

Pacific Primary SUN



- - inspiring a love of learning, creating, and caring - -



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"If we want to reach real peace in this world, we should start educating children." - Mahatma Gandhi



Teaching peace to young children is often less about teaching them and more about listening. Giving children the opportunity to work on things together and find peaceful ways to get their needs met happens repetitively during the day at Pacific Primary. Our amazing Expressive Arts program offers many opportunities for peaceful resolution. When we listen, we hear and see young children noticing that a friend is struggling with making their creation work. Often without prompting, the child next to them will notice this frustration and openly offer their help and work cooperatively to help their friend reach the goal of making that creation happen.

Our program scaffolds children's emotional intelligence, which we believe is vital for future success. We expect that there will be times when our young children will be overwhelmed by their feelings and act out. The teachers patiently help them build the skills of resiliency. The teachers see behavior as great curriculum, and use challenging behavior as an opportunity for children to learn new ways to solve problems. This slow but mighty process results in children finding more peaceful ways to work out conflict.

Another opportunity for teaching peace is during circle time, where our teachers shine. We make time to listen to these amazing children at our daily circle time, and this gives the children a chance to talk and share about what they know; we are often amazed at what they tell us. We also discuss friendships, and the challenges of being excluded. We are always inspired by their capacity for compassion and empathy.

Working with teachers, parents and children on creating a more peaceful and just world is so rewarding; it makes us proud and sustains our dedication to early childhood education.

With Love,



Belann



Lynn



Pacific Primary Sun is an annual newsletter written and produced by current parents at Pacific Primary, under the guidance of the school's directors. We are deeply grateful to the following parents and staff for their hard work and contribution to the newsletter.

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A true commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion cannot be passive; it must be intentional, pro-active, and ongoing. It must be unwavering but not stagnant, and spoken out loud, not kept quiet. As such, this year the Pacific Primary Board of Directors, in collaboration with staff, gathered to produce a statement of our community's commitment to these values. The statement is a living document, one that will shift and expand to gather more under our wing, never fewer, and to state out loud that racism has no place here. We are delighted that the Board of Directors has given their permission to publish the statement for the first time in the pages of the Pacific Primary newsletter. Please see the statement below.

--Lizzy Gilbert

PACIFIC PRIMARY DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Diversity, equity, and inclusion have always been at the heart of Pacific Primary School's mission. Since its inception in 1974, our school has welcomed families and educators from different backgrounds into a community in which everyone's voices are valued and weave our social fabric. At this point in our country's history, there have been too many examples of racism, bigotry and exclusion. In response, we feel compelled to reassert our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in a stand-alone statement.

We teach diversity, equity, and inclusion through developmentally appropriate practices which include curriculum, modeling, and peaceful conflict resolution. We talk to children about fairness and equity, read children's books that emphasize diversity, and march in our Peace Parade to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, other peacemakers, and the values they upheld. We live these values every day in our school community, emphatically.

The racial, cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, the diverse family structures, and the learning differences of the members of our community present opportunities for each child to learn from those whose life experiences differ from their own. We are dedicated to maintaining a diverse school. This commitment informs our decision-making and organizational processes, including admissions policies, tuition assistance, professional development, curriculum implementation, staff hiring, and board recruitment. Pacific Primary does not tolerate bigotry, hatred or exclusion of any kind including racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia or any other form of oppression. We are committed to providing an emotionally and physically safe space for each of our students, their families, and our staff.



Celebrating Our Community



Mahroushka Papazian's 20th Anniversary | Masa Fisher

It is the people and their personalities that make up the sunshine of our school and this year we shine a light to celebrate one of our amazing Lead Teachers, Mahroushka Papazian on her 20th (!) year at Pacific Primary. We asked Mahroushka to reflect on her career path:

I grew up here in San Francisco, and one day during high school, my mom walked to our neighborhood day care center, Stop and Grow, to ask owner Wendy Mines if she needed a volunteer. She did, and after my first day, I was asked to return for a paid position. I quickly realized how much I enjoyed working with children, and decided to pursue a career in teaching. I went on to study early childhood education, and continued to work at Stop and Grow. After a few years, the school announced it was to close, so I started looking for other positions. My sister's children all attended Pacific Primary, which is how I heard about an opening in the Sandpiper classroom. I applied and after Belann came to observe me at Stop and Grow, I was offered a position and moved on to Pacific Primary!

