

The ICS Link

A monthly newsletter for families at Independence Charter School
"Opening WORLDS of OPPORTUNITY"

March 2010

2009-2010 ICS School Calendar Adjustments

A message from CEO Direktore Jurate

Due to the unusually frequent and intense snow storms this school year, we have had to make adjustments in the school calendar. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires that charter schools provide sufficient hours of instruction. At this writing, having lost 7 instructional days, and with winter still not over, we realize that we must prepare you for the changes that may affect your family plans. The driving force behind the changes is the goal of providing meaningful instructional time for all grades. Therefore, it makes more sense to provide more instructional time now before the PSSAs instead of at the end of a school year. The PSSA testing will happen in April. Please make note of these changes.

-March 25 (Thursday) previously Report Card Day and no school for students **will now be an Early Dismissal School day for students.**

-March 26 (Friday) previously a Professional Development Day and no school for students **will now be an Early Dismissal Day for students.**

We will use early dismissals at 2pm for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of that week, that is March 24, 25, 26 so that we can schedule report card conferences with teachers and parents from 2pm to 5pm on all three days.

-March 29 (Monday) previously part of Spring Break **will be a full school day for students.**

-March 30 (Tuesday) previously part of Spring Break **will be a Half school day with dismissal at 12 Noon**(so that families and staff can get a start for the break). This leaves you with three Spring Break days (Wednesday through Friday).

Families who already have made plans and have paid in to vacations may write a letter to the principal and they will excuse the absences. We will, however, be sure to give you a schoolwork packet for your child to keep up with work.

These accommodations to the calendar should keep us safely within the days and hours required by the state and help kids and teachers regain instructional time, even if we have a couple more Nor'Easters. We do reserve the right to make adjustments to the Grade 7 and 8 calendars should we lose any significant additional time, since those grades are required to be in school for more hours than lower grades. If that were necessary, the adjustments would be in adding additional instructional time to the end of the school day and we would inform you of that in advance.

Please note that ICS in-house care, clubs and tutoring will NOT be held on the following dates:
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday March 24th, 25th & 26th
Monday, Tuesday March 29th & 30th



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I.C.S. Bulletin Board

Student Council March Update:

Student Council has been regularly meeting with senior citizens at Liberty Court. So far we've helped with birthday parties, made room visits, and even played Pokemo! Everyone's been having a great time (students and seniors alike) and we look forward to future visits.

Meal Program Information

If your child pays for meals at ICS, please be sure to keep funds in his or her account by sending in payments on a regular basis. Payments (cash or money orders) can be sent in on any school day. Contact Tr. Neyza at neyzac@independencecharter.org or 215-238-8000 extension 2228 for more information on your child's account.

We are working with Linton to be able to offer more vegetarian options, including some that don't include cheese. As always, the options need to meet the requirements of the National School Lunch program and need to be within the financial budget for the program. If you have any suggestions for options, please forward them to Tr.Neyza.

Attention 7th and 8th Grade Girls!

What: The "Uniquely You" Summit 2010, sponsored and led by Spelman College

Why: To empower, endow, and equip young women in Philadelphia to think, feel, and conduct themselves with confidence and a positive sense of self *

When: Saturday and Sunday, April 10th and 11th

Where: Springside School in Chestnut Hill

How: Apply at www.uniquelyyousummit.org by Friday, March 12th. **Cost:** \$10-15.00

* The weekend includes a series of workshops and breakout sessions led by powerful and inspiring speakers.

Registration for Kindergarten Siblings

If you submitted your 2010-2011 sibling kindergarten application by the November 2009 deadline, you should have received your registration/parent orientation packet by now. If you have not received it, please contact Tr. Megan at megans@independencecharter.org or 215-238-8000 extension 2292.

Update from The Haiti Relief Committee

The Independence Charter School community responded quickly and generously to the devastation that occurred in Haiti in early January. Our January "Change for Change" Drive, Dollar Dress Down Day, and Mercado de Fruta collected just over \$3,700. These donations have been sent to Partners in Health (www.pih.org) and Doctors Without Borders (www.doctorswithoutborders.org). In addition to monetary donations, boxes and boxes of medical supplies were filled and will be shipped to Haiti by the group Haitian Professionals of Philadelphia (www.hpphilly.org).

The ICS community continues to stay connected to the many needs of Haiti. Our next stage in relief efforts will focus on raising money to purchase a shelter box for victims in Haiti. Shelterbox.org is an organization that responds to natural and man-made disasters by delivering boxes of aid to those who are most in need. Each box supplies an extended family of up to 10 people with a tent and essential equipment to use while they are displaced or homeless. Over 7,000 ShelterBoxes have been distributed with thousands more on their way to Haiti.

