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ROOM PARENTS

2003-2004

Sandpipers

Coltrane Lord

Scott Rubin

Stephen Moore

Gray Whales

Denise DeMory

Charo Gonzales

Rainbow Dolphins

Dan Matz

Susan Smiga

Coyotes

Sunanna Bonetti

Nancy Marks

CREDITS

Editors

Liza Geary

Belann Giarretto

Diana Wolf

Contributors

Laura Galvin

Belann Giarretto

Amy Rosenhaus

Stephania Serena

Tim Sheridan

Brian Silveira

Leslee Subak

Geoff Walsh

Diana Wolf

Photography

Liza Geary

Jeremy Lichtmacher (00)

Kathi O'Leary

Design

Stephania Serena

Alumni Notes:

Emma Dinkespiel (94) has just started Urban where she joins fellow Coyote classmates **Nisha Arand** and **Claire Turner**.

Gabriella Frachia, 27, just received her Masters in Italian from Middlebury College. Her sister, **Adriana**, 21, is in college in Seattle and working 20 hours a week at a preschool.

Andrew Bregman (89) is currently a sophomore at Vassar College.

Amanda Gill (93) is a sophomore at Gateway High School.

Allison Uba (03) is doing well at Clarendon Elementary. She walked 5 1/2 miles in a school walk-a-thon (top distance for her grade!)

Oriana Schaaf (99) danced in the "Velveteen Rabbit" again this year and is in her 4th year of ballet, learning piano and is in the Synergy School Choir and she studies occasionally!

Ariana Getz (88) is currently a sophomore at Barnard College in New York City.

Chris Chun (95) is a freshman at Gateway High School.

Tory Peterschild, 15, is a sophomore at Menlo-Atherton High School. She visited Fiji last summer for a community service project. **Jonah Peterschild**, 13, is in 8th grade at Orinda Intermediate School. He loves soccer and plays on the Lamorinda Soccer Club Team. Both have fond memories of Pacific Primary.

Emily Baker (95) enjoys being the oldest of 22 children in the Pleasant Hill CoHousing Community with fellow alum **Lucio Hupfer**. Emily has a new scar from surgery for a broken leg - a result of the soccer season. She and fellow alum **Rachel Dwyer Hamolsky** enjoyed 2 weeks in Paris together with their families.

Teacher Fun Facts

By Amy Rosenhaus

Can you match the Pacific Primary teacher or staff person on the left with the interesting fact on the right?

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1. Spring | A. Sold hammocks for 10 years |
| 2. Sean | B. Loves parties and socials |
| 3. Elyse | C. Favorite movie theaters are the Castro & Red Vic |
| 4. Darby | D. Has won a city-wide ping pong tournament |
| 5. Neil | E. Did commercials as a child |
| 6. Lynette | F. After daughter left for college, considered opening a doggie Bed & Breakfast, but decided to become Program Director at Kids' Turn instead |
| 7. Michelle A. | G. Is a licensed scuba diver |
| 8. Brian | H. Has bicycled across the country twice |
| 9. Susann | I. Speaks Mandarin |
| 10. Eric | J. Favorite author is Laura Esquivel |
| 11. Jeanette | K. Lived on an island in the middle of the Panama Canal for 5 months while studying monkeys |
| 12. Laura | L. Has collected over 300 Christmas ornaments |

1=E, 2=I, 3=C, 4=H, 5=J, 6=L, 7=G, 8=B, 9=C, 10=D, 11=K, 12=A

HELP US FIND LOST ALUMNI:

- Are you in touch with former families & classmates?
- Are you interested in becoming an alumni class parent and in reaching out to your Pacific Primary class for the purpose of the Annual Alumni Picnic?
- Are you available to help us plan the 30th Anniversary?

CONTACT PACIFIC PRIMARY (415) 346-0906
www.pacificprimary.org

Kate Robertson is a junior at UC Berkeley, majoring in archeology. She works with Collage a volunteer leader of a support group of children of gay and lesbian parents in the East Bay. **Jonny Robertson** is a freshman at Urban School; there were 6 Pacific Primary alums in his entering class and many more in the upper classes.

Laurel Hunt (94) is a freshman at UHS, also playing basketball and loves history. **Jonathan Hunt (97)** completed Clarendon Elementary School and is at middle school at MCDS. He is an aspiring basketball player and best friends with **Brandon Dicks** whom he met at Pacific Primary School.

