

# The ICS Link

A monthly newsletter for families at Independence Charter School  
"Opening Worlds of Opportunity"

May 2009

## Greetings ICS Family,

It gives us great pleasure to announce that the Sixth Annual International Festival will take place at our school on Tuesday, June 2, from 9am to 3pm. Through song, dance, plays, classroom projects, presentations, crafts, food and traditional/cultural attire, we will celebrate the wonderful countries and cultures we have learned about this year. We are asking the ICS family for assistance in making this day successful. There are many ways you can support your ICS student and the event.



### We are in need of the following:

Donations of cultural food for tasting, Traditional/cultural attire, Books relating to countries studied, Decorations, Volunteers to monitor hallway traffic, Set-up and clean-up, Stamping passports...

\* Students and parents may wear ethnic clothing all day. Ethnic clothing does not have to be only of the country studied but can also reflect your own ethnic heritage. Parents should note safety in how clothes are worn and the fact that kids will be active.

*Please contact your classroom teacher regarding volunteering.*

Below is the list of the countries that students will be displaying this year.

**K – Mexico**  
**1st Grade – France**  
**2nd Grade – India**  
**3rd Grade – Kenya**  
**4th Grade – Ghana**  
**5th Grade – Afghanistan**  
**6th Grade – Greece**  
**7th Grade – West Africa**  
**8th Grade – Greece**  
**Japanese Club – Japan**

In addition, parents with younger siblings and grandparents are welcome to come and visit the displays on **Wednesday, June 3rd from 9-11:00**. This is designated as a visitors' day.

On Thursday, June 4th the ICS Community Relations committee has organized various wonderful guest performances by various ethnic groups. Teachers will be signing classes up to enjoy: Aztec Dancers, West African Drummers, Dominican Folklore and Storytelling, Chinese Tea Sampling, Egyptian history of the Nile, and an International Game Room. ICS Guitar players will also perform.

**Sincerely,  
The ICS Staff**

# I.C.S. Bulletin Board

## UPCOMING EVENTS

June 2nd-5th International Festival

June 9th-11th– Field Days (See Below)

June 17th- Eighth Grade Graduation 4PM

June 18th- Kindergarten Graduation 10AM

June 19th- Last Day for Students

July 6th- Summer School Begins

## STUDENT TRANSFERS

This is the time of year when ICS gets many (many, many, many) calls from parents of students on our very long waiting lists. As much as we are sad when students leave before 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation, it helps our next year's planning process if we know about student transfers as early as possible. So, if your child will be transferring due to your family moving out-of-state or due to your child starting at another school, we would greatly appreciate your contacting Tr. Megan at [megans@independencecharter.org](mailto:megans@independencecharter.org) or by phone at 215-238-8000 x2292 as soon as possible.

**It's time for ICS students and staff to celebrate the end of the year at our annual FIELD DAY!**



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



On the day of your child's Field Day, it will be a dress down day. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for playing games and running outdoors in the warm weather, and wears sneakers – no sandals or flip flops. We encourage you to provide your child with a packed lunch (including a drink) on Field Day.

Thank you!  
Field Day Committee

**Mark your calendars for "Yearbook Signing Day" Tuesday, June 16th. Yearbooks will be distributed Monday, June 15th. Year books can still be purchased, see Tr. Tracey for details.**

# Two Events- Saturday June 20th

## Summer Reading Book Fair

Get your copies of the required summer reading titles!



When: Saturday June 20th  
Where: Barnes and Noble  
Rittenhouse Square  
1805 Walnut Street

Besides being a great opportunity to get your own copy of the summer reading books, this event serves as an ICS fundraiser. So come on out, grab your summer reading, and maybe purchase some Father's Day gifts while you're at it! More information about the required summer reading titles and assignments will be included in the June Newsletter.

## ICS Community Mural Paint Day



Come join muralist Anne Northup for the first ICS Community Paint Day for our new playground mural on Saturday, June 20th from 1:00-4:00PM. Regardless of your painting ability, all are welcome to join the start of this exciting project.

If you plan on coming please email  
Tr. Michael @  
[michaelf@independencecharter..org](mailto:michaelf@independencecharter..org) or  
215.238.8000 Ext.2305

We can't believe it's almost June! We're reading up a storm, writing several sentences, and learning the basics of addition and subtraction. We've been very busy preparing for the International Festival and can hardly contain our excitement. Come south of the border and visit us in Mexico next week! A special thank you goes out to Senora Sylvia Garcia and her lovely assistants for their captivating presentation on Mexican culture and customs. We also had the opportunity to meet Mr. Tom Warburton, author and illustrator of 1,000 Times No, a children's book about a toddler named Noah who repeats the word "No!" in Latin, Dutch, Japanese, and even Robot.