In the weeks to come we encourage you and your child(ren) to participation the following opportunity to contribute to the ICS Shelterbox fund.

- Families are encouraged to purchase Haiti bracelets. The bracelets showcase the colors of the Haitian flag and have been made by ICS students. Bracelets cost one dollar and can be purchased in student's homeroom/advisory in the morning. Families are encouraged to send a clearly marked envelope stating how many bracelets they wish to purchase.
- On Friday, March 5th, student will be encouraged to participate in a **Dress Down Day**. All participants are asked for a \$2 donation, or any donation within family means. In an effort to show our support and unity for Haiti, students are encouraged to wear red and blue, the colors of the Haitian flag.



Could it be? Or were we dreaming? Was it actually warm enough this past weekend to play outside without two pairs of gloves and snow boots? Spring is only a few short weeks away, and with the beginning of spring also comes the time for many of our students to sit for the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Although these tests are only one indicator of a child’s success in the classroom, the results contribute to teachers’ understanding of individual and group needs, and help them design units and lessons that best support our students. This year, the exams are all scheduled in the month of April. The ICS schedule will be as follows:

Exam	Dates	Who?
Reading	Friday 4/9– Friday 4/16 (students will take 3 Reading sections and 3 Math sections during this week)	Grades 3-8 (first year English Language Learners are exempt)
Math	Friday 4/9– Friday 4/16 (students will take 3 Math and 3 Reading sections during this week)	Grades 3-8
Writing	Monday 4/19–Friday 4/23 (students will test two days during this week)	Grades 5 and 8
Science	Monday 4/26–Friday 4/30 (students will test two days during this week)	Grades 4 and 8
Make-Up Exams	Through 5/7 as needed	All students who miss any section(s) of an exam

To be best prepared for these exams, we at ICS and you at home should focus on cultivating an environment that allows our students to best demonstrate their skills without feeling anxious. All students react differently to testing, and all students progress at different rates. Finally, students in the Immersion Program often take a few years to “catch up” on standardized test performance as they learn to organize both languages in their brains. Your most important role is to encourage and prepare them to do their best by:

- ensuring that your child attends school between now and the testing days. We have lost a number of instructional days due to this year’s snowstorms, so it is important that students miss as little school as possible.
- ensuring that your child attends school on the testing days. If possible, avoid scheduling outside appointments during the testing windows.
- requiring your child to rest and eat well. Students should have adequate sleep and healthy breakfasts every day, whether that breakfast is at home or here at ICS.
- talking with your child about the test. However, do not “study” for it. This exam is a test of his or her skills – not memorized knowledge.
- Keeping sick children home on testing days. It is unlikely he or she will perform as well as when healthy. The test can be made up when he or she is feeling well again.

I look forward to seeing our 3rd-8th graders demonstrating their skills during testing next month. I thank you for supporting our efforts to provide the best possible testing environment for each student. If you have any questions about the PSSA, please contact me.

Calling All ICS Parents And Guardians:

The Family Connections Task Force Wants To Hear From You!

On Thursday, March 18 at 5:45 PM, the Family Connections Task Force will be holding conversations for ICS parents and guardians to learn more about the experiences of ICS parents and guardians and gather ideas about how ICS can improve the ways it connects with families.

We will have babysitting for the kids and pizza for everyone. The conversations will be led by ICS parents and will be confidential. The Family Connections task force will use the information and ideas that are shared to make recommendations to the ICS staff and board of trustees about ways to improve connections with families.

Please come share your experiences and ideas with us!

- When:** Thursday, March 18, 5:30-7:15
Pizza and babysitting begin at 5:30.
Conversations begin at 5:45
- Where:** ICS
- Questions:** Contact Elsie Stern at estern@rrc.edu or
215-236-4874

If you want to participate, please return this form to school by March 11

Your name: _____

Phone number or e-mail: _____

Your child's grade and program: _____

If you have ideas to contribute, but can't come on March 18, please contact Elsie Stern at estern@rrc.edu or 215-236-4874 so we can arrange another time to speak with you.

Attn: ICS Staff—Please put these responses in the BOT mailbox.



Happy March. It's been a wild February for all of us. Hopefully the turn of the calendar page will bring us fewer snow days this coming month.

The ICS Board of Trustees will be approving a budget for the 2010-11 school year in coming months. As you might guess based on what's happening around the city, the state, and the country, this will be a tough fiscal year for ICS as well. With cuts in funding and the ending of the two-year federal stimulus package, combined with soaring costs of health insurance and reduced foundation giving, we will undoubtedly have to make some difficult cuts this year. The administration and our business manager, along with the Board Finance Committee, are looking carefully at where we might be able to shave costs, but we can expect that we will all be trying to find creative ways to do more with less this coming year. We are of course looking for ways to save that will have as little impact as possible on the school's core instructional program and supports.