Juan Carlos Cancino (82) graduated from Stanford in 2002. He is working for the California Rural Legal Assistance as an Americorps volunteer.

Miguel David Cancino (86) is a junior at Pomona College.

Eric Saldivar (86) is a carpenter in San Francisco.

Leslie Saldivar (88) is a freshman at North Idaho College.

In Memoriam:

We were deeply saddened by the loss of **Anne Murray Ladd (81)** who died in a bicycle accident in Arizona this summer. Our deepest sympathy is with her family.



the PACIFIC PRIMARY SUN

WINTER 2003 - 2004

What Makes a Pacific Primary Graduate Special?

By Diana Wolf

Choosing a pre-school that is right for one's family involves reviewing school guides, attending informational events, and doing the "pre-school trek." Crucial to the process is also the soul searching that goes on to clarify our values and to determine how our children should understand them. As parents, we engage in this process, because we know how important learning and socialization is at the pre-school level.

For many of us, Pacific Primary is a miraculous place. As our children grow, we begin to hear some things at home that delight, surprise and engage us. "I know how to solve that problem!" "Let's make a peace place table." "Let's try it and see if it works." We may be privy to a short rendition of "Kumba, I Love Ya, Ashai, Ashai." We may be the recipient of a creative expression of a thought or feeling that warms our hearts as parents. Our children are showing us that they are beginning to internalize the core principles of Pacific Primary: conflict resolution, learning by doing, creativity and connections with others.

But what is special about a Pacific Primary graduate? We may wonder if, as a group, Pacific Primary children carry with them these shared skills, abilities and core values, even after they leave the school. Many anecdotes seem to indicate that there are some common threads. Here are some of the things that we have heard:

Alumni parent, Stephanina Serena, recently shared a story of how her daughter, Serena Warren ('03) and Zachary Kim ('03), approached a recent event:

The kindergarteners at Nueva School were organizing a community "feast and fair" to celebrate their study of communities and the reading of the book "Charlotte's Web." After a long decision making process, the class decided to make several contributions of food

to the feast. Zachary and Serena came up with the idea of creating a "kindness chain" at the fair, where people could write kind thoughts on each link of the chain.

Another parent shared that at her daughter's school, a group of girls encouraged other girls to join a "club" whose purpose it was to leave out one of the girls in the class. Three Pacific Primary graduates refused to join, stood up to the group, said that they did not believe it was the right thing to do, and reported it to the teacher. The parent believed that Pacific Primary's influence definitely guided the girls' decision to stand up for what they believed was hurtful.

Rebecca Lewis, kindergarten teacher at San Francisco Day School, has seen many Pacific Primary student. When asked what characteristics she observes in our kids, she answered:

As I think about the Pacific Primary graduates with whom I have worked, two areas stand out. One, related to conflict resolution and social skills, is their ability to articulate their feelings when working out conflicts with peers. The other area is probably related to "process not product." The students from Pacific Primary seem very engaged during our work times, are willing to take risks and are often eager to try new things. They also seem to have initiative with self-directed projects during free choice time. [And] those same students seem to feel proud of their work.

As we move into the 30th Anniversary during the 2004 - 2005 school year, Pacific Primary would like to hear from you - parents, teachers, alums, students - about how the school has affected the lives of you and your children. Please contact the school with your stories and insights so that we may share and celebrate them with others.

SAVE THE DATE
Annual Auction
March 6, 2004

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Letter from the Director *By Belann Giarretto*



Director, Belann Giarretto

Dear Families,

Every year, when tours of the school mark the beginning of our admissions process, I have the same wonderful experience. As I lead a group of parents through Pacific Primary, it is as though I am seeing the school for the first time. By the end of the tour I am as excited as the parents by what I've seen – children engaged and focused as they explore their environment and teachers providing rich and varied hands-on experiences that help develop the dispositions of curiosity and love of learning in each child. Throughout the school there is an almost palpable feeling of warmth, love, respect and joy. Parents often say to me – “I wish I were a child and could go to this school” and I know that is the ultimate compliment.

We've worked hard to redefine our educational philosophy and our staff is able to spend time reflecting on what we've accomplished and where we want to go. There is now additional time for teachers to observe children's play so that they can create fresh curriculum that encourages deep and meaningful learning. Focus on emotional growth is of utmost importance and we are constantly refining our ability to really listen to children and give them the tools to resolve conflicts. The rich

diversity of the school continues to flourish and we know that we are preparing children to be confident problem solvers who welcome differences in the friends and people they interact with.

