



THE CLEARWATER SCHOOL

The Clearwater School is Seattle's Sudbury school. We provide an educational alternative based on **Freedom, Trust and Responsibility** to students aged 4-19.



THE SCHOOL BULL

WHY NOT HAVE CLASSES?

Amanda Klein, Shawna Lee, Stephanie Sarantos, Nora Wheat

As a Clearwater parent, I often find myself trying to articulate—even justify—the Clearwater model, and there are times I get stuck. As a member of the Clearwater PR Committee, I try to remain aware that parents considering Clearwater may have some of the same questions I do. Recently, I decided to bring one of my questions to the PR Committee. Though I asked it partly for my own edification, the email exchange I touched off conveys several crucial elements of what is unique about Clearwater. I initiated the discussion thus:

Amanda Klein (parent) begins:

The biggest question that has been cropping up when I do informal PR with people, including my family members, who are fundamentally very sympathetic to many aspects of the Sudbury model, is: What exactly is wrong with adults offering optional “educational” activities to kids? An example would be the Summerhill-type model: “here are some classes on this, this, and this—come all the time, come sometimes, or don’t ever come if you don’t feel like it.”

I know I have heard staff members address this, but I’m still not fully clear on the thinking—and perhaps not always comfortable with this aspect of the model. My understanding is that offering something to a kid can have an element of coercion or condescension—even if it is just a suggestion and totally optional.

Stephanie Sarantos (staff) responds:

Class offerings distract from the purpose of education at Clearwater. That purpose is bare bones, stark and difficult: take responsibility for your life. If you want a class, ask. Staff will respond. The asking can be a direct request for a specific class, or a whisper of an idea about an interest. Staff may assist by teaching, helping find a teacher, or helping define a vague idea into a tangible plan. The important focus is that ultimately, students are in charge of figuring out what they are interested in and how they want to spend their time.

Offering a slate of classes can convey an official sanctioning of the importance of one activity over another. We do not believe in core subjects versus elective subjects. We do not see some

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**APRIL
2004**

PLAY DAYS
ALTERNATING WEDNESDAYS
10:00 AM TO 12:00 NOON
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

**ANNUAL MEETING
AND PICNIC**
SATURDAY, JUNE 12

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ANNUAL MEETING AND PICNIC

SATURDAY, JUNE 12
5:00 PM DIPLOMA AWARDS
5:30 PM PICNIC
6:30 PM ANNUAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

Join students, staff, parents and other Assembly members as we award diplomas to graduates, eat together, conduct scheduled business and celebrate the end of the school year.

Please bring a potluck dish to share.



Claire, Ian and Lucas

The School Bull **APRIL, 2004**

The School Bull is published on an as needed basis. You have something to go in? Let us know. The core team consists of:

Stephanie Sarantos, Martha Hurwitz and Shawna Lee: Writing and editing
 Bob Freeman: Graphics and layout
 Shawna Lee: Photos, except where noted

THE CLEARWATER SCHOOL

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The Clearwater School is Seattle's Sudbury school, offering an educational alternative based on **Freedom, Trust** and **Responsibility**. It is open to students aged 4-19 and welcomes racial, cultural, and religious diversity, and families of every composition. The Clearwater School is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization.

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Gabe, Gregory, Lucas and Robert

IMPORTANT ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

2004-2005 SCHOOL YEAR

The enrollment deadline to guarantee your spot for the 2004-2005 school-year is May 14, 2004. Returning students must renew their contracts and update their registration information with the school office. New students must complete registration paperwork and schedule their enrollment interviews and visiting weeks. Visiting weeks may be completed this spring before June 1st or scheduled when school resumes next fall.

Late registration will be accepted and processed on a space available basis. We anticipate that Clearwater will continue to expand; Play Days have been full, and new students have completed visiting weeks and enrolled throughout this school year. To ensure your place next fall and assist our planning process, please contact Angel or Stephanie to complete registration by May 14th.



PLAY DAYS

**ALTERNATING WEDNESDAYS, 10:00
AM TO 12:00 NOON**
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Play Days provide an opportunity for families of young children to experience The Clearwater School first hand. On Wednesday mornings the school's already active space becomes a bit more energetic as preschoolers explore their passions and parents learn how (and why) Clearwater works.