If you are concerned about funding for public education in Pennsylvania, as we all are, please take a moment to contact your state legislator's office to let him or her know what you care about. Find your legislator by going to <http://www.legis.state.pa.us> and using the search box in the upper right corner. You can tell them you want them to fully fund the Adequacy Formula (which is the multi-year plan to correct some of the imbalances in how education money gets spent around the state) or you can just tell them you support funding for Philadelphia public schools. The state budget is being debated now in Harrisburg so your call will be relevant and timely.

In other areas, the ICS Board continues to seek ways to strengthen the input of our families in the school. In addition to the work of the Parent Connections Task Force (which is meeting Thursday, March 18th at school – contact estern@rcc.edu for more info on that), you will also see our annual Parent Survey at the March parent-teacher conference. Please take a moment to fill that out while you are in school for conferences. (If you fill it out in the 1st floor computer lab, you will get a dress-down pass for each of your children.) This Parent Survey is an important way that we “take the temperature” of the ICS community. Your input is important, so please take a few moments to let us know what you think.

In addition, you'll also see info at the Parent-Teacher Conference on the spring election for the Board of Trustees Parent Seat. If you're thinking of running, please feel free to get in touch to learn more about what's involved. We will be doing lots of board training and support for new members going forward, so don't be afraid to jump in.

Think Spring.

Rona Buchalter
President, ICS Board of Trustees

Parents: Please be sure to fill out the dress code survey that will be coming home in the Wednesday folder. We are hoping to put some minor changes in place for the Middle School especially with some logo shirts and other minor adjustments for the K-4 students. Your feedback is valuable and will help immensely. Low cost and minor changes are our goals. We will be seeking some volunteers to help with feedback. More on this at the PTA meeting this Thursday!

-GEO Jurate
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ICS kindergarten students have quite a learning agenda during the month of March! As part of our China study, we are taking a trip to Chinatown to learn about Chinese writing, tour a fortune cookie factory, and sample Chinese food made by the famous chef, Joseph Poon. Chef Joseph Poon is a regular on local Philadelphia news and National entertainment programs, such as The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, The Ellen Degeneres Show, and Food Network's The Best of... We will also take part in a Tai Chi lesson instructed by Pat Conroy of Golden Breath, a modern system that pays respect to old Chinese forms. Tai Chi stems from a very ancient history in China of movements systems that are associated with health and philosophy. We will be visited by two ICS parents this month: Dentist Justin Bloom will teach us about teeth and Mr. Jiang will tell us about his experiences in China and play a traditional Chinese instrument for us. We encourage the members of our larger ICS family to share professions and experiences with us. Please contact Tr. Emily to schedule a grade level visit. Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss, and welcome Spring!



Kindergarten



The first grade has had a busy winter! We have loved studying France, learning about the geography, people, and foods there! We are really looking forward to our upcoming trip to the Philadelphia Art Museum in March where we will explore some French art! The first grade has also been busy learning about time and fractions in math and adding more details to our writing. Good luck to all first graders on their upcoming class spelling bees! We can't wait for the spring!

Grade 1

Wow! We made it through a VERY snowy February! Second graders are ready to jump back into learning. We are diving into subtraction with regrouping ("borrowing") and studying spelling words for the upcoming Spelling Bee in mid-March! Fruit Market has been a great success so far. We are always in need of parent volunteers if you have some time to spare to help wash fruit and sell fruit with our students. The next market is March 16th. M. Adrienne and Tr. Karen's classes have rescheduled their Field Trip to the Art Museum for March 4th. Tr. Suzanne's class will visit the Philadelphia Flower Show on March 3rd! We will be in touch soon with ways that our second grade plans to help with relief efforts in Chile after the devastating earthquake. We are looking forward to seeing you for report card conferences. Check your child's folder in the upcoming days for details!



Grade 2

Third grade is busy preparing for our first year of PSSA testing! In math, students absolutely loved learning their multiplication facts and are excited to begin our geometry unit. We've been learning a lot about Kenya in social studies and be sure to ask any third grader about rural and urban communities. We recently visited the Franklin Institute and we got to explore the giant heart, pretend we're athletes, and watch a movie on the IMAX screen. We're looking forward to planning our Spring Potluck Mixer -- details coming up soon!