We've created new opportunities for connection. Our families enjoy meeting each other at the fall and spring Family Picnics. We also have a summer Barbeque and Dance Party at school where the entire family joins in the festivities. We were thrilled with the turnout at our first annual Alum Picnic in June and we are looking forward to the next picnic on June 6, 2004.

Pacific Primary has put the needs of children first for 29 years. As we approach our 30th Anniversary with great anticipation, we look forward to reconnecting with alum families. When graduates stop by, we love seeing how they have grown, and how their eyes light up as they remember their experiences here. We welcome you to visit and reconnect to Pacific Primary. You will recognize familiar sights and faces and enjoy discovering new aspects of the school and our program.

Warm wishes,
Belann

Heart: April 29, 2002 – January 12, 2004

Our beautiful chicken, Heart, died this January in the arms of teacher Brian Silveira, her “Papa.” Heart was a beloved part of our school community – inspiring love, compassion and awe from everyone from the children to the parents visiting the school.

Heart was hatched in the Rainbow Dolphin Room. Children from every classroom and their parents gathered around to witness the event. As Heart grew, she was held and fed by the children and teachers and became completely comfortable around them. Children held Heart, rocked her to sleep and enjoyed climbing with her on the dome.

We held a beautiful memorial for Heart and the children sang songs to her as they said goodbye. Children made her a blanket with the sun logo and a pillow. They drew pictures and wrote stories. We will all miss Heart very much.

Heart, you were some chicken!



Process Ignites Learning *By Laura Galvin & Stephania Serena*

Our culture places emphasis and value on the finished product. Luckily, here at Pacific Primary, the children have the opportunity to focus on the act of creating and learning, which may or may not lead them to an end product. It is universally the process that the children remember most; the sticky glue, the drippy blue paint, the properties of wet sand or the repeated effort of mastering a feat on the play structure. Children who learn that process is valued have the freedom to make discoveries and answer questions on their own. In addition, they develop self-confidence and learn to trust their own judgment through gaining satisfaction from the experience of learning. Process is not always easy to observe, but it represents the focus of the daily work at our school. If we take the time to appreciate the process its value is elevated.

When the children work with Elyse Jacobs, Expressive Arts Specialist, they may create items that don't fit neatly in a manila folder. This reflects the children's own individual process. As she eloquently states:

Process is open-ended. Exploration is the primary goal. As children are their own authority creating from within, they gain confidence and self-esteem. As artists, it is their vision and enjoyment of the process that counts. The attention span of the children increases because they enjoy concentrating when their ideas, feelings and imagination, as well as the materials, are the source of inspiration. Developing the ability to concentrate is an important precursor to acquiring reading and math skills.

Heidi Tzortzis, Music and Movement Specialist, shares this viewpoint:

Process is everything! In fact, process is much more important than the result. While actively working and playing with a given thought, poem, song or story the children determine the development of the activity. I'm often in awe of all those creative sparks that develop into seemingly endless streaks of ideas, exploration and expression.

A Coyote class a few years ago presented a play, *Baby Rattlesnake*, complete with costumes and music by Heidi. What was memorable to Heidi was the preparation for the play:

As the children worked with sounds of stones clanking and paper crunching it reminded us

of tumbleweed. The idea of 'desert' was not far off, and adding the story of Baby Rattlesnake was natural. The children were enthusiastic because in the process, they created the atmosphere in which the story took place. This was a typical growing process from which the performance evolved.

When one enjoys a finished piece of visual or performance art, the process is not visible. The viewer does not know what parts of the process that the children cherish. For one child the best part of watercolor painting may be how many times the water changed colors as the brush was rinsed. Last year, a child was painting at the easel using blue and yellow paint. Suddenly, there was a joyful scream, “Oh my gosh, it made green!” Evidence of the process is apparent when a child delights in the sensory experience of painting one's hands. Children working side by side at the easel, and even by mutual consent on the same painting, have some wonderful conversations. If only those moments could be recorded in some way! Actually, when a child comes home messy you can be certain that they were intensely engrossed in a learning process.