One highlight of many is, after 13 years in the Sandpiper classroom, the school allowed me to take a sabbatical, where I taught and volunteered in Italy. This break was reinvigorating, and when I returned, I took over as Lead Teacher in the Gray Whale classroom. Six years later, I became Lead Teacher in the Prairie Dog classroom, where I am now.

What stands out most over the years is that I have been given an incredible opportunity to work closely with a variety of wonderful teachers, and hope that I have been an equally positive influence on them as an educator, as they have been on me. Pacific Primary has become an extension of my family, and my husband often teases that we can't go anywhere without running into former parents and students. I am fortunate to have been a part of so many lives, and am always delighted to see my students return as Summer Volunteers. To this day I've taught over 360 children!

Celebratory thoughts, from Belann:

"I clearly remember when I first observed Mahroushka at her former school. It was clear to me that she was an excellent and enthusiastic teacher, and I hired her immediately. How fortunate we've been to have Mahroushka at our school for the past 20 years! I have always been impressed with her dedication, hard work and her immense love for the children. Congratulations, Mahroushka! We are so glad that you are a part of our school, as you bring so much to our community and to our profession as early childhood educators."



Sarah Watkins' 20th Anniversary | Yvonne Tsang

"Namaste, the good in me sees the good in you." This is how Sarah Watkins greets children and teachers, as she enters her 20th year at Pacific Primary.

Over the years, Sarah has worn many hats. A former English teacher, she began as a part-time substitute teacher at Pacific Primary, and spent years as a full-time alternate teacher and Sandpiper teacher, before circling back to her current role as part-time alternate teacher. Although many things have changed in two decades, "Pacific Primary values have remained the same, and that's why I'm here," Sarah said.

"When Sarahwatkins (most children's preferred way of saying her name) came to our school, she brought her passion for yoga, love for sharing songs, and her great delight in the children," said Belann. "She brings a bit of magic to all that she does, and she knows a lot about fairies and fairy dust. Sarah created 'Stinky Foot Yoga,' for children to raise one leg and foot to their nose and say "Eww, stinky foot", and then laugh out loud and be silly as they move on to other yoga poses."

"Teaching kids yoga is my favorite favorite thing," echoes Sarah, who is a certified yoga teacher. "Belann encouraged me to start teaching yoga classes to children." Kids delight in chanting, holding their stuffies to their bellies and breathing into them, and doing meditation and sun salutations.

Thank you, Sarah, for bringing such thoughtful and delightful experiences to our school for the past 20 years!

The Yellow Sun School Shines a Little Brighter | Yvonne Tsang



This past year, thanks to the maintenance committee and our board of directors, a number of deferred maintenance projects were undertaken to improve the Yellow Sun School building at 1500 Grove Street, where Pacific Primary was established 44 years ago. Board member Tim Caraher, who is one of four maintenance committee co-chairs, shares some of the highlights:

Exterior Window Replacement: All 26 windows were replaced with brand new Pella double-hung windows. The glass is tempered and double-paned, increasing the overall safety and energy efficiency of the building. New exterior trim was added, caulked and painted to match the new windows exactly.

Security Upgrade: With the new windows in place, Bay Alarm conducted a comprehensive review on the existing security setup, and replaced the interior security panel, motion sensors, and door sensors, while adding 26 new window sensors. Included in this upgrade was a new touch-screen control panel and smartphone app that allows the alarm to be armed or disarmed remotely, bringing the entire security system into the 21st century.

Electrical Panel Upgrade: A new exterior electrical service panel was installed, bringing the building's electrical service up to current standards. As part of this upgrade, new code-compliant wood decking was installed below the panel. Coordination with PG&E and the installation crew was critical to get this completed during the Staff Work Week in August. Many thanks to PP alum Pat O'Donnell, and his company Mervue Electric for their help with getting this upgrade completed!

Interior Track Lighting: New track lighting was installed in the hallway and front bathroom, creating a brighter look and feel throughout the common areas. The new LED lights not only consume up to 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs-- their longevity makes them easier to maintain. A few more lights need to be installed in the Sandpiper class bathroom, and some dimmers in other areas, before this project is completed.