Grade 3



The 4th grade is gearing up for the PSSA's this Spring! We are finishing up our Ghana unit and are looking forward to studying Australia. In Spanish we are looking at surveys and creating line plot graphs to "crunch" data about our siblings. With Tr. Alison, we have finished creating our own original similies, and are looking at the elements of expository text. This year sure is going by FAST!

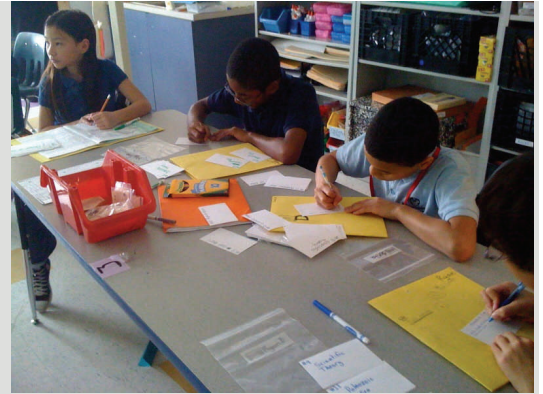
Grade 4

Happy almost-spring! The fifth graders are heavily entrenched in PSSA prep mode. Please look for math and reading practice assessments, as well as upcoming writing projects. Also, don't forget that logging into Study Island at home is a great way to help your child prepare for testing. Additionally, in math, students are working on decimals. In language arts, students have just begun a poetry unit, and in social studies they've launched into their study of South Africa. Don't forget to get those cheesecake orders in by March 11th. Proceeds help support the fifth grade camping trip. Permission slips for the trip went home last week in Wednesday Communication Folders. Additionally, an orientation for parents has been scheduled for April, which will provide you with the opportunity of finding out more about the trip.



Grade 5

Sixth graders are exploring social issues that affect our community in their advisory groups for their service learning projects. Students in Tr. Joshua's homeroom are looking at peer pressure & drugs, in Tr. Lindsay's homeroom domestic/animal abuse, in Tr. Sarah's advisory crime, and in Tr. Chris T.'s advisory discrimination/racism. In the coming weeks students will be visited by various community partners from Philadelphia to learn more about their social issues before designing their service-learning projects for late spring. In Math Problem Solving students are finishing up their unit on Shapes & Designs. In Language Arts, we have finished our fantasy unit, in which we read *City of Ember* and wrote a short story, and have begun a non-fiction and expository writing unit. 6th grade Spanish language arts is working with irregular verbs through music and reading short non-fiction texts in preparation for the PSSAs.



Grade 6



In Social Studies, we recently finished our unit on Islam and have begun learning about West Africa. In an ELA/Art class collaboration, we've begun creating "Dream Flag" poems in preparation for the International Dream Flag celebration at the Kimmel Center in April. In MPS we're learning about ratios, proportions, and percents. In our environmental science unit we're learning about biotic (living or having lived) and abiotic (non-living or never having lived) factors in an ecosystem, as well as the impact we have on these ecosystems.

Grade 7

8th grade is still going strong, even with multiple snow days and a fair amount of eighth-gradeitis. In social studies, we just finished learning about the Cuban and Haitian Revolutions and have moved into our unit on Slavery in the United States, Jamaica and Brazil. A group of 8th graders have also begun working with a group of students in India to spread their knowledge and the importance of Fair Trade in our communities and the world. We're writing our plays and we just had a Coffee Shop Talk about *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. We're also starting our literary analysis essays on themes in *The Giver*. We have just finished our unit on exponential functions and are beginning our exploration of Quadratics. The 8th graders made the first annual chili cook-off a huge success and can't wait to see how much they will raise in the upcoming walk-a-thon!



Grade 8

Independence Charter Double Anniversary Committee Meeting

April 12 at 5:45

On **November 18-19, 2011**, Independence Charter School will celebrate our 10 year anniversary and the 100 year anniversary of our home - The Thomas Durham Elementary School.

In order to plan for this exciting occasion, we need your help. Volunteers are needed to help publicize the celebration. We also need assistance with locating Durham School alumni and former staff members.

Volunteer commitments are very flexible.

To learn more about how you can participate in the planning of the celebration, please attend the meeting on **April 12 at 5:45 p.m. at ICS**. Refreshments will be provided.

If you can't attend the meeting and are still interested in participating, please contact Leonora Cravotta at ext. 2430 or via email at leonorac@independencecharter.org.

ICS 1st Annual Cook-Off a huge success!!

This 8th grade fundraiser turned Sunday afternoon into a Family Rocking Chili good time! We raised \$1,072 and 9 people went home with trophies and medals. It looks like we'll be doing it again next year, so get your best batch ready.