Often our first reaction when children share their work with us is something along the lines of, “Wow that is wonderful!” A nice encouraging statement, but it only gratifies their need to gain adult approval, and does not give attention to how exciting it might have been to create the work. If we can take the time to discover how a child arrived at that wonderful result, we can then learn about what motivates that child. Children then do not have to look so often to the grownups around them for approval and will strive to find satisfaction for themselves. We need to remember that the finished products they unveil to us represent only a small part of their experience. As we help cultivate their enjoyment of the process, we can still treasure the final product. Here are some suggestions for valuing your child's learning process:

TIPS:

- Listen with equal interest to your child's descriptions of their experience creating something as well as to their excitement about the final product itself. This shows the child that both aspects of creating are valued.
- When viewing your children's art work describe the characteristics of what you are seeing, not what you think it is. For example, “Look at all of those colors you used.” Ask, “What were you thinking of when you painted this?”
- Ask your child how he or she feels when they are working. Let them talk about the work themselves.



Children who learn that process is valued have the freedom to make discoveries and answer questions on their own.

Help Us Celebrate!

The 2004-2005 school year marks Pacific Primary's 30th anniversary! Special activities are already being planned. We look forward to all our special friends participating in the festivities. Keep your eyes and ears open for some terrific events for parents, children, alumni, staff and the community.





Spreading Diversity *By Brian Silveira*

Pacific Primary has a long-standing tradition of welcoming a diverse community of families including gay and lesbian headed families. Last year, Pacific Primary was asked to participate in a conference entitled, *Building Partnerships*, to provide Culturally Sensitive Care and Education for Children from Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Families by the Bay Area Network for Diversity Training in Early Childhood (BANTEC). Belann Giarretto, Pacific Primary's Director, was asked to educate teachers and directors about how Pacific Primary creates an affirming environment for all kinds of families including LGBT families. She enlisted Chad Kordt-Thomas, a former teacher, and Brian Silveira, current Coyote Room teacher, to help her put our practice into words.

With the aid of an anonymous donation, interviews were conducted with Pacific Primary staff, current and alumni families, the current and former director, and alumni of the school. Additionally, all of the school's printed materials, such as the mission statement, admission forms and parent and staff manuals were examined to glean information about the school's policies and values. A document reflecting Pacific Primary core practices was ultimately prepared for the conference and was organized in eight categories: Overview and Values; Current Practices; Leadership; Communication; Children and Families; Staff; Curriculum and Community.

At the conference itself, a panel presentation consisted of both parents and staff. Their testimonials helped the presentation come alive for the attendees. Five parents, both gay and straight, participated: Sandra Coke, Amy Scharf, Debbie Lee, Doug Tom and Susan Colson. The parents felt that their families were treated with respect and sensitivity and that the school spoke to the core values that they want to instill in their children.

Stories captured through parent interviews were also shared during the presentation. For example, David and June Kim stated:

"Experiencing diversity first hand at such a young age has helped Zachary appreciate differences, rather than be bothered by them. He is able to focus on the person as a friend rather

than the circumstances of that friend." Dan Everest said, "I never felt like a "straight" parent and I never saw Paul and Mike as gay parents. Pacific Primary allowed me not to categorize myself." What Molly Dwyer loves most about Pacific Primary is that "you don't have to be the gay family. It's taken for granted. The kids take it for granted."

Pacific Primary Director, Belann Giarretto, spoke with passion about her vision of a school that puts the needs of children first, and how she believes that children learn best through their daily interactions with people whose lives look both the same and different from their own. She spoke of how every family needs to feel equally supported. There is no such thing as an "alternative family".

Finally, teachers' experiences also came to the fore. Brian and Chad, two gay teachers, represented the staff and spoke of Pacific Primary as an exceptional place to work and how their lives were valued in the classroom and in the community at large. When asked how the staff was supported in this aspect of our diversity work, Genee Ramsey, former Sandpiper teacher, said:

Participating in the Pride Parade and being encouraged to be out in the classroom demonstrated that our lives as staff are important. We all become the fabric. It's always there, and we all can converse in why and how it's normal and just an everyday way of life by being exposed to differences and accepting them.

When asked to contrast Pacific Primary to other schools he worked at Yusef Malenky, Gray Whale lead teacher, responded,

It (Pacific Primary) took some time getting used to. I felt now that what I had to contribute was going to be heard and respected and not just thrown out. I think that when you're talking about fostering diversity it doesn't stop with ethnicity or sexual orientation. We are open to hearing all of the different ways that humanity gets expressed.

Pacific Primary continues its commitment to diversity. Our goal is to help parents raise flexible, productive thinkers who respect themselves and others, children who are resilient, who have the tools to resist violence and who grow to offer a myriad of positive contributions to our communities.

We are open to hearing all of the different ways that humanity gets expressed.