Families considering enrollment for the fall of 2004, are encouraged to sign up for a four-week Play Day session. Participation in this program gives children time to form friendships with school staff and students and gain familiarity with school routines. Play Days "graduates" tend to make a smooth transition to becoming students.

For further information or registration contact the school office.



Stephanie, Ukiah, Ian and Corey

WHY NOT HAVE CLASSES

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subjects as essential and others as enrichment. And, we do not believe that classes provide a better or more meaningful way to learn than playing, talking, reading, and thinking.

Classes happen at Clearwater when they are the best method for gaining the particular information being sought. When there are faster, more efficient or more fun ways of learning something, classes don't happen.

The longer I am here and the more classes I participate in at Clearwater, the less value I place on classes. They offer an efficient way to teach, but usually an inefficient way to learn. Certain subjects like dance or languages (or at times, writing) require interaction with others, and classes are good for that. When kids want to learn something quickly, individual effort—with help if needed—often works much better.

I also think that many things that happen at Clearwater—getting along with friends, mediation and Judicial Committee, School Meeting, clean up, understanding people whose behavior can be challenging, discussing world events—could be considered classes. These activities involve group interaction, learning skills practice and evaluation. It is important to realize that in other settings, classes are created to address these very subjects that are part of daily life here.

The most important part of my answer though is to return to where I started. The most lasting, useful and meaningful education is not about content knowledge, but about self-knowledge and responsibility. Kids at Clearwater learn that if they want a good life, they need to create a good life.

Shawna Lee (staff) responds to Amanda's original question:

My immediate, blunt response to "Why not just offer some educational activities that are totally optional?" is: "What's the point?"

Who's to decide what's "educational"? Why is what students choose to do all day every day any less educational than some activity I, as a staff member, could offer? Or maybe that's not the question. Maybe it's really an exposure question. "How will kids be exposed to everything that's 'important' if adults don't present them with 'educational' activities?"

At Clearwater, by the time a student reaches the age of ten or twelve, her/his working knowledge of the everyday world rivals that of most adults. I'm talking about the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, but also politics, art, culture, history, etc. I've been astonished more than once at the breadth of general knowledge that kids, my own included, have acquired by that age. Moreover, students that age and older have developed (and continue to develop) specialized knowledge that exceeds that of most adults, unless those adults have skill in that specialty. And they obtain it without me or anyone else needing to offer "educational" activities, just in case.

Many adults worry that children may not discover what turns out to be a lifelong passion or miss some essential piece of knowledge, unless adults offer educational content to the child. The possibility that either will happen

is remote for several reasons. First, each person has the potential for an infinite number of passions and there's no way to predict what will spark any particular passion. Second, the child's interests will lead unerringly to at least one and undoubtedly more of those passions.

Third, educational content is so unimportant in the totality of a person's life because it is so easily gotten at any time by anyone who is motivated to get it. People will find what they want *when* it's important to *them*. What is



Samantha



Aslin and Sam

important is that a person knows her/himself intimately and believes s/he is capable of working hard and learning what s/he needs to succeed, however s/he defines success.

Another thing I've discovered at Clearwater is that the means I choose to convey or teach "educational" content is probably a lot less efficient and effective than allowing students to discover and learn the content themselves in their own way and time. Students choose classes at Clearwater to see what that experience is like, or because they've decided it's an efficient way to learn a particular thing at their level of knowledge. But they rarely choose pre-made "educational" experiences because conversation and play, independent, experiential learning, and unscripted, spontaneous discovery are just so delightful and life-affirming.

The last argument against offering optional educational activities is that students who come from traditional school backgrounds may perceive these activities as more "important" than talking and playing, because the activities are offered by adults and look more like what they've been conditioned to believe is "education." They may sign up for these because they don't yet believe that they are capable of deciding how they should spend their time. By offering activities we are undercutting our own goal, which is to provide an environment where children grow into free, capable, self-aware, responsible adults.

So I am left with the assurance that my time is much better spent being a part of students' lives in whatever way *they* want to include me, whether it's chatting, playing, fixing lunch, tying shoes or occasionally engaging in activities that look like school.