Congratulations to the winners:

1st place-Judith Dumorney-McDaniel with her J3 Spicy Chili, mother of 2nd grader, Jala McDaniel

2nd place- Don Pancoe with his Spice Boy Chili, father of 2nd grader, Bix Pancoe

3rd place- Sherell Highsmith with her Blast Off Chili, Mother of 6th grader, Nyla Webb

Honorable Mentions:

Overall Uniqueness- Todd Lentz with his Pork Vindaloo, father of 2nd & 4th graders Alena & Isabella Lentz.

Best Presentation- Kevin Kilmartin with his Chuck Wagon Chili, father of 8th grader Helen Kilmartin.

Most Unique Main Ingredient- Jeff Newburger with his Lamb Chili, father of kindergarten student Ella Newburger.
and...

The People's Choice Awards

1st place- Judith Dumorney-McDaniel again!

2nd place- Dan Long with his Profundamente, Oscuridad y Misterioso, father of 2nd & 7th grader Juliana & Dylan Long.

3rd place- Helen Kilmartin with her Chili from Hel, ICS 8th grader.

And to our 5 wonderful judges, 5th grade TA. Arline Roberts, Teacher Ramzy, Donald Chisholm -father of 8th grader DeAngelo Chisholm, Fernice Greer- mother of 8th grader Tatiana Greer and Rhian Bickley - NorthBowl Chef, *Thank you for your time, taste buds and strong stomachs! We appreciate you!*

Thanks to all that came, to those who volunteered their time and those who donated an item, to the wonderful group of 8th graders that showed up and worked stations, You were all instrumental in yesterday's success. Be on the look out for the upcoming Walk-A-Thon.



PTA Information

Corbi Supporters Contribute BIG

A big note of thanks to all those ICS families that contributed towards the Corbi Pizza Kit & Cookie Dough Fundraiser. Approximately \$4,000 was raised and will go towards the 8th grade trip to New York City this Spring. Thank you to 8th grade parents Becky Wiesner and Barbara & Kevin Kilmartin and 4th grade parents Cristina Vea and Susan Burrows. A special note of thanks to Tr. Kerry and to the following 8th grade students who helped unload, organize and distribute Corbi products on a very cold Wednesday in February: Olivia, Tatiana, China, Cheyenne, Abeja, Brianna Harvey, Dominique, Jhonas, Kideyah, Savvy, Seamus, Castor, Bianca, Anya, James P, Joseph, Helen and Nora! Many thanks to all those patient souls that put up with limited walking space during dismissal that memorable Wednesday afternoon.

March PTA Meeting is

Thursday, March 4th beginning at 5:30.

Back by popular demand, the monthly PTA meeting will again be held on the first Thursday of the month (March 4th) beginning at 5:30, right after club pickup. So after picking up your children, please stay and have a bite to eat, catch up with friends and hear what's going on at school and with your PTA. We hope to have one of the Odyssey of The Mind teams perform for us during dinner. All kids are welcome to stay and have dinner. Afterwards, they are invited to watch a movie in the music room with their friends while the grown-ups talk school and PTA. Be sure and RSVP by Thursday morning, March 4th. You can RSVP by calling or emailing Tr. Tracey at the front desk.

Upcoming PTA workshops/information sessions:

Thursday April 1: Responsive Classroom. Come and learn about the responsive classroom from Dean Andrea.

Thursday May 6: Family Literacy Night featuring M. Odamis, Tr. Amy and Tr. Alison

Box Top Contest Ends Friday March 5th

Be sure and send in those last minute Box Tops by this Friday March 5th. Winners will be announced in April.

2009/2010 PTA Officers

President: Conswelia McCourt, president@icspta.org

VP: Luci Boone, luciboone@aol.com

Treasurer: Liz Reed, earead@yahoo.com

Secretary: Nannette Johnson, philnannette@comcast.net

Membership: Stephanie Kindt, Stephanie.kindt@verizon.net

Board Liaison: Cristina Vea, cristinamvea@gmail.com

Correspondence: Susan Burrows, sieburrows@earthlink.net

Save The Date—ICS PTA 8th Annual Social and Silent Auction is Saturday, May 1, 2010, from 6-11 PM

The PTA's Social and Silent Auction is a school tradition among the ICS community. It's a great night of fun that brings together ICS parents & guardians, friends, teachers & staff, and the community at large in mutual support of the PTA's Fine Arts Fund.

Come and have uninterrupted conversation with other adults, enjoy delicious home-cooked food, listen to some great live and mixed music, feast your eyes on the beautiful works of art created by the students and check out the variety of raffle baskets and auction items donated by individuals and businesses. You'll be inspired to bid! If you are willing to put in an hour of volunteer time that night, you can get in for free! Otherwise, the entrance fee is \$5 per person (and that comes with either a drinks ticket or a dress down day pass – your choice).