Outdoor Creation Station and Garden Shed: A new aluminum canopy over the Creation Station was installed, and a new wooden garden shed was constructed during our Fall Maintenance Day in August. (Thank you, parents!) The shed creates a nicer look and a more natural feel for our garden tool storage. Look for new, matching wooden storage sheds to replace the existing open-air shelving in the Creation Station over the next few months.

As the work of the maintenance committee is never done, future projects include remodeling the kitchen, staff break room, exterior fencing, and the adult bathroom of the Yellow Sun School. These larger projects need to be completed while school is closed, adding a layer of complexity that requires a tremendous amount of coordination and effort from staff, parents, volunteers, and contractors.

With these improvements in place and more to come, the Yellow Sun School is shining a little more brightly these days, and our school community couldn't be more grateful!

Traditions of Peace | Rachel Rouda

Pacific Primary has long cultivated traditions of peace with students, families, and our community. As we struggle to make sense of the hateful rhetoric that permeates our everyday, and the exclusionary policies that threaten our country, the notion of teaching our children about conflict-resolution, empathy, and equality seems more important than ever. Since its inception, Pacific Primary has been committed to upholding diversity, inclusion, and social justice – these are major tenets of the school’s mission, and ones we can see enacted in both the classroom and community.

Teachers use peacemaking tools in their everyday instruction. The Peace Place is one strategy, among many, that Pacific Primary uses school-wide. Since first implemented by teacher Chad Kordt-Thomas in 2001, the Peace Place has become an integral part of every classroom at both the Orange and Yellow Sun Schools. Each classroom has a space set aside, some with a table and chairs, and some with a cozy corner where children can sit together on cushions. In all of these spaces, there is a poster that visually illustrates the five steps of the Peace Place, reminding children how to work out a problem.



The five steps have provided a common language for thinking and talking about problem-solving, and facilitating conflict resolution has become second nature for Pacific Primary teachers. Teachers begin each year by talking through the meaning and intention of the Peace Place, modeling the five steps by role-playing with puppets. In the youngest classrooms, children are learning these concepts for the first time, while children in the older classrooms are getting a refresher, reinforcing the use of the Peace Place as a tool that they can continue to use in their new classroom. Teachers then provide real-time support as children learn the steps to work out a problem together. With time and practice, teachers

observe an incredible change over the course of the year, with children enthusiastically learning to work out their problems on their own. It is not long before children are using the Peace Place independently, whether in the classroom, on the playground, on field trips, or at home.



Conflict resolution is recognized as a learning opportunity, and the Peace Place offers an everyday learning tool that helps children develop multiple skills. Children are learning to communicate with empathy as they take turns talking and listening to their peers’ perspectives: how would it feel if someone grabbed the toy out of their hands? When a teacher asks, “What will help? How can we resolve this?” they are teaching children to be critical thinkers (the highest level of cognitive development!), helping them learn to make decisions, problem-solve, and evaluate information to determine what is right or wrong. At the same time, this process is building children’s self-esteem, by showing them that problems are solvable and that their teachers believe that they can do it.

Even in the youngest classrooms, the Peace Place is empowering children to solve their own problems rather than seek assistance from their teachers. In the Sandpiper classroom, Lead Teacher Eric Wilson shares that eventually, “instead of children coming to teachers saying, ‘We have a problem,’ they are coming up to teachers saying ‘We solved our problems!!’ Saeda Fuller, Penguin Lead Teacher, says that the Peace Place is “a simple but impactful framework for practicing and building upon the idea that when we have problems, we fix them!”



At parent orientation night last fall, Pacific Primary shared handouts on the Peace Place with every family, offering this same framework as a tool that we can use at home with our children. In thinking about ways you might bring the Peace Place to your home, consider these words of wisdom from teachers:

- *Involve your child in making and choosing the location of your Peace Place at home.*
- *Be consistent with following the five Peace Place steps.*
- *Model the steps for your children – act out a problem and show how you can solve it together.*
- *Help your child recognize when there is a problem – “Oh, sounds/looks like we have a problem!”*
- *Our bodies need to be ready to solve the problem emotionally – before you approach the problem, take time to help your child take a deep breath and get calm.*
- *Remind your child that the Peace Place is also within us wherever we go – it is a set of tools you can apply anywhere and does not need to be a specific place.*
- *It takes time and practice to resist the urge to solve problems for children – the goal is to support children in doing their own problem-solving. Ask “Who can solve this?” to generate ideas directly from the children, allowing them to see that problems can be resolved.*
- *Do not underestimate younger children’s ability to engage in the Peace Place!*

