
26 Happy Memorial Day Schools Closed	27 CHICKEN NUGGETS WHIPPED POTATOES W/GRAVY GREEN BEANS DINNER ROLL	28 SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALLS TOSSED SALAD, ASSORTED DRESSING GARLIC BREAD	29 STEAK SANDWICH ON PHILLY ROLL FRENCH FRIES FRUIT COCKTAIL	30 4x6 PIZZA TOSSED SALAD OR TUNA SALAD ON BABY KAISER ROLL	Cals 771 Fiber 8.9 g Iron 44.2 mg Calcium 1475.3 mg Prot 34.6g T.Fat 25.8g S.Fat 8.4g

ICS Monthly Next Publication-

June 5, 2008

Suggestions and/or comments about
ICS Monthly's publication please contact

Tr. Michael-
michaelf@independencecharter.org