Amanda replies to Stephanie and Shawna:

This makes sense to me, but it kind of goes in and out of focus. I will say that what you two are saying is, in my mind, perhaps the most radical thing about Clearwater. I appreciate what Shawna is saying about the content the students absorb—but really you are saying that content isn't important. I agree, but boy, can *that* be a hard sell.

The funny thing is, I went to St. John's College, where we studied a "canon," but at the same time as the school emphasized learning these crucial pieces of Western thought, it told us that the content could really be anything—it was learning analysis and discourse that was crucial—learning to learn.

Stephanie reacts to Amanda's reply:

I don't think it is as straightforward as "content is not important." It is more an adamant statement that *universal* content is not important. The content that I want to learn about and want to remember is very different than the content that my husband wants to know about—and still more different than the content that most of the other people I know are interested in.

Learning about content, gaining skills and thinking, thinking, thinking are universal human activities, drives and desires. The difference is that we do not impose a set of content and expect kids to enjoy it, benefit from it or learn it. This freedom we grant to adults more readily in our age of mass information, but we do not easily give this level of autonomy to kids.

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WHY NOT HAVE CLASSES

continued from page 3

There is an irony to what I said in the last paragraph, because there are some universal areas of content that everyone needs. The kids at Clearwater learn these “things” quickly, efficiently and matter-of-factly. In addition (as Shawna pointed out), the depth and breadth of content knowledge among Clearwater students, who don’t take classes, is readily apparent through casual conversations—let alone heated discussions—with our ten-year-old students.

So this is where the trust comes in. We trust that kids and adults will master essential content because they want to be successful, literate members of society. I find it instructive to observe the areas of content the students learn about and know well; these areas of expertise, knowledge and trivia are the “essential subjects” of our culture.

Nora Wheat (staff) weighs in:

Honestly, I too sometimes flirt with Amanda’s question. This is my fourth year at Clearwater and I’ve seen very few classes. I could be concerned as I wonder about all the missed opportunities—great classes with catchy titles and inspiring field trips—“The Geography of Seattle Beaches” or some such thing. I often interact with teachers, students and families who participate in schools where this romantic curriculum is the strength of the school. This is appealing: I think it would be great if my kids knew about the spawning cycles of salmon. I would be excited if they built props for shadow puppet performances. I want the world for them and for all of our children. They would be guaranteed exposure to fabulous artistic and academic content in any number of local progressive/alternative schools. As much as I’m attracted to this ideal of a well-rounded, cross-cultural, experiential, program, I know that these well-intentioned programs require a great deal of student manipulation on the part of the teacher, and still don’t meet their stated goals. In my observation, they are controlling, dishonest and ultimately damaging to a child’s sense of self.

The way I see it, classes make school life easy. They imply that teachers have to be prepared for only a limited number of topics, and that these are the topics about which students should be curious. They require prep time along a specific line that may or may not be of interest to students, while limiting time that might otherwise go towards building relationships or supporting student-initiated activities. I know that with “optional” classes, it may seem that a balance could be struck—but I’m not so confident in that. Once a class is scheduled, staff and students enter it prepared for *this* topic. Even if one student’s stray curiosity could be relevant or useful to the class, it’s hard to be flexible when others have taken the class expecting *this* content. Of course in regular schools, high-stakes testing plays into this drive to stay on task—but even in alternative models (like Summerhill) classes predetermine content, even if student interest shifts midcourse. At

this point, a student with “freedom” would likely drop the class. All this may be fine, except that in an environment where classes are the sanctioned means to knowledge, the student may have less experience and support in pursuing that content on her own—and may instead wait for a class to be offered.

In the same way that classes make a teacher’s job “easy,” they make the task of being a student even easier. In a supportive environment, learning may be challenging, but is not



Ukiah

difficult. Choosing what to learn is excruciating. It is this torture that most often leads me to consider the merit of offering classes. Give them something to soothe the pain: a class so they don’t have to think or plan or choose for themselves. In this way, I see having a schedule of optional classes as escape from the real work of being a student at Clearwater—discovering oneself: strengths, weaknesses, interests, abilities...

