

The ICS Link

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

September 2010

Dear ICS Parents,

Welcome back for the 2010-2011 school year! We are excited to begin our 3rd year in our home here on Lombard Street. If you haven't already, please make sure you take some time to stop and look at the beautiful mural that dons the wall overlooking our playground, as well as notice some of the "sprucing up" of our front office (still in progress!) and of our internal procedures. On Back to School Night, you will receive the updated 2010-2011 Parent and Student Handbook, which you will notice has a new look and a much friendlier format. It will also be available for download on the website starting Sept. 22. Please keep it handy for your reference, as you will find it quite useful from now on as a reference guide for life at ICS.

As you talk with your child about this school year and review the handbook together, please remember to review the *ICS Community Guidelines*. They are briefly listed below but will be discussed in detail in the handbook. In addition, the students will spend much of their first trimester morning meeting/advisory time discussing these guidelines and related school rules. The students

will work in their classrooms on creating *hopes and dreams* (Grades K-4) or *goals and declarations* (Grades 5-8) for the year, share them with classmates and teachers, and then discuss the connection between these *hopes and dreams/goals and declarations* and their classroom and school environment. As a group, each class will then create classroom rules that help them achieve the *hopes and dreams/goals and declarations* they have shared. Classes discuss how their classroom rules align with and inform the *ICS Community Guidelines*. After six weeks of discussion and focus, the entire school holds a celebration of their hard work and commitment to the *ICS Community Guidelines*.

I look forward to seeing you all at Back to School Night on September 22nd (grades K-4) and September 23rd (grades 5-8), when you will have the opportunity to meet your child(ren)'s teachers and learn more about our program. Until then, please feel free to contact us here at school with any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank You,
Principal Stephanie

Save a tree (or two or three)!

Sign up to receive future issues of the *Link* electronically instead of on paper. Send an email to jennyh@icscharter.com with "GO GREEN PLEASE" in the subject line and your child(ren)'s first and last name(s) in the body.

Independence Charter School Community Guidelines

An "ICS" Citizen...

1. uses "ICS words"
2. uses "ICS actions"
3. follows directions
4. is a TEAM player
5. respects self

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Back to School Night

Wednesday, September 22nd, 5:30-7:30 PM for K-4th grades

Thursday, September 23rd, 5:30-7:30 PM for 5th-8th grades

Please mark your calendars to attend Back to School Night!

(As veteran parents recall, we have in the past tried both a three-night version and one-night version of Back to School Night...here's hoping that two nights is **JUST RIGHT!**)

In addition to visiting your children's classroom(s) and learning about their curriculum and learning goals for the year from their teachers, you will have the opportunity to visit workshops and presentations on the following topics:

- *ICS's Mission and Vision
- *FAQ's with Principal Stephanie
- *Responsive Classroom/
Developmental Designs
- *Student Assessment and Report Cards
- *Family Involvement with Tr. Jenny
- *Student Success Team Process
- *Supporting Second Language Learning
- *Spanish FLES Program
- *English Language Arts Program
- *MMS Parent Portal (online student grade book)
- *High School Applications

You will also have the opportunity to:

- *Receive and learn about the
2010-2011 Parent and Student
Handbook
- *Uniform-swap
- *Meet with PTA representatives
- *Browse and buy books from the
Scholastic Book Fair
- *Add money to your child's meal
account

Scholastic Book Fair



The book fair is coming Monday, September 20th through Friday, September 24th. Book fair Hours are 9-3 M,T,TH & F & 9-2 on Wednesday with "Back to School Night" evening hours from 4-7pm Wednesday and Thursday. Your child's teacher will let you know when their class will be visiting the fair.



Help build teacher classroom libraries by donating a book to your child's teacher. Come in and check out the teacher's wish list that will be posted at the book fair.

Tr. Tracey is in search of parent volunteers for the book fair running the week of September 20th - 24th. She is looking for cashiers and sales assistants during the fair and help with set up on Friday, September 17th after school and break down on Saturday, September 18th around noon. Please contact Tr. Tracey to volunteer at ext.2222 or traceyh@icscharter.com. **If you already indicated on your Volunteer Survey that you would like to help—thank you! Tracey will be contacting you this week!**

Save the Date!

Independence Charter Mural Dedication Ceremony

Join Independence Charter, artist Ann Northrop, the Mural Arts Program, and the Violette de Mazia Foundation as we celebrate the dedication of the beautiful mural "One World" which will grace ICS's playground and inspire students for years to come. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet the artist and to honor the many individuals who made this special day possible.

October 29, 2010, at 11:00 a.m.