This is an adult-oriented event with beer and wine. This parent/teacher/alumni/friend event is not intended for those under the legal drinking age.

There are many ways to get involved:

- Make a donation of food or beverages
- Donate twinkle lights and paper goods
- Volunteer to help with set-up or clean-up
- Volunteer to help out at the event
- Donate an item (minimum \$25), service, certificate for auction
- Create and donate your own themed raffle basket
- Solicit donations and raffle baskets from restaurants, movie theatres, bookstores, coffee shops, beauty salons, etc., and other places you frequent that may like to support your child's school
- Help your child's class create a work of art and/or a themed gift basket
- Contribute to your class' themed basket to be raffled

Social & Silent Auction— Donation Form **Saturday, May 1, 2010, from 6-11 PM**

Name _____

Phone or email (the best way to contact you): _____

____ I/we would LOVE to contribute/donate to the ICS PTA's Social & Silent Auction:

Sponsoring monetarily in the amount of \$_____ (Checks payable to "ICS PTA")

____ Donating paper goods (plates cups cutlery napkins) Colors: yellow, navy, white

____ Donating twinkle lights

____ Donating Auction Item(s) _____ value _____

____ Donating Auction Item(s) _____ value _____

____ Donating food or beverage (Appetizers Dessert Vegetarian Dish or Beer Wine Soda Water)

____ Volunteering ____ Set-up Friday night, April 30th from 6-9

____ Set-up Saturday, May 1st from 12-5

____ Help out night of the Social (circle what you'd like to do: Bartend, sell drink tickets, sell raffle tickets, registration, close-out, runner, floater)

____ Clean-up immediately following the event

____ Work with my child's classroom to create a work of art and/or themed basket

____ I want to help but am unsure how to start the process and I'd like some ideas. Would a committee member please contact me (don't forget to tell us your name).

other (please describe) _____

Questions? Contact anyone of the following:

Susan Burrows (215-805-2621), or sjeburrows@earthlink.net, Cristina Vea, cristinamvea@gmail.com or Tracey Hill, traceyh@independencecharter.org

Thank you for your help and we hope to see you Saturday May 1st

Any questions or comments, please feel free to contact any of the following committee members:

Laura Ayala, Susan Burrows, Nikki Butler, Michelle Coats, Debora DeVaughn, Maureen DiStefano, Mary Ann Duffy, Sabrina Fecher, Gia Guadagnino, Tracey Hill, Lynn Hunt, Stephanie Kindt, Maureen Long, Marcie Lichtman-Lentz, Conswelia McCourt, Jean Miller, Jeffrey Newberger, Maria Palladino, Liz Reed, Karina Roepel, Caren Seltzer-Devin, Megan Steelman, Cristina Vea, Maureen Wellner

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Chef Gabe's Corner:

Hello to all! I expect that all of us are ready for the snow to be done and gone. I would like to tell you about a few things that we are working on in food service for the month of March. As you know February's winner of the student choice was Darryl Simpson from first grade. His entry of Chicken and Broccoli Alfredo with Fettuccini was unfortunately not served yet, because of the snow storm that closed school. So we are going to have his meal on the menu this month on Thursday the 4th. This contest gives the students the opportunity to help us put new items on the menu, so unique ideas are appreciated.

The International Day this month is inspired by the fifth grade cultural studies of Afghanistan. The menu will consist of Beef **Qorma**, which is a beef dish similar to a stew with a lot of spices such as coriander, cumin, cardamom, and other spices. We are going to have **Qabli Pulao**, which is a rice dish that has raisins and carrots. For a vegetable we are going to have cauliflower.

I hope that all students will partake in our International Day menu and broaden their gastronomic horizons.

This month we are also going to try something new on the menu. On the 9th we will be serving Vegetarian Chili. I know that last month we were going to try this, but again because of the snow storm that canceled school we had to postpone this. In addition to the Vegetarian Chili we are also going to have a vegetarian nuggets on the menu. Please look for these new vegetarian options on the menu as has been suggested by a few of the parents and students. Please review the menu to see which days these meals will be served.

The Team Nutrition display board this month is going to focus on the topic of general nutrition, because March is National Nutrition Month. This topic is not only important to learn at an early age, but equally important to maintain throughout your life. As you might hear in the news and read in the newspaper; childhood obesity is a big topic in the U.S. and if we just teach our children the importance of General Nutrition then they have a better chance of coming out on top of this epidemic.

I hope that everyone has another wonderful month at ICS.