*~ Yusef Malenky
Rainbow Dolphin Teacher*



Picnic in the Park *By Tim Sheridan*

The first annual Pacific Primary Alumni Picnic was held on June 8th, 2003, in Golden Gate Park. The weather was cold, but the spirits were warm with over 200 people from our 1995 through 2003 graduating classes. There were many great moments as friends and teachers reconnected. Thank you to our Alumni Class Parents for helping us bring everyone together. This year the alumni picnic will be on June 6th, 2004.

If your address, phone number or e-mail changes, please let your Alumni Class Parent know. If you know of any families that have been "lost," please let us know. We need your help getting in touch with all of our alums.

The Alumni Committee has been successful in identifying Alumni Class Parents as far back as 1995. Our goal, however, is to reach even further and include pre-1995 classes. If you can volunteer to be an Alumni Class Parent please get in touch with Pacific Primary. The 30th anniversary is fast approaching and we want to include everyone.

The Alumni Class Parents are listed below:

1995
(RD) Louis Blumberg, Ellen Friedman, 566-9107
(RD) Lindy McKnight, Erin Cunningham, 821-4844
(Coyote) Debbie Hamolsky, 550-1950
(Coyote) Charlotte Brown, 346-4152

1996
(RD) Rene Biba, 665-0890
(Coyote) Linda Nakell, 665-6451

1997
(RD) Scott Cowan, 333-1695
(RD) Jon & Tomoko Flynn, 921-4956
(Coyote) Peg Strub & Archie Nash, 566-1287
(Coyote) Stephanie De Maria & Jeanette Brown, (650) 728-5828

1998
(RD) Ross Moody & Dina Goldman, 587-3457
(Coyote) Susan Colson & Maureen Anderson, 282-1791
(Coyote) Lynn Ferrante & Jonathan Wong, 826-8829

1999
(RD) Laura Jacobson, 682-0400
(RD) Janet Mohle Boetani & Mark Manasse, 585-4263
(Coyote) Naomi Jay, 282-4728
(Coyote) David Lahar & Julie Westcott, 567-3236

2000
(RD) Karin Immgergluck & Michael Mueller, 564-6904
(Coyote) Ann Regenstein 664-7447
(Coyote) Scott/Lewis, 431-2165

2001
(RD) Audrey Koh & Gaeta Bell, 647-8908
(RD) Maria Rogers-Pascual & Josh Karliner, 751-1943
(Coyote) Megan Englander & Gilbert Robinson, 431-7437
(Coyote) Tom Hatton, Supriya Shivakumar, 666-3396

2002
(RD) Helen Rosen, 665-8373
(RD) Brian Powers & Katie Riggs, 585-7551
(Coyote) Judith Bell, Jim Greenberg, 510-595-1823

2003
(RD) Debbie Lee, 753-2107
(RD) Hedy Chang, 242-9345
(Coyote) Tim & Lori Sheridan, 255-7119

VISIT US AT OUR NEW WEBSITE: www.pacificprimary.org



This year's alumni picnic will be on June 6th, 2004





Reaching Out to the Community *By Diana Wolf*

Pacific Primary was founded in 1974 on a strong platform of creating a joyful, diverse, nurturing, learning environment for children. Achieving this could only happen with a strong focus on and respect for community: community for our children, our teachers, our parents, and our neighbors.



Broader community engagement has always been a core component at Pacific Primary through annual drives for food, books and toys. As the school matures and celebrates the successes in children's learning and development, we continue to challenge ourselves to reach out and put our community in the context of the community at large.

During the 2002-2003 school year, the Pacific Primary Board Committee on Community invited a wide variety of local community leaders, current and alumni parents to a brainstorming meeting aimed at generating ideas and enthusiasm about ways in which the school could play a bigger role in the community. Initial ideas

surfaced from this advisory group including: community service projects involving the children, staff-led parenting workshops open to the community, new community partnerships, and greater access for diverse families and staff.

As a result of these conversations, Pacific Primary identified at least one new community connection. In the spring of 2003, a partnership was launched with the Tenderloin Community School and the Bay Area Women's and Children's Center (BAWCC). The Tenderloin School was built by San Francisco Unified School District with community leadership by BAWCC as an elementary school and community center serving a diverse community of low-income families in San Francisco's Tenderloin and beyond. The facility serves 400+ elementary school students and includes a child development center, a health center and dental clinic, garden, counseling rooms, an adult education center, library, community kitchen, and family resource center.