# Kindergarten



The first grade students have been enjoying exciting trips in the past month. Teacher Mary Beth, Maestro Andres, and Maestra Luz Angela's classes all went to the Children's Festival at Penn. At the festival students were entertained with a hip hop dance show. The first grade village also took a trip to the Philadelphia Art Museum to view French artifacts and art to coincide with our social studies unit on France. The students are really enjoying learning many facts about France. We are looking forward to showing off all we have learned about France at the International Festival on Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Parents if you are available to volunteer with our French room display, please let your child's teacher know. We could really use extra hands as this can be a very hectic day. Thank you for all the

much appreciated donations towards the Silent Auction baskets and International Festival supplies.

# Grade 1

Second grade is busy, busy, busy as we approach the end of the school year. We had a special visitor, Christine Rouse, who came to speak to us about living with a disability. We were very proud of the second grade for being amazing listeners and asking thoughtful and honest questions. The International Festival is NEXT week! We will be presenting what we learned about India. We are still looking for donations of \$3.00 for supplies for the day, as well as parent volunteers to help out that day. We are also looking for 3 parent volunteers to help with Field Day on June 9th from 9:30-1:00PM. We will reschedule the June Fruit Market as it falls on the same day as Field Day. Details to follow! Finally, M. Adrienne's class is performing a play on June 17th at 7PM and all are welcome.



# Grade 2

This month we are gearing up for the International Festival, we have been studying Kenya. Our exhibit will include handmade masks, maps, flags and folktales written by third graders. There will also be several activities to enjoy in our display room (Room 200, Tr. Kelly) We are planning our second 3rd grade mixer for the month of June, more details will follow, so keep an eye out for a flyer that is coming your way. The tentative date is June 8th from 5:00 to 6:30PM. We want to send out a big "THANK YOU" to all of the parents who have been volunteers at school, in the classroom and on field trips. We greatly appreciate your help and efforts in making our events fun, safe and a big success. Wahoo!



# Grade 3

May has been an interesting month filled with exciting experiences. The 4th graders participated in a lot of activities. We had fieldtrips to the Constitution Center and The Painted Bride Art Center. We had a visit by Eloise Greenfield, a children's writer. June is bringing us a deeper study of Japan's traditions and culture in social studies. In math we worked on decimals and probability. In language arts students are finishing their fiction books. They will immerse themselves in the story of "Sadako and The Thousand Paper Cranes", and to finish the year will be focusing on Japanese poetry.



# Grade 4

The fifth grade had a terrific trip to Camp Onas. We received many compliments about how cooperative, friendly and gracious our students were from the Onas staff. The students participated in team challenges, group building activities, archery, canoeing, rock wall climbing, skits, a very exciting stream study, Predator/Prey and much more. The food was delicious! We thank everyone who made this trip possible. Next week the fifth graders will be sharing what they have learned about Afghanistan during the International Festival. We've been busy planning our presentation. We hope you all received our wish list of items needed to make the 5th grade Afghani presentation top notch. While the Afghani study is nearing its end, the students have begun an exploration of South Africa which will continue until the end of the year.



# Grade 5

In mathematics the sixth graders just finished a unit on 2-dimensional measurement and will finish the year studying probability. Students are diligently working on completing their year-long service-learning projects in language arts classes. Projects included toiletries drives for the homeless, neighborhood clean-ups, and public service announcements about the dangers of smoking.



# Grade 6



In problem solving, the seventh graders just finished a unit on linear relationships and will finish the year studying 3-dimensional measurement. We are excited for the annual seventh grade Wetlands Institute field trip in Stone Harbor, NJ in June. At the institute we will learn about wetland ecology and barrier beaches.

# Grade 7

The 8th grade graduation is approaching, and our upcoming graduates are gearing up to explore the wide world outside of ICS! Students have finished their plays and have submitted them to the 2009 Young Playwrights Festival Competition. The ICS Play Festival held at the Lantern Theater on Friday, May 29th. Students showcased their scenes and acted alongside professional actors! 8th graders are also working on graduation speeches. In math, students are finishing up a unit on quadratics. In social studies, 8th graders just finished learning about the Civil War and are now moving into Reconstruction. Students will be learning the 2nd past tense used in Spanish and will be reviewing themes visited this year. We will be ending with culture infused lessons.



