

Dear families,

Yesterday I spoke to the parent of one of our alumni. The child (now a young adult) is deciding between attending Oxford or Princeton. I cannot describe how strongly the parent attributed the child's success to CJDS. I asked what part of the school's approach did he value the most? He said, "Your school provided a sense of inquiry, curiosity and higher order thinking skills that is absent or worked against in most schools." In this newsletter, I provide an example of the children's higher order thinking skills that occurred when Morah Vered and I discussed Holocaust Memorial Day with her fifth grade class.

Morah Vered and I wondered what the children already knew about the Holocaust as it is not a topic that is often taught at CJDS. The children knew quite a bit, responding with dates, names, places, and some details. Interestingly, only one child shared that they gained this information through formal conversations with parents or teachers (one child also mentioned it was discussed when they interviewed an elder for the Perspectives Fair). Most children reported reading this in books or seeing it on the internet. We asked the children why they feel it is not often discussed. One child said it was a taboo topic (defining taboo as a topic that makes people uncomfortable). Another thought it was because grownups think children are innocent and that they should not hear about bad events. Another reason given was that people are embarrassed that this happened. Morah Vered, using the perspectives tools, shared that from an Israeli perspective the Holocaust is not taboo for children as in Israel a siren goes off and all children know that it is to commemorate the Holocaust. She showed a video clip of the country coming to a stop for two minutes. Children made connections between the Holocaust and slavery, racism, monuments on the State House grounds, family immigration, and modern-day evil doings. The children ended with their suggestions of what they can do to confront atrocities in our times. This conversation is a microcosm of the deep and creative thinking that occurs at CJDS.

Dates:

- May 5th Gathering in Sesqui Park
- May 6th-8th Fifth grade overnight
- May 7th 1st and 2nd graders are invited to the City Council where their work on gaining an honorary street sign for civil rights activist Modjeska Simkins will be recognized.
- May 10th During elementary assembly the children will commemorate Israeli Independence Day. Elementary children can wear clothing with blue or white colors.
- May 30th Fifth grade graduation

News and Notes:

* Gathering at Sesqui State Park - This Sunday from 4:00-5:30 we will have a gathering in Sesqui State Park (9564 Two Notch Rd, Columbia, SC 29223). This end of the year gathering is a chance to socialize with families and meet our new school principal, Ms. Kristin Ziegler. Each family is invited to bring their own food – school will hand have water bottles for everyone. The park charges an entrance fee of 3.00 for children 6-15 and 5.00 per adult.

* Beth has started rolling over tuition payment plans with Facts Management reflecting the 2019/2020 tuition rates. If you want to make changes on your payment plan, please contact her.

* On May 7th at 6:00pm the City Council meets at City Hall (1737 Main Street, 3rd Floor)
Councilwoman Devine will make the presentation based on the work of our first and second graders.

* Next week is Teacher Appreciation Week. The PTO is hoping to get at least one parent in each class to organize or volunteer to bring baked goods and uncut fruit (or other kosher treat) to thank our teachers. The planned date is Wednesday, May 8. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0E4BA9AC2AABF94-teacher>

Health Update:

Each week I will supply a list of illnesses experienced by children and staff. This list is a compilation of the week as collected on Friday morning. I cannot guarantee that the list is comprehensive but we do our best.

Infants One out with a fever and a virus.

Ones One out with a fever.

Twos All well.

Threes One out with ear infection.

Fours All well.

K All well.

1st All well.

2nd One out with asthma.

3rd All well.

4th All well.

5th All well.

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Meir