The school's Family Fair sponsored by BAWCC was a first major fair in many years and its purpose was to raise funds for after school programs, parenting classes and other onsite services for children and families. Pacific Primary families were asked to participate in two ways: first by donating like-new books and toys as prizes for the school's children, and secondly, by joining with Tenderloin parents and kids two weeks prior to the event to help decorate kites. These kites were purchased by community donors as part of the fundraising effort and were displayed during the fair. The event was a success for both contributors and organizers: with Pacific Primary families assisting with hands-on activities and the organizers raising important resources to run essential programs.

Pacific Primary's Committee on Community has as one of its goals to sponsor two community service events during the 2003-2004 school year. They may include developing similar partnerships and/or public service activities for the entire family. Providing opportunities to become more involved in the community allows for participation in activities that are new and different and may spawn deeper relationships as well as contexts for rich learning. Pacific Primary strives to remain a diverse, accessible and affordable school with an inclusive, participatory and connected community. Look for new events in the near future and join in the activities!

Broader community engagement has always been a core component at Pacific Primary...

Enabling Longevity *By Geoff Walsh*

Staff turnover in early-childhood programs is notoriously high. Yet something different and exciting goes on at our school: teacher satisfaction and longevity.

Gray Whale Lead Teacher Yusef Malenky is enjoying his sixth year teaching fulltime at Pacific Primary because he says he's "treated so well here in so many different ways by the school and by the families." Vital to what makes it a rewarding place to teach, he says, is the active involvement of parents.

"At the last place I worked parents dropped off, parents picked up and there was never any contact," he says. "Here there's plenty of contact. We can step off the floor and meet with parents for any range of issues. That creates more of a sense of togetherness, a humanizing element."

It's the kind of contact that cultivates connections. "To me," Yusef says, "what's most important is the connection with the child. Each child connects with me in a different way. And when that connection happens, you know it. That's how I can affect that child's growth. Without that, I'm a policeman."

Yusef began working at Pacific Primary in the Sandpiper room with Mahroushka Papazian. "I learned a lot from her," he says.

Mahroushka, Sandpiper Lead Teacher, explains that "teachers here feel very appreciated through dinners, luncheons, and on every first Friday of the month we have a treat. I love this school. I wouldn't teach anywhere else."

When she started seven years ago, the current Gray Whale room used to be for Sandpipers. There were 21 kids. It was big and loud. The next year, in 1999, the Sandpipers were moved into their current room and the class size was reduced to 15.

"I was overwhelmed that first year," says Mahroushka. "So many laps. There's a lot more tears when there are that many kids. And harder goodbyes. The move to a smaller class made a huge difference."

She's happy working with the youngest children. "I prefer this age group," she says. "A lot of teachers have tried it but I've never left. I think my expertise is transitioning kids into their first year of school. I'm proudest when I see they've made the transition and they enjoy and love coming to school."

Brian Silveira, Coyote Lead Teacher, has been here 8 years. Part of his long teaching career had been in public schools where he faced a dilemma. "I wasn't able to be an out gay male teacher in public school, even in San Francisco," he says. With Pacific Primary's commitment to diversity he's able to be out to children and families in meaningful ways. "The kids might be talking about who they're going to marry or who I'm going to marry," he says, "and I'll talk about my partner. Or they'll realize that some of their classmates have two moms or two dads. Children of gay and lesbian parents get to see their parents reflected in their teachers." This year Brian has new responsibilities as the school's Senior Lead Teacher, a position that adds administration duties. He smiles when describing his new role. "This is a nice place to be."

Eight years ago Laura Galvin made an appointment to see the school and got a personalized tour from Belann. "The place seemed so cozy and warm, so child-centered and positive. There was an afternoon position available and I got hired. The fact is I walked in the door and I've never left."

We get to know the child, the child's parents and siblings, I just love the fact that kids visit from class to class. It's good for the teachers. It really contributes to a family atmosphere where all the teachers know all the kids so when they're in the yard everyone's going to know your child's name. It ties the school together.

"It's just a pleasure to be in a place like this," Laura says and after many years of teaching the thrill is still there. "The nice thing about this job is you learn new things every day. For instance, I got all excited about what I just learned about worms!"

Laura's excitement is genuine. And it speaks to why our school keeps good teachers teaching here. They feel genuinely supported and appreciated which enables them to give their focus to a program that nourishes our kids.



I love this school. I wouldn't teach anywhere else.

*~ Mahroushka Papazian
Sandpiper Teacher*