A final (for the moment) concern I have about a standing class schedule has to do with the way content becomes identity for students. In the larger world, adults identify and evaluate children by what they study at school and the grade they are in. Too often, I have seen children begin to claim these incomplete and confining snapshots as their own identities. This too is an easy out, eliminating any need to examine oneself and what personal information to share in building a relationship. It also leaves the student who chooses not to attend classes with no allies in explaining to the larger world that their school and learning experience is not dictated by classes. (For example: “What classes are you taking at school?” “Well, astronomy, geometry and Haiku poetry are being offered—but I’m not taking them.”)

I know that I haven’t even touched on the depth of content that Clearwater students *do* acquire—all the “fabulous” artistic, academic and physical activities they encounter and engage in, both in and out of school.

Amanda concludes:

Thanks for your great responses. It never ceases to amaze me how wholeheartedly and thoughtfully you all engage with these complex issues—the combination of your confidence in the model and the fact that you are so clearly in a constant state of observing it, questioning it, and learning from it inspires great confidence in me. This combination of trust and exploration that you model is one of the delights of being a part of this community, as is the satisfaction and growth I observe in my son.



Gabe and our intern Mark

CLEARWATER BRUNCH FEATURES EARLY SUDBURY VALLEY GRADUATES

Clearwater families were entertained and educated with stories of writing on the bottoms of shoes, swimming in the pond and watching dissections during the early days of the Sudbury Valley School. At a recent Assembly brunch, Debra Sadofsky and Christian Cederlund, 1979 graduates of the Sudbury Valley School discussed how their education has influenced their lives, from relationships to employment to personal philosophies.

Memories of their experiences at Sudbury Valley included spending a year talking and writing on the bottoms of shoes, watching another student dissect animals in the kitchen as they fixed lunches, solving problems in School Meeting and being listened to from an early age, swimming in the pond and climbing a huge beech tree on campus. Both Debra and Christian emphasized that the freedom they experienced at Sudbury Valley has empowered them as adults. They each exhibited a striking fearlessness, joyfulness and confidence in their approach to change and life challenges.

All of us in the Clearwater community are grateful for the time Debra and Christian spent with us and for generously sharing their thoughtful perspectives and life experiences.



Gabe, Gregory, Lucas and Robert

IDENTITY CRISIS

Shawna Lee, staff

"In the larger world, adults identify and evaluate children by what they study at school and the grade they are in. Too often, I have seen children begin to claim these incomplete and confining snapshots as their own identities. This too is an easy out, eliminating any need to examine oneself and what personal information to share in building a relationship." —Nora Wheat, from "Why not have classes?" [see facing page]

For many years I defined myself largely in terms of external measurements and other people's real or imagined perceptions of me. My experience is hardly unique; from an early age many of us learn to judge our worth on the basis of school or job performance, economic status, material possessions, IQ score or people's opinions.



Recently I realized that my son's interactions with adult acquaintances and strangers trigger my old need to measure up to external standards. As he approaches thirteen, I observe him consciously inserting himself more and more into the larger world. He encounters adults who predictably ask what grade he's in or what

he's studying in school. He explains that he goes to a school without grades and classes. When they ask what he does at school, he talks about playing and talking with friends. The conversation sometimes stops there. I find myself feeling anxious about how these adults will respond to my son's answers and how they will perceive him.

I know he's smart, creative, talented and charming; and I want the world to know it too. In the past, my desire to protect him from the pain of not being seen or understood has led me to ride to his rescue with my version of his activities at school. Lately I'm reining myself in because I don't want my own needs to muck up his unique experience of other people. It is *his* task to figure out how he wants to talk about and define his schooling experience to people who have no context for Clearwater. Most importantly, as Nora so eloquently pointed out, only my son should decide what information he gives to adult (or any) acquaintances about his own life, based on what kind of relationship he chooses to build with them.

I may want to protect my son from the reality that his orthodontist may never realize the depth of his worth and excellence. In fact, my son may not care how his orthodontist or anyone else perceives him. The wonderful truth is that he knows his own value and does not depend on superficial labels or the opinions of other people to describe himself. As a result, he is free to establish deep or shallow relationships with whomever he chooses, and continue to define and measure himself by his own internal standards.

CHILDREN MEET IN SECRET ROOMS AND . . . OTHER RUMORS I HAVE HEARD: FICTION AND FACT ABOUT THE CLEARWATER SCHOOL.