# Grade 8

# The ICS PTA

## News & Announcements

### ICS Variety Show & Pot Luck Dinner is Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6pm.

Does your child play an instrument, or is he or she in a band with some school friends? The variety show is a great opportunity for the kids to shine on stage. Whether it's dancing, juggling, a magic trick, telling knock-knock jokes, hula-hoop to music, playing the drums, strumming a guitar or singing a song, the ICS community is eager to embrace & celebrate all our talented students. Registration forms are available in the front office.



**Come on out for the Last PTA Meeting of this school year on Wednesday, June 3rd!**  
Same place (the lunchroom), same time (dinner starts at 6:15).

Friday Night, May 15<sup>th</sup> at ICS was a night of raw, in-your-face competitive spirit! Baseball? Nope. Dodge Ball in the play yard? Wrong again. Game of B-Ball – parents vs. teachers? No (but a good idea). It was Family BINGO night featuring sports trivia. About 50+ people attended and proudly wore their favorite team colors, T-shirts, and baseball caps. Two ICS dads, Rob Wylie and Kevin Kilmartin donned attractive orange & silver wigs and acted as Masters of Ceremonies. “Stadium Jam” music rocked the lunchroom and Dean Yerodin and his 8<sup>th</sup> graders helped throughout the evening. The whole evening was a “Touchdown” thanks to Tr. Tracey!



### Newly elected PTA Officers for upcoming school year

**Conswelia McCourt**, President, Parent of incoming kindergartner daughter in the Enhanced program & 2<sup>nd</sup> grader in the Enhanced Program

**Luci Boone**, Vice President, parent of 5<sup>th</sup> grader in Spanish Immersion

**Nannette Johnson**, Secretary, Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade twins in Spanish Immersion

**Liz Reed**, Treasurer, Parent of 2<sup>nd</sup> grader in Spanish Immersion and 8<sup>th</sup> grader Spanish Immersion

**Stephanie Kindt**, Membership, Parent of incoming kindergartner and 3 other boys all in Spanish Immersion

**Cristina Vea**, Liaison to the Board, Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grader in Spanish Immersion

**Susan Burrows**, Communications, Parent of 3<sup>rd</sup> grader in Spanish Immersion

# Silent Auction Raises \$10,000 for Fine Arts Fund



The Silent Auction in early May was, once again, a big hit! Not only did the PTA raise \$10,000 towards the Fine Arts Fund that night (yahoo!), but there was much socializing going on. There were parents from every grade, including those starting in September. Spanish Enhanced and Immersion parents were there along side parents whose students don't attend ICS anymore. Even Randy our Security Guard from our old building paid us a visit. The sounds of Impacto Vallenato got everyone in a party mood, TJ (the DJ) Gobreski kept the evening moving along at a good toe-tapping clip and Lynn Hunt and LH Catering, once again, out did themselves!

**Grab a cup of coffee or tea because the Silent Auction Thank You's are about to begin:**

**Thank you to the following ICS Families & Friends who donated items, secured donations or donated a dish, dessert or beverages towards the evenings festivities (beyond committee members):**

Parents of Ayanna & Athena Lemon, Selina Harvey, Debi Phillipotts, Nicole Perkins Kilcullen, Janet Pinkerton, Becky Wiesner, Leon Phillipotts, Direktore Jurate & Family, Courtney Chobert, Carol Wartman, Leonora Cravotta, Cammy Voss & Denis Murphy, Cheryl & Troy McLaughlin (incoming parents), Tr. Mike C., Jenny Hoedeman-Eiteljorg, Tr. Adriane, William Reed, Cynthia Kwan (incoming parent), Micah Josephson (Tr. Janet's husband), Josephine & Mark Hing, Gretchen & Andrew Diemer, Barbara Kilmartin, Joan Alvini, "Dr. Larry", Andrea Love, Maria McLeod, Gabrielle White, Paula Umana, Tina Kleutmeier, Ebru Erkut, Dianne LaMastra, Anne Foresman, George Petropoulos, Kristin Bailey