Following the 2016 presidential election, Pacific Primary recognized the need to support parents in finding the right words to have meaningful and developmentally appropriate conversations about the outcome and its implications with children. In the Panda classroom, for example, teachers led a community project to address this. One parent shared a powerful message of gratitude in response to this work:

The Panda teachers’ community project gave our family a language to talk about what was happening in the world that was genuine and powerful but hopeful. It helped me to be a better parent. It gave me hope and helped give [my daughter] a sense of her own power and agency in an imperfect world. I cannot imagine a more valuable lesson for [my daughter] or for me.

Looking beyond the classroom, we see peacemaking traditions celebrated community-wide at Pacific Primary. For over two decades, the school has been celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday with a Peace Parade. Up until 2016, this has been the most meaningful school

community celebration, bringing together students, staff, and families from both schools in a walk around the neighborhood, carrying signs and messages of peace. In the wake of the 2016 election, Pacific Primary chose to further reinforce its tradition of peace by holding an additional Peace Parade in December 2016, entitled “A Celebration of Our Community.” Once again, both schools came together in a unified walk, as neighbors came out to watch and cheer with joy.

**Join the Upcoming
All School Peace Sing-Alongs**

Friday, March 16
Friday, April 20
Thursday, May 31

This year, Pacific Primary will have its annual Dr. Martin Luther King Peace Parade on Friday, January 12, as well as five all-school Peace Sing-Alongs scheduled throughout the year. As Belann shares, “the Peace Sing-Alongs bring the schools together to honor our values, keep hopes alive, and celebrate our community.” November 2017 marked the first Peace Sing-Along of the school year, bringing the full school community to the Yellow Sun School playground, where our wonderful Music Teachers, Kevin Gerzevitz and Kate Offer, led everyone in songs of peace. Panda Lead Teacher Kelly Fox, and Sandpiper Lead Teacher Eric Wilson taught us about the ways that peacemaker Mahatma Gandhi practiced kindness, and how we embody those same values at Pacific Primary. At each Sing-Along, teachers plan to celebrate a new peacemaker, sharing details about the lives and beliefs of a historical figure that has helped to cultivate peace and love.

As a parent, I am grateful and inspired by the powerful ways in which our school community is teaching peace. These traditions are instilling in our children the skills and tools they will need to be respectful and caring adults, even in moments of discord. As you listen to children sitting down to work out a problem together or belting out songs of peace, you cannot help but feel a surge of hope. We are growing peacemakers at Pacific Primary.



Alumni Profile: Student, Teacher, Aunt | Jessica Marmor Shaw

Cameron Shaw has a unique perspective on life at Pacific Primary

Cameron Shaw has a collection of vivid memories from her time as a Pacific Primary student some 30-plus years ago. She remembers her first day as a Gray Whale -- she cried for hours, but was comforted by some older kids; she remembers sneaking a forbidden toy from home on a field trip... then losing it. She remembers eating Spaghetti-O's, and holding hands to sing the lunchtime song -- though she doesn't remember the song.

Now, as an alternate teacher, the moments that often stand out are seemingly ordinary ones. Cameron, who is also a cinematographer, likes to talk with the kids about photography and how to take pictures. On one field trip, a child noted to her that the picture she was taking was "a landscape AND a portrait" -- it had mountains in it, but also her friend.

"Those are the good moments when you know they are listening to you." As a teacher, she gets to watch children develop their own sense of self and, she says, "I know that at one point, I was the beneficiary of that."

This year, another element was added to Cameron's Pacific Primary experience: her nephew (my son) began as a Sandpiper. She says being an aunt has especially attuned her to the big transition the children go through when they first enter school -- the kinds of things that need to be explained to them, and the kinds of experiences they may have never before encountered.