Stephanie Sarantos, staff

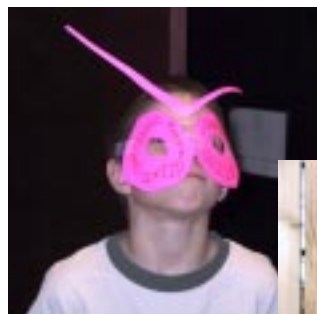


Fiction: Children left to their own devices will surely eat too much sugar, hide from adults, and engage in wild and dangerous behavior.

Fact: Clearwater students take freedom very seriously and strive to become more (not less) responsible.

Through my role of explaining Clearwater to interested parents and community members, I have the opportunity to learn about Clearwater rumors that circulate in the greater community—most recently, I heard about children meeting in secret rooms to make secret decisions, school vending machines and candy jars. When I share these (and other) stories with Clearwater staff and students, we enjoy a good laugh, but I am left feeling puzzled and saddened. I understand how the idea of a school based on freedom conjures up fantasies, but I am sincerely dismayed to realize that many people imagine that children who experience freedom will behave irresponsibly, because our experience is just the opposite. Perhaps these rumors reflect a cultural view that children cannot be trusted. I have more faith in human nature—I believe we are programmed to seek balance and sustain life. It would not benefit our survival as a species if children isolated themselves from adults, based their diet on foods that cannot sustain life and engaged in dangerous risk-taking behavior whenever left alone.

Throughout my days I find several opportunities to juxtapose the rumors I hear with the reality of life at Clearwater. My experiences and observations *continued on page 6*



Robert

Caitlin and Arlo



Adrian and Aslin



CHILDREN MEET IN SECRET ROOMS

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reassure me that a positive, creative force drives human development. Children who grow up in an environment that supports self direction and autonomy engage wholeheartedly in their lives.



Sam and Luke

Fiction: Children who experience freedom will engage in wild and dangerous behaviors.

Fact: Children use freedom to explore, learn and create safely. Play, the most creative enterprise of childhood, is a primary activity of every day; but when someone gets hurt in the course of a game, staff members are called immediately, and other students come running to help. Students remind each other of the rules all the time, and discuss what is fair and safe when involved in solving problems and preventing future altercations. Dangerous behavior is neither tolerated nor desired.

Fiction: Clearwater candy jar.

Fact: While in the school kitchen the other day, I was reminded of the fabled candy jar. I observed numerous Clearwater students eating green salads, was asked by a six-year-old to help slice fruit into a giant bowl to share with friends, and listened to a twelve-year-old analyze nutritional labels. Most Clearwater students eat healthy balanced diets. Like many children (and adults), they certainly like to eat sweets, but the fear that they will eat sugar exclusively if not prohibited by a watchful adult is unfounded.

Fiction: Children meet in secret rooms to make secret decisions.

Fact: The idea that children meet in secret rooms is the most surprising idea I have heard in quite a while—perhaps because all of us at Clearwater would love to have a secret room, or at least another room. The idea that children make secret decisions is even harder to imagine, because it is very difficult to keep a secret in a small community where everyone is curious about, and fascinated by, each other's activities and experiences. The underlying implication that children will try to get away from adults is not evidenced here. Children who are not given freedom are more likely to act secretly, because they lack power over their lives. At Clearwater, students seek out staff members who share opinions, experience and advice freely. Students form long-term friendships with adults as well as peers that are based on mutual respect.

Fiction meets fact: There is a thread of truth in all the rumors I hear: At The Clearwater School children are free. Free to pursue their interests, make decisions and define their lives.



Aslin and Chloe give Stephanie a makeover.

Lucas

Ukiah Cameron

Robert Gabe Zelina



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CLEARWATER

Stephanie Sarantos, staff

It is difficult to describe just what happens at Clearwater in a way that will convey the diversity of activities, the creativity of students and the inspiration of community. I always hesitate when I list activities, because I know that my observations are so incomplete. I am only aware of some of the things that happen here; I may omit activities that are of vital significance to some students; and I can never hope to convey some of the most important activities—the thoughts and feelings that go on inside each person—because they cannot be observed. With this caveat, I also love to write about life at Clearwater. In this environment, where students have the freedom to create their own worlds, the ways they fill their worlds provides a refreshing perspective on education.