**Thank you to following volunteers that night who manned their posts with style, good humor and patience:**

Ramzy Andrawos, Danielle Brickhouse, Rona Buchalter, Diane Cohen (incoming parent), Debora DeVaughn, Tracey Dopson, Annette & Dave Earling, Maureen Egan, Fabio Fernandez, TJ Gobreski, Sean Hennessy, Stacy Hester & her mother Debra, Ernst Hohmann, Fairley Hopkins, Monika Kreidie, Robin Kohles, Nirva LaFortune, Brian Leighton, Tabitha Mays-Wilson, Adelaida & Frankie Medlock, Ruth Pearson, Dave Peterson, Michael Prell, Vince Romano, Nathan Snyder, Tom Wellner, Carrie White, Rob Wylie

**Thank to the following ICS families that contributed generous monetary donations towards the Silent Auction:**

Donna Sharer, Sue Lutz, Tr. Nancy, Adelaida & Frankie Medlock

**A big thank you to The Silent Auction Committee. Without their talents and flair for fun, the evening would have been a bust:**

Dawn Ang, Nikki Butler, Michelle "McGyver" Coats, Maureen DiStephano, Sabrina Fecher, Gia Guadagnino, Tracey Hill, Lynn Hunt, Jessica Jacquay, Nannette Johnson, Stephanie Kindt, Marcie Lichtman-Lentz, Maureen Long, Consuelia McCourt, Maria Palladino, Liz Reed, Caren Seltzer Devine, Megan Steelman, Cristina Vea, Maureen Wellner

**We apologize whole-heartedly if your name was mistakenly omitted. Many, many people brought food that evening and I don't think we had everyone's name. Please let us know so we can properly thank you.**



# A Global Gift



**Thanks to the generous donations of ICS parents, friends and families, we have raised over \$6,000 for the ICS World Cultures Library and Resource room!** This money will be used to purchase internationally focused books, student magazines, audiovisual materials, geography resources, and other educational tools that will support classroom instruction and expand students' global horizons.

**It's not too late to join the ICS community of giving and put internationally-focused learning materials directly into the hands of your children and their teachers.** Return the form below with your donation today! A donation at *any* level will help build our library and enhance your children's access to global resources.

Each family's gift will be recognized on a donors' plaque in the room when it has been completed.

\$5	Purchase one world cultures/country study book for early readers
\$10	Purchase one world language book (Spanish, Arabic, Japanese, Italian)
\$25	Purchase one world cultures/country studies book for intermediate readers or one musical CD
\$50	Purchase five student fiction or non-fiction books with an ethnic or world cultures theme or one Teachers' Best Practice book
\$100	Purchase one subscription to <i>National Geographic Kids</i> , one subscription to <i>Time for Kids World Report</i> , and two world cultures DVD's
\$250	Purchase ten world cultures/country study books
\$500	Purchase a collection of audio CD's representative of six continents
\$1,000	Purchase a collection of maps, atlases and globes

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**I wish to support Independence Charter School's World Cultures Library and Resource Room!**

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

\$5  \$10  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$250  \$500  \$1,000  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. Return materials to school in an envelope marked: Leonora Cravotta, Development Office.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

To make a gift by credit card, visit [www.independencecharter.org](http://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.

# Independence Charter School

## 2009-2010 Student Calendar

(subject to change)

The school day will begin at 8:30a.m. and will end at 3:30p.m.

(except on Early Dismissal Days)

DATE	Early Dismissal at 2:30p.m. EVERY Wednesday, starting on 9/16/09
Tues, 9/8	First Day of School for 1 <sup>st</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Graders
Thurs, 9/10	First Day of School for KINDERGARTNERS
Mon, 9/28	SCHOOL CLOSED (Yom Kippur holiday)
Mon, 10/12	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Wed, 11/11	SCHOOL CLOSED (Veterans' Day holiday)
Thur & Fri 11/26-27	SCHOOL CLOSED (Thanksgiving holiday)
Wed, 12/23	REPORT CARD DAY- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Thur 12/24- Fri 1/1	WINTER BREAK- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Mon, 1/4	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Tue, 1/5	Students Return to School
Mon, 1/18	SCHOOL CLOSED (Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday)
Mon, 2/15	SCHOOL CLOSED (Presidents' Day holiday)
Thur, 3/25	REPORT CARD DAY- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Fri, 3/26	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Mon-Fri, 3/29-4/2	SPRING BREAK- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Mon, 5/31	SCHOOL CLOSED (Memorial Day holiday)
Fri, 6/18	Last Day for Students



