

Hi,

The Reggio Emilia educational model considers the environment to be the third teacher. The choices of what is hung on the walls is a sign of a school's values. In this update I share the stories that the CJDS elementary school walls are telling (I will write about the preschool hall in the future).

The front hall and elementary classroom hall communicate a fascinating story of integrating Jewish and general studies, acts of kindness, and using a critical lens to view history and current events. Here are a few examples:

- Integration of Jewish and general subjects can be found on the large Tu Bishvat (Jewish Arbor Day) display which uses trees to represent different historical figures. The roots are events that perhaps made the people who they would become, the branches are famous people's descendants, and the fruits are lessons we can learn from the person. The tree integrates great Jewish sages, explorers, scientists, and other well-known people. Further, integration can be found on a board at the end of the hallway where students write about what tree Dr. Martin Luther King might have planted on Tu Bishvat. Another example is the "Hub" display. This board is the genesis of the integration work and represents thoughts from each grade level.
- Kindness is interwoven throughout many of the displays and is highlighted on the "Wood's Buddies" board where fourth graders are shown interacting with preschool children.
- Critical thinking is the practice of looking at a topic and asking whose perspective is included and whose is missing. This higher order, social justice way of thinking, can be seen on display boards focusing on "Explorers of Territorial Thieves" and another depicting children's reactions to discovering that all of the astronauts and most scientists in their books were white men. The children further noted that the only female astronaut mentioned, Valentina Tereshkova, had to crash land. The children wondered if the book was intentionally giving the message that the only woman in the book was not skilled enough to have a successful flight.

If you have a chance please take time to look at all of the great work in the elementary hallway.

### **Upcoming Events:**

Feb. 18 – No School President's Day

### **News and Notes:**

We have filled at least one of each of our younger preschool classes for next year. We are now considering opening a second class for one or two-year-old children. Please help us spread the word to families that have young preschool children.

Please do not hold the school door open for people you do not know. This is a hard practice but please partner with the school in allowing the door to close behind you and not opening the door for strangers.

Financial aid awards will be emailed to families next week. It is not too late to apply for Financial aid for next school year.

### **Health Update:**

It seems the cases of the flu continue to decrease in the school but we will still maintain extra cleaning and sanitizing procedures over the weekend. We also remind everyone about extra handwashing. It is a good idea

to wash your child's hands when they come to the classrooms. Of course, we will also be washing hands with extra diligence.

Infants	All well
Ones	One out with pink eye
Twos	One out with a virus and one with a pinkeye.
Threes	One out with a stomach virus.
Fours	All well.
K	All well
1st	All well
2nd	One out with a fever.
3rd	All well.
4 <sup>th</sup>	One out with a virus
5 <sup>th</sup>	One out with flu

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Meir