This afternoon looking out the office window I watch ten students, age six to fifteen, invent and execute a complex variant of tag. The person who is now "it" gestures from side to side and across the playground explaining the rules to the others who are lined up along the fence. Suddenly the game begins and students race across the yard jumping logs and zigzagging to the fence and back again. One by one they are caught, frozen, until the last student is tagged and a new "it" chosen.

Around this time each year kids come together to create large outdoor games. The power of spring weather, the novelty of a fun idea, the compelling cajoling of an organizer who believes the more people the better, or some combination of these factors draws out students from all corners of the school. Kids of different temperaments, interests and ages find common ground. I should come to expect it, but each year I am surprised.



Claire

Likewise, as I reflect on the myriad happenings in the school I am surprised each day—to find someone doing something he or she has never tried before, to find a new pairing of friends share a similar interest, to hear two kids resolve an especially heated conflict through mediation. Students learn from all that they do; each decision, each disappointment and each success has something to teach. I hope this glimpse of what's been happening conveys a sense of the energy felt each day at Clearwater where education is based on freedom, trust and responsibility.

Painting; drawing; bike riders doing wheelies and jumps over wood chips, logs and dirt hills; Chloe's solo singing concert on the monkey bars; Zelina, Gabe, Lucas, Ukiah and Cameron's human pyramid; board and card games extraordinaire: Trivial Pursuit, Carcassonne, Settlers of Catan, Magic the Gathering, Apples to Apples; reading books aloud and silently on couches, futons, and under tables; computer LAN games and video games; designing board games, card games and computer game levels; personal makeovers; swimming and ice skating field trips; cherry blossom field trip; snowboarding; skating; digging holes; walks to the park and playground; wading the stream; juggling; making and playing with PVC swords; trying to understand each other's perspectives and make agreements in Daily Meeting; trying to solve the problem of messes in School Meeting; scheduling diploma presentations; learning to play the guitar and read music; building a village with clay, sticks and flowers; trapeze work; fort building; selling lemonade made from scratch; bake sales; future scientists making terrariums for worms and beetle larvae; LEGO building; practicing cursive and basic arithmetic; hangman games; designing the future play structure in the active room; and.....

TRUST-BASED PARENTING WORKSHOP

For the first time this spring The Clearwater School offered a workshop on Trust-Based Parenting. The foundation of Trust-Based Parenting is the belief that human beings are innately social, capable and driven to engage in life-sustaining activities. The aim of parenting is to actively develop family relationships based on trust. By deepening these relationships, parents support their children as they change, grow and develop autonomy. Parents learn how to influence children by engaging with them, rather than exerting power over them.

The course provides support to Clearwater parents who are interested in ways that the school's philosophy of education can extend to their family life. It also provides an opportunity to interact with parents from a broader, more diverse community who want to align their parenting with values of trust and mutual respect.

The workshop attracted almost thirty parents; many found the workshop so valuable that they requested and organized an additional class series to continue the work. If you would like to learn more about Trust-Based Parenting and be informed of future classes, contact Stephanie Sarantos at The Clearwater School.



Our intern Mark and Chloe

SCIENCE ART & MORE BENEFITS THE CLEARWATER SCHOOL

Science Art & More, Inc. offers a program to provide free materials to schools. It is easy to participate; you can inform the cashier that you would like The Clearwater School (or any other school) to benefit from your purchases. Every time you make a purchase at Science, Art & More a percentage of the money you spend is credited to the school's account. In addition, if you are a new customer, the school will receive \$5 when you make your first purchase if you say you heard about the store from The Clearwater School. Science Art & More has a great selection of art and science materials and games at reasonable prices. We already have some money in our account and would love to see it grow so that we can buy some new art and science supplies.

Science Art & More Inc. is located at 6417 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, 206-524-3795.

IMPRESSIONS OF A CLEARWATER INTERN

Mark Fillipone, staff intern

I am enrolled in the elementary education program at City University. A requirement of the program is to do an internship each quarter at a different school. This past quarter I have had the opportunity to intern at Clearwater. Since January I've been coming in once a week to see how this type of school works. My past internships have all been in public schools. For anyone who has experienced public school, it's pretty much exactly as you remember it. The kids are told what to do, how to do it, and when to do it. The biggest thing that my mentor teachers in these schools emphasized was classroom management.