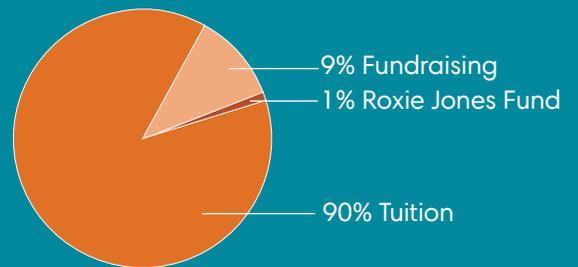
Pacific Primary is, in some ways, different now than when Cameron was a student -- no Spaghetti-O's at lunch, for one thing. But, Cameron says, "the values remain the same -- solving problems when they arise, putting diversity first, embracing the city we live in."



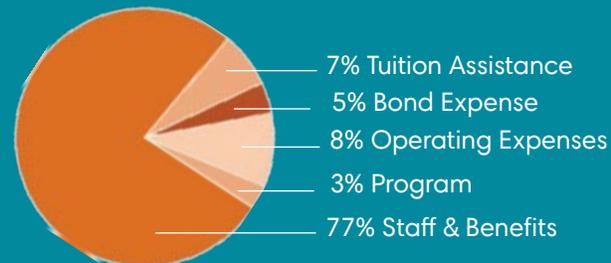
FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT | Meera Chary, Co-President

We continue to operate on strong financial footing, and our priority in the next years is to keep this strength while also investing in our school appropriately. We continue to invest in our greatest asset - our staff - while also recognizing that keeping tuition affordable is vital to Pacific Primary's mission and values. In order to maintain this balance, we call on our incredible school community - and every year, the community answers - building our fund that supports tuition assistance, music, arts, and summer programs. As always - thank you for the support that you give, as parents, donors, and community members. Given our relative financial position, the Board is thinking towards the future - security, sustainability, and growth. This means being thoughtful about our long-term financial vehicle - our endowment - as well as our year-over-year spending and budgeting. We have many long conversations about this, as a board, and as we enter into budgeting season in the spring, these conversations will continue and deepen. Top of mind, always, is how to ensure that we manage our finances while also staying true to our values of inclusion and diversity. We welcome any questions or thoughts about our finances - please direct any inquiries to the board (board@pacificprimary.org) or Amie Haiz.

2017/2018 INCOME



2017/2018 EXPENSES



Meera Chary





Anarose Helferd (1997) recently passed the Bar exam, and began work with migrant farm workers through the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project in Yakima, WA. Anarose attended SF Waldorf High School and Seattle University, and studied abroad in Puebla, Mexico. After college, she went directly into the University of Washington Law School. Anarose's dad, Dave Reardon, still lives in the neighborhood and says, "When thinking about the arc of Anarose's growth and education I remember all of the institutions and never forget Pacific Primary."



Jackson New-Smith (2002) just completed a Summer/Fall internship at the Office of the Commissioner of Major League baseball in New York City. Jackson is in his junior year at Santa Clara University, studying Communications and International Business. He's enjoyed a path that led from bat boy/clubhouse attendant for the World Series Champion San Francisco Giants, to the Office of the Commissioner, and is looking forward to applying his valuable work experience.



Sylvie Wilson (2004) recently graduated from Drew School, and started Pitzer College this fall, which is part of the Claremont College consortium. Sylvie plans to pursue environmental science, and when she is not studying or working in Pitzer's Study Abroad Department, she stays active by playing lacrosse, dance and Zumba! Sylvie is the daughter of beloved Sandpiper Teacher, Eric Wilson and incredible Finance Director, Amie Haiz.

Pacific Primary 2017-2018 Teachers & Staff

executive & OSS director belann giarretto • **YSS director** lynn turner • **finance director** amie haiz • **business & operations manager** shannon rice

OSS • penguins saeda fuller (lead) | evelyn cobb | joseph powell • **prairie dogs** mahroushka papazian (lead) | lisa koester | jane kolb | hector rivera • **pandas** kelly fox (lead) | alyssa chazen-richards | haruka yamaguchi • **polar bears** brian silveira (lead/program coordinator/senior lead teacher) | sabine scherer | sarah cleary