Independence Charter School
1600 Lombard Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146

To rsvp, please contact Leonora Cravotta
via email leonorac@icscharter.com or by phone at 215-238-8000, ext. 2430.

*The 777 students of ICS will have their own celebration of the mural that day.
This invitation is for parents and friends of ICS.

Fall Friend Raiser carnival

at Independence Charter School

October 30, 2010
11 am to 3 pm

Rain Date: November 6

Moon Bounce ★ Pie Throwing ★ Cake Walk!

*Bring
a friend!*

Independence Charter 365 Fundraising Event

Modeling Global Citizenship Every Day of the Year

Join us for Independence Charter School's annual fall fundraising event. This event showcases the artwork of Independence Charter School's students and debuts our 2011 World Holidays Calendar featuring student artwork.

November 12, 2010

6-9 p.m.

Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial
719 Catherine Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147

**This is an adults only event.

All proceeds benefit Independence Charter's student field trips and other applied learning programs.

Look for more announcements on this exciting event!

IMPORTANT! — Explanation of new DRIVER and WALKER pick-up procedures:

Drivers

- ✦ Parent Drivers who are picking up ONLY Kindergarten students will have a RED placard and may arrive between 2:55 and 3:15pm to pick up students. Kindergarteners will arrive at 3:00 to be escorted to cars.
- ✦ Parent Drivers of students in grades 1-8 or multiple grades including K will have a BLUE placard and must arrive between 3:15 and 3:30 for pickup. Your children will be escorted to your car.
- ✦ **Drivers MUST stay with their vehicles at all times and should continue pulling forward as space allows so that new arrivals can pull in smoothly behind them.** Parent Drivers must NEVER leave their vehicles unattended or double parked as they will cause safety concerns and may be ticketed by the police.
- ✦ **If there is no space available curbside, consider parking in a nearby metered space and walking, which can often be faster.**
- ✦ **6-8th graders are dismissed at the back of the building. If you are a driver of middle school students ONLY, consider arranging a consistent meeting spot with your child (for instance, on South St.) to avoid driving down Lombard St.**
- ✦ It is recommended that parents make every effort to avoid driving up 16th Street at any time, as busses use 16th street for loading and unloading.
- ✦ No cars will be allowed on Naudain Street during arrival or dismissal.

Walkers

- ✦ Parents/guardians who are Walkers will locate their children on Lombard Street in front of the school. Parents Walkers will NOT be allowed to drive up and park their cars in front of the school. **If you drive occasionally due to inclement weather or changes in schedule, you must PARK your car in a nearby metered or free parking space and walk to the school from there to pick up your child.**
- ✦ We understand that dismissal is a convenient time for you to connect with other families. Our priority, however, must be to maintain maximum student safety at all times. The sidewalk directly in front of the school must be kept clear so that we can find students easily and bring them to their cars safely. **To this end, we ask that parent Walkers NOT congregate directly in front of the school, but instead move in the direction of 17th and Lombard as a place to meet with each other after picking up students.**

Don't miss out on ICS information----make sure that you've signed up for the ICSinfo and ICSccommunity e-mail lists!

In order to have quick communication with as many ICS families as possible, please make sure to sign up for the ICSinfo and ICSccommunity e-mail lists today! The ICSinfo list will send you official ICS information (i.e., reminders about school events, notices about early dismissals, etc); the ICSccommunity list is used to share all kinds of information with the ICS community (i.e., families starting carpools, sharing information about summer camps and after school programs, etc.).

It's very easy to sign up:

Simply send a message to icsinfo-subscribe@yahoogroups.com for the ICSinfo list and a separate e-mail to icscommunity-subscribe@yahoogroups.com for the ICSccommunity list.

After you send the message(s) you'll receive a reply, asking you to confirm that you want to join the list(s). All you need to do is reply to that message and you'll be signed up!

You can visit the groups.yahoo.com website to manage how often you receive updates from the group, etc.

Independence Charter School 2010-2011 Student Calendar

The school day begins at 8:30a.m. and ends at staggered times according to grade level. Arrival begins at 7:45 and dismissal ends at 3:30p.m. (except on early dismissal days).