-Chef Gabe



A Message from Nurse Leslie

I can't believe March is here. I hope that this month brings warmer weather and clearer skies. Remind your kids that as the weather warms up, coats do not come off...it's still winter for a few more weeks.

With that, we may be looking at allergy symptoms soon, if you are aware that your child has allergies, please make sure to give allergy medication in the morning before school so that they will be more comfortable here at school.

Very shortly parents will be receiving the results of the screenings that I have conducted this school year. All students have received height, weight and vision screenings, and now parents will be getting a print out of the results. Some students have received a hearing screening as well, and if it was not within normal limits, parents will receive a copy of those results as well.

There is still a plea for donated new underwear in all sizes for those children who may have a bathroom accident. These donations would be much appreciated.

Parents, please remind children that breakfast is the most important meal of the day and that if they don't eat breakfast at home, they should be eating it here. Kids should be checking the meal calendars and ensuring that the meals of the day are things that they like, so that they are not stuck eating something that they either can't or won't eat. If the meal choice is not to their liking, perhaps a breakfast or lunch can be brought from home. I am seeing a lot of kids complaining of headaches in the middle of the day, after breakfast and before lunch.

Let's hope for no more snow!

Nurse Leslie
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Cheesecake Sale

Cheesecakes are coming to ICS on March 25th. Below you will find an order form for you, your family, and friends. We have priced the cheesecakes at \$18, a bargain, so they are affordable for you for the upcoming holidays.

All order forms and money are due in the office by March 11th. Please enclose your order forms and money (CASH or check made out to Independence Charter School in an envelope labeled with your child's name and room number and the word: CHEESECAKE.)

Cheesecakes will be delivered to the school on March 25th. Make plans NOW for pick up. These cheesecakes are delicious and they freeze well.

We hope everyone takes advantage of this offer and lets their friends and business associates know about our cheesecake sale.

Thank you for your support.

All processed to towards the fifth grade camping trip.

Help send an ICS teacher to Responsive Classroom training!

Independence Charter School has fully adopted the student support systems: the *Responsive Classroom* approach (lower school) and the *Developmental Designs* approach (middle school). These programs provide teachers with resources to help them understand their students' social and developmental needs and facilitate a communal classroom environment which enables students and teachers to become mutually respectful and empowered partners in learning.

Thanks to the generosity of Independence Charter families and friends, in the summer of 2009, twenty-eight (28) teachers and administrators participated in the week-long training course necessary to implement *Responsive Classroom* and *Developmental Designs* this year.

For the 2010-2011 school year it is our goal to have 100% of Independence Charter School's teachers fully trained in *Responsive Classroom* and *Developmental Designs* methodology. To make this goal a reality, we need your help!

We are asking families or groups of families to contribute half the funds necessary to enable a teacher to participate in this invaluable workshop. For every \$350 raised, ICS will match that contribution and deliver this training to one teacher this summer. Our goal is to raise \$18,000 in order to train 26 additional teachers/teaching assistants (to the ones already budgeted) this summer.

The *Responsive Classroom* and *Developmental Designs for Middle School* programs are based on seven guiding principles:

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is as important as what they learn: Process and content go hand in hand.
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- To be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
- Knowing the children we teach-individually, culturally, and developmentally-is as important as knowing the content we teach.
- Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential to children's education.
- How the adults at school work together is as important as their individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community.

Visit the programs' websites to learn more about these exciting approaches to student learning and development!!

www.responsiveclassroom.org www.originonline.org

I wish to send an Independence Charter School teacher to the *Responsive Classroom/Developmental Designs* summer institute!

Please group my gift with the gifts of the following families: _____

Enclosed is my gift in the amount of (check one):

| \$175 | \$350 | \$525 | \$700 | \$1400

| \$10 | \$25 | \$50 | \$100 | Other: _____

| This gift qualifies for a corporate matching gift (forms enclosed).

Please make check payable to Independence Charter School and fill out the form below. Then mail both back to Independence Charter School, attention Development Office.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

To make a gift by credit card, visit www.independencecharter.org and click on 'DONATE NOW' on our homepage.

Independence Charter School is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Your contribution is tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.



El Centro de Recursos de Aprendizaje del lenguaje



A partir del 24 de febrero, el Centro de Recursos de Aprendizaje del lenguaje estará abierto en un horario extendido para proveer a los estudiantes y sus familias con la oportunidad de estudios de un segundo idioma a través de Rosetta Stone Software.

El Centro estará abierto **los miércoles de 4-5:45 para los estudiantes en grados 4-8 y los sábados para los padres de 9-11 o 11-1**. La inscripción será conforme lleguen las aplicaciones. Dando una prioridad a los estudios de Español e Ingles.