YSS • sandpipers eric wilson (lead) | hanna alemayehu | tiffany taylor • **gray whales** anna vongvixay (lead) | keiko shimozaki | jessica bellefeuille | lizbet rosario banos • **rainbow dolphins** lucia johnson (lead) | soara delouvre | randy johnson • **coyotes** nadia jaboneta (lead/program coordinator) | riley graham | darby hillyard

music & movement kevin gerzevitz (oss) | kate offer (yss) • **expressive arts** elyse jacobs (oss) & daniel gill (yss) • **support teacher** sean o'connor (oss) | ben tursi (yss) • **sunroom coordinator** sabrina brewer (oss) | mario carranza (yss) • **sunroom afternoon teacher** sean o'connor (oss) | jonathan gregg (yss) • **afternoon supervisor & support teacher** kristen baggerly (oss) | natalie karet (yss) • **chef** amy fernandez (oss) | ashley ellington (yss) • **alternate teachers** cameron shaw | sarah watkins | aimee scorza • **parking coordinator** doug diboll



Peace-full Music with Teachers Kate & Kevin



Yellow Sun School Music Teacher Kate Offer is relatively new to Pacific Primary, but a veteran when it comes to her love of (and work with) music, children, and families. She grew up and still resides in Oakland, and although she wasn't sure about becoming a commuter, the school's philosophy (particularly its emphasis on and support of music) easily won her over.

Kate offers an eclectic mix of body movements and instrumentation to her instruction (from the guitar to the auto-harp and many more), but her favored instruments are human voices, big and small. The satisfaction she receives when the children start internalizing the songs (and repeating or reinterpreting them at home) validates her career calling.

Kate is also passionate about the power of peace, and the ability of group song and participation to instill the principles of peace: "I've spent a lot of the last year thinking about peace and the role of music, and it comes down to this: the power of a community singing together cannot be overestimated. Peace requires agreement and compromise; group singing is no different. We need to agree on the song and on the key; we need to share a common steady beat, and start at the same time. We will breathe together; our voices and bodies will move together. For the length of one song, we will jump into the same boat and row together for a while. In this way the Music and Movement program at Pacific Primary gives students a hands-on practice of peace pretty much every day of the week."

-- Dan Tursi

Orange Sun School music teacher Kevin Gerzevitz has shaped Pacific Primary culture for 10 years. Kevin grew up in Ann Arbor, Michigan and became interested in music at age 5. His brother was taking piano lessons and he got so excited that he figured out how to play on his own.

After graduating from University of Michigan's School of Music, Kevin began performing gigs on the piano, and teaching piano lessons. He moved to San Francisco in 1991, and continued gigging in the Bay Area, eventually picking up the bass and the accordion, as well as composing/producing music for local audio company Earwax Productions. Kevin completed Level I of the Orff-Schulwerk training at Mills College in 2003, and began teaching preschool and elementary music classes in Marin County. Kevin studied with beloved Pacific Primary music teacher, Heidi Tzortzis, and joined her in 2008 when the Orange Sun School opened.

Kevin is inspired by observing the themes that emerge as children learn and play in their classrooms, and seeks connections to those themes through songs, games, and dance. In his view, building connections is a pathway to peace. "I believe that peace can occur when people see one another with kindness, love and respect for differences. We must have compassion and share the intention to resolve problems nonviolently. Oftentimes, achieving peace is not easy and requires courage, great struggle and hard work. Several of our peace songs resonate with these ideas."

-- Janis Greenspan

Letter from the Board President | Nina Kim Schultz, Co-President

As a leader in Early Childhood Education for the past 43 years, Pacific Primary continues to believe our mission today is as clear and important as ever: to nurture our children socially, emotionally, and intellectually, and to create a community where peace, kindness, and diversity are celebrated. It is this community of teachers, students, and families that helps Pacific Primary live into this mission as the world rapidly changes.

It seems that recently, whenever I open a news site, I brace myself -- did anything happen in the 8 hours, or even 5 minutes, since I last checked? It is easy to want to react from a place of fear or anger. However, all I have to do is walk into either of our school sites to feel hope and to be reminded of what works. I see children working together, and teachers patiently scaffolding. I see discussions on self awareness, expressing feelings, embracing differences, celebrating diversity, using "power voices" to advocate, and creating peace where there was conflict. You can feel how hard the children work and how much they care, not just for each other, but for their broader community through their discussions, play, songs and art. I am thankful that this school not only provides our children with a safe and nurturing environment, but also encourages empathy and action beyond our bubble.