On Thursday, May 22, five student representatives accompanied Direktore Jurate on a special trip to City Hall to be honored with a resolution recognizing ICS's recent Goldman Sachs Prize for Excellence in International Education. The resolution congratulating ICS on its winning of the prestigious award was adopted on April 2, 2009 and presented to Jurate and the student representatives by Council President Anna Verna and Councilmember James Kenney at the May 22 council meeting. Students in attendance were 2<sup>nd</sup> grader Jacqueline Wongso, 3<sup>rd</sup> grader S'rey Harvey, 7<sup>th</sup> grader Gianfranco Rosselli, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders Courtney Simmons and Abriana Gaffney. All of us were very proud to be representing ICS in beautiful Council Chambers with the representatives of all of the city's neighborhoods present. We celebrated afterwards by eating gelato.

ICS parents, kids and Direktore Jurate as well as our Development director Leonora Cravotta joined well over 1000 other charter school supporters in Harrisburg to rally for support of charter schools. We visited our representatives and made the case for charter schools.

# ROCK REACH

## CITY DANCE AUDITIONS SATURDAY JUNE 13, 2009 1:00 PM



**What:** City Dance is a program that enables The Rock School to identify and train talented, local children ages 6 to 11, to become excellent dancers and to prepare them for possible careers as professional dancers. NO PRIOR EXPERIENCE NECESSARY & NO ROUTINES REQUIRED.

**BENEFITS:** Free ballet classes, dance supplies. Annual performances at the Academy of Music and The Perelman Theater.

**WHO:** Children ages 6 to 11 from financially challenged families. If your child is accepted, you must complete a scholarship qualification form to determine financial eligibility.

**WHEN:** Saturday, June 13, 2009 at 1:00pm. Registration begins at 12:30.

**WHERE:** The Rock School, 1101 S. Broad Street, corner of Broad & Washington Streets in Philadelphia, PA. (Ellsworth-Federal stop on Broad Street Subway)

**HOW:** Bring appropriate dance wear or gym clothes, but nothing baggy. Judges look for strength, coordination, flexibility & musicality.

**QUESTIONS:** Call Sarah Cooper, RockReach Manager & City Dance Administrator 215.551.7010

# ***A Message from the Board of Trustees***

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At its May meeting, the Board approved the 2009-2010 academic year calendar. School will start on Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> for 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders and on Thursday, September 10<sup>th</sup> for kindergartners. Students will continue to have early dismissal (2:30p.m., instead of 3:30p.m.) on Wednesdays (starting on 9/16). The Board, as always, received updates from its committees. The Human Resources Committee reported that health care costs will increase by at least 15% for the next school year. ICS has made a commitment to its staff to keep health benefits at their current level for the upcoming school year. Charter schools in Pennsylvania are required to have comparable benefits to the local school district in which they are located; given that requirement, ICS's administration and Board will be in regular communication with ICS staff regarding any changes that will need to occur for the 2010-2011 school year once the School District's new contract is negotiated. The Curriculum Committee reported that ICS is considering adopting the Children's Literacy Initiative (CLI) literacy curriculum. Curriculum changes require Board approval.

At the June Board meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> at 7p.m., the Board will welcome new Parent Seat Board member Elsie Stern and will elect several new Board members. Officers for the 2009-2010 school year will also be elected. At that meeting, the Board will also be voting on the use of federal stimulus funds.

As always, everyone is welcome to attend the monthly Board of Trustees meetings and/or to submit written comments via [feedback@independencecharter.org](mailto:feedback@independencecharter.org) for the public comment period.

Co-President  
ICS Board of Trustees

Dear ICS families,

I wanted to let you know that Elsie Stern has been selected to represent ICS in one of the two Parent Board Seats starting in June 2009. Elsie is the parent of a Kindergartner in the Spanish Enhanced program.

ICS is successful for many reasons, and a primary one is the involvement of parents, not just on the board or in the classrooms, but also on board committees. If anyone is interested in seeing how the board works, please come to a meeting. They are the second Wednesday of the month at 7pm at ICS.

Also, many committee members are parents at ICS. If you have an interest in joining a board committee, please let us know. The committees that are available are as follows: Human Resources, Finance, Curriculum, Policy (Ad hoc), Board Development

Please email [feedback@independencecharter.org](mailto:feedback@independencecharter.org) after the June 10th board meeting (when committee chair assignments are made) to find out who will be chairing the committees. Hopefully one of these committees is of interest to you, and the meeting time will work for you.

Sincerely,  
Kristin Nocco, Community Relations