Las sesiones para los estudiantes estan asignadas los miércoles de 4-5:45pm. El programa continuara hasta el miércoles 9 de junio. Las sesiones para los padres estan organizadas los sábados de 9 a 11 y luego de 11 a 1pm. El programa continuara hasta el sábado 12 de junio. Por favor note que estas sesiones no serán extendidas si usted llega tarde. **El Centro de Recursos de Aprendizaje del lenguaje para el uso de los adultos no cuenta con cuidado de niños, por lo tanto NO traer niños a estas sesiones.**

Formulario de Inscripción de Estudiantes

(Miércoles por la tarde)

Nombre del estudiante _____

_____ Si, quiero reservar un lugar para el estudio de aprendizaje los miércoles de 4-5:45pm.

¿Necesita su hijo asistir al programa de cuidado de ICS?

_____ Si, mi hijo/a necesitara asistir al programa de ICS-aftercare de 2:30-4:00.

_____ No, mi hijo/a estará asistiendo a un club durante ese tiempo.

_____ No, mi hijo/a regresara a la Escuela a las 4:00.

Mi hijo se ira a casa de la siguiente manera:

_____ Yo recogeré a mi hijo en la recepción a las 5:45 o a una hora designada, que no sea antes de las 5pm. Si alguien mas recogerá a mi hijo, yo llamare a la oficina con anticipación para indicar el nombre de la persona que lo hará.

_____ Mi hijo se ira a casa en transporte publico (esto solamente es apropiado para los grados 6-8).

Firma del padre _____

Nombre del padre _____

Fecha _____

Teléfono _____ Celular _____

Correo electronico _____

Idioma de estudio _____

Formulario de Inscripción de Padres

(Sábados por la mañana)

_____ Si, quiero reservar un lugar para el estudio de aprendizaje los sábados de 9 a 11 am.

_____ Si, quiero reservar un lugar para el estudio de aprendizaje los sábados de 11 a 1pm.

Firma _____

Nombre _____

Fecha _____

Teléfono _____

Celular _____

Correo electronico _____

Idioma de estudio _____



Language Learning Resource Center



Starting February 24, Independence Charter School's Language Learning Resource Center opened for extended hours to provide students and their families with the opportunity to supplement their second language studies through additional practice with Rosetta Stone software.

The Learning Resource Center will be open on **Wednesdays from 4-5:45 for students grades 4-8 and on Saturdays for parents with two separate sessions: 9-11 or 11-1**. Registration will be on a first come first served basis with priority given to Spanish and English language study if multiple applications are received on the same day.

The student sessions on Wednesdays from 4-5:45 will continue through Wed., June 9. The parent sessions on Saturdays from 9-11 and 11-1 will continue through Saturday, June 12. Please note that individual sessions may not be extended if you arrive late. **Saturday sessions are for adults only. This means that children may not accompany parents to the school. There will be no child care and children may not play quietly off to the side.**

If you would like to participate, please fill out the appropriate registration form below and return to school in an envelope marked "**Leonora Cravotta, Language Center**". Registration will be ongoing until all the slots are filled (25 total slots are available at each session). At that point a waiting list will be created.

<p><u>Student Registration Form</u> (Wednesday afternoon sessions)</p>
<p>Student Name _____</p> <p>_____ Yes, I would like to reserve a place for my child every Wednesday from 4-5:45 P.M.</p> <p>Will your child need After-Care services?</p> <p>_____ Yes, my child will need to attend the After-Care program from 2:30-4:00.</p> <p>_____ No, my child will be attending a club during that time.</p> <p>_____ No, my child will be returning to school at 4:00.</p> <p>Please indicate a transportation plan for your child:</p> <p>_____ I will pick up my child at the front office at 5:45 or at a designated time no earlier than 5pm. If someone else will be picking him/her up, I will call the office in advance with that information.</p> <p>_____ My child will go home by public transportation (appropriate for gr.6-8 only).</p> <p>Parent Signature _____</p> <p>Print Parent Name _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Phone _____ Cell _____</p> <p>Email Address _____</p> <p>Language to study _____</p>

<p><u>Parent/Adult Registration Form</u> (Saturday morning sessions)</p>
<p>_____ Yes, I would like to reserve a place at the Language Learning Resource Center on Saturdays from 9-11.</p> <p>_____ Yes, I would like to reserve a place at the Language Learning Resource Center on Saturdays from 11-1.</p> <p>Signature _____</p> <p>Print Name _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Home Phone _____</p> <p>Cell Phone _____</p> <p>Email Address _____</p> <p>Language to study _____</p>