DATE	Early Dismissal at 2:30p.m. EVERY Wednesday, starting on 9/15/10
Tues, 9/7	First Day of School for 1 st -8 th Graders
Mon, 9/13	First Day of School for KINDERGARTENERS
Wed, 9/22	BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT 5:30-7:30 (Kindergarten, 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd & 4 th)
Thur, 9/23	BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT 5:30-7:30 (5 th , 6 th , 7 th & 8 th)
Mon, 10/11	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY – NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Thur, 11/11	VETERANS’ DAY HOLIDAY- SCHOOL CLOSED
Thur-Fri 11/25-26	SCHOOL CLOSED (Thanksgiving holiday)
Tue-Thur, 12/14-16	EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS due to Report Card Conferences (Late afternoon and evening)
Fri, 12/24-Fri 12/31	WINTER BREAK- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Mon, 1/3	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Tue, 1/4	Students Return to School
Mon, 1/17	SCHOOL CLOSED (Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday) Alumni Day for ICS Graduates
Mon, 2/21	SCHOOL CLOSED (Presidents’ Day holiday)
3/14-25	Math & Reading PSSAs (3 rd -8 th grades)
3/28-4/1	Writing PSSAs (5 th & 8 th grades)
Fri, 3/25	REPORT CARD DAY- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
4/4-8	Science PSSAs (4 th & 8 th grades)
Mon-Fri, 4/18-22	SPRING BREAK- NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Mon, 4/25	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
Mon, 5/30	SCHOOL CLOSED (Memorial Day holiday)
Wed, 6/15	TENTATIVE (pending confirmation of facility) 8 th Grade Graduation (after 3p.m.)
Thur, 6/16	Kindergarten Graduation 9:30a.m.
Fri, 6/17	Last Day for Students
Week of 6/20	Final Report Cards will be mailed home

2010-2011 Student Dress Code

Bottoms: K-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Loose-fitting navy trousers/slacks, capris worn at the waist ✦ Navy jumper, skorts, skirts and shorts - must be knee-length or longer ✦ No jeans or jeans-like pants, no exercise/leggings-like pants ✦ No ripped or intentionally-distressed pants ✦ Solid navy sweatpants on dance/movement, fitness/movement days only
Tops: Middle School (5-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Red polo shirt purchased from ICS-approved vendor ** (long- or short-sleeve) ✦ Shirt-tails may not extend below fingertips
Tops: Lower School (K-4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Red or navy polo* shirt (long- or short-sleeve) <p>***2010-2011 will be considered a “transition year” for the Lower School. During 2010-2011, students may continue to also wear white, blue, pink polo and oxford shirts/blouses. Beginning in 2011-2012, all Lower School students must follow the above-described dress code (red or navy polo).</p>
Outerwear: K-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Solid navy sweater, pullover or vest ✦ No hoods or “hoodies” may be worn ✦ Solid <i>white</i> shirt worn underneath polo shirt for warmth (gr.5-8) ✦ Solid red, white or blue shirt worn underneath polo shirt for warmth (gr.K-4)
Socks: K-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Socks, tights or leggings <i>underneath skirts or shorts</i> may be worn and may be any color or design ✦ No intentionally-distressed tights and leggings
Shoes: K-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Closed shoes, sneakers or boots ✦ No sandals ✦ Toes and heels must be covered
Dance/Mvmt Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Solid navy sweatpants may be worn all day ✦ Shorts must be worn under skirt/jumper ✦ Dress code polos required ✦ Athletic shoes must be worn for MS Fitness and Movement class
Accessories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Stud earrings, not extending below or wrapping around ear lobe ✦ 1 watch, 1 simple ring, 1 simple necklace tucked under shirt/blouse ✦ No bracelets ✦ No hats or scarves unless for religious reasons ✦ Hair accessories may not be hazardous or distracting
Field Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Students must remain in dress code for all trips unless otherwise indicated by the teacher due to nature of field trip
Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Upper school wears ICS-approved vendor polo shirts; lower school not required ✦ Length of skirts, shorts, skorts and jumpers must be knee-length or longer ✦ Dance/Mvmt/Fitness pants must be solid, no stripes or designs on sweatpants ✦ NO logos other than ICS logo on any polos, no matter how small
Recess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Students will go outside in all weather, between 15° and 95°, including light rain and snow ✦ Rain coats and ponchos, no umbrellas ✦ Under 40°: winter coat, hat, gloves and neck warmers required
Dress Down Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ All tops must have a sleeve and fully cover the midriff ✦ All bottoms must be knee-length or longer ✦ No hoop or dangling earrings ✦ No hoods or “hoodies” ✦ No inappropriate or derogatory language, images or messages on clothing <p>School administrators will use their discretion to determine whether or not the clothing is appropriate for school. If the clothing is inappropriate or does not conform to the above expectations, the student will call home for a change of clothing and will lose future dress down privileges.</p>

* Polo shirt means collared, three-button shirt, knit-type material (cotton or polyester/cotton blend).

** ICS will provide each MIDDLE SCHOOL student with one new ICS polo logo shirt, provided by *Cramer’s Uniforms*.