The Clearwater School has no student management problems. The staff doesn't use coercive measures to keep the kids in line. I would share this information with my classmates at City University and I would get a lot of eye rolling and sighing. The question that everyone wanted answered was, "How do they learn?"

I discovered during my internship that the students learn however works best for them. There are no grades or mandatory assignments, so the kids don't feel that extrinsic pressure. Clearwater's structure requires the student to take on responsibilities that many older public school students wouldn't dream of. It puts them in charge of their education. They're free to do what they want, but they're responsible for what they do. I'm sure many of you already know this, but I didn't.

This amazed me. I had read about it in some books and talked about it in class, but Clearwater gave me an opportunity to see it in practice. During the first month I thought it was great because I simply had a lot of fun. I played with the kids. I wrestled, built forts, played basketball, and enjoyed cool card games. It was great. There were a few tough times when kids got into fights, or I was trying to make sure I didn't lose anyone at the park, but generally it was all fun. I got to see a student practice math just because she wanted to learn it. I listened to a boy list off the names of a dozen different birds that I'd never heard of, and basically got to see a lot of different people show off their talents. What a great environment.

As I spent more time there I realized that Stephanie and Shawna did a lot of work. It really takes a lot of effort and skill to give a child the space, freedom, and support necessary for their growth. I started listening in on the daily meetings and trying to find out more about the method of conflict resolution that was used. I asked a lot of questions. Everyone was kind and gave me advice. I learned early on that the students were very knowledgeable and could offer good advice on dealing with particular school situations. I asked for their help often.

The students and staff have been absolutely wonderful. This has been the most significant experience of my entire college career. Once my student teaching is done I hope to be able to come back and volunteer once a week. It's been a great experience and I'm grateful for the chance to be part of this community.



Ian, Corey and Claire

WISH LIST

Pentium 4 computers	High quality mechanical pencils
Glue sticks and white glue	Markers, washable and nontoxic
Post-it notes	Highlighters, all colors
Potters clay	Beads, all kinds
Tracing paper or white vellum	Elastic beading thread
Good electric pencil sharpener	Tape - Scotch, painter's, masking

EBULL

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Now the ebull features color pictures! You don't get that in the paper version!

CLEARWATER'S MAILING LIST

If you no longer wish to receive the School Bull or other Clearwater mailings, please let us know by phone (206-306-0060) or email (info@clearwaterschool.com) and we will cheerfully remove your name from our mailing list. Be assured that we never share your email or postal address with anyone else.

FUNDRAISE WHILE YOU SHOP



The Clearwater School participates in PCC Natural Markets' great fundraising offers: the 1% for Education and Scrip programs.

PCC will give back 1% of the pre-tax amount that we spend on groceries. Collect your receipts at home and turn them in to The Clearwater School. We then submit them to PCC and get a check for 1% of the total pre-tax dollars spent.

Clearwater also purchases scrip coupons that can be used as a gift certificate at all PCC stores. Clearwater buys scrip at a 5% discount and sells it to you at the full face value. Scrip comes in \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 denominations, and any change from a purchase is returned as regular currency. Call or email the school if you'd like to buy scrip.



THE CLEARWATER SCHOOL

<http://www.clearwaterschool.com>
info@clearwaterschool.com
 206-306-0060

EVENTS

Play Days, alternate Wednesdays, reservations required
 Information Night, Thursday, May 20, 6:30-8:30 pm
 Annual Meeting and Picnic, Sat., June 12, 5:30 pm: picnic, 6:30 pm: meeting

THE CLEARWATER SCHOOL 2003-2004 SCHEDULE

Memorial Day Holiday - Monday, May 31, 2004
 Last Day of School - Friday, June 11, 2004



RENT THE CLEARWATER SCHOOL

The Clearwater School is available for rental during evenings, weekends and the summer months. The space is perfect for small events and retreats. All or part of the school is available for rent at reasonable rates. Take a virtual tour on Clearwater's website: www.clearwaterschool.com/basics.htm. To comply with IRS regulations, the school rents only to nonprofit or religious organizations. Contact Shawna Lee or Stephanie Sarantos at the school for further information.

The Clearwater School
 11006 34th Avenue N.E.
 Seattle, WA 98125-6806

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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