Watching the work of our two- to six- year olds can help us adults reset, and remind us to act from a place of positive intention, creativity and love. Each day, the joy and excitement that our children bring and the energy and consistency our teachers bring are reminders that no matter what is happening in the world, here, there are people helping and minds growing, creating a ripple effect that goes beyond our classrooms. I know many alumni parents who still talk about drawing strength from that "Pacific Primary feeling" and their alumni community.

In the last two years, we have come together from both school sites to sing for peace and love. Parents continue to pour their talents, time and energy into maintenance days, the auction, and their year-round volunteer committees, allowing Pacific Primary to fully implement its many programs. Teachers like Mahroushka, who celebrates her 20th anniversary this year, are not only our children's guides -- they help us be better parents. I still think about our Penguin teachers now, four years later, when battling bedtimes and mealtimes. Our directors Belann and Lynn are the glue, working tirelessly with parents, staff and children alike, while navigating poor air quality, ICE policies, and changing San Francisco demographics.

Having the opportunity to send our children to Pacific Primary has been a blessing I feel even more today than when we began four years ago. My older son loves to come back to school as do generations of graduates, including those who are current parents. One of our founders, Kris, still volunteers regularly at the school. I got to meet one of the founding board members, Patty Robertson, at our wine event in the fall, who talked about how Pacific Primary was the first full-time preschool option for women who were beginning to enter the workplace. There is a sense of history, community and acceptance you can count on when you walk through the doors. Our children do not see the same barriers some adults do when it comes to gender, race, background and wealth. They understand how to solve problems and come from a place of curiosity. These are skills, the ones beyond the literacy and math, that are woven into play, that make the legacy of the school so essential.

2017-2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Nina Kim Schultz".

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Pacific Primary-isms | Compiled by Jennifer Hoh & Jessica Marmor Shaw

Teacher Sayings (and Songs!) That Work Wonders in the Classroom

“Talk to me like you know I’m going to help you.”

That’s how Eric Wilson, Lead Teacher in the YSS Sandpiper classroom, responds when kids’ requests sound more like demands. (A much-used version of this for the calls of “More!” during lunch: “Talk to me like you know I’m going to feed you.”)

“All of our bodies and brains need different things to help us be ready to learn, play, and make friends.”

OSS Penguin Lead Teacher Saeda Fuller uses this phrase to emphasize how each child/person is a different, diverse learner. This helps them begin to talk about and chart “tools” that can help - from gross motor play, to breathing, to small ‘fidget’ toys.

“The Rainbow Road, and the Rocky Road.”

In the YSS Gray Whale classroom, Lead Teacher Anna Vongvixay developed this analogy about how we choose to respond to situations. With practice, everyone -- teachers and students -- are learning to take the Rainbow Road, instead of the Rocky Road.

“Zip it, lock it, put it in your pocket, hand up like a rocket!”

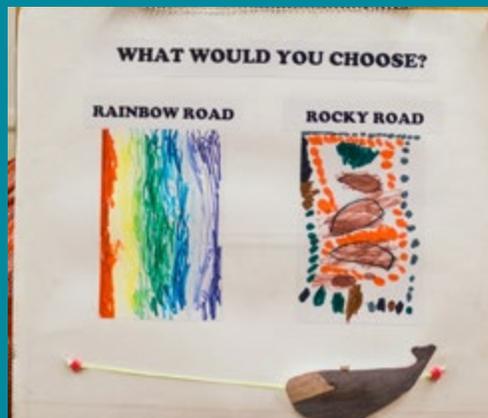
On field trips, teachers use this saying while crossing a street, so that the children remain quiet, attentive, and raise their hands to be easily seen.

“Make bubble gloves.”

Teachers remind kids to use this visual cue to ensure that their hands are soapy and squeaky clean when washing them.

“Team work! Team work! We can do it together!”

Another wonderful saying from Saeda-- the Penguins use it when a group of children are struggling with a task, and like magic, it transforms their pushing/pulling/arguing into a collaborative effort.



“We were keeping track of the many languages the children were exposed to in their families and at Pacific Primary,” longtime Pacific Primary teacher Sarah Watkins says. “I suggested that we all have one common language, the language of the heart.” Sarah wrote the following song to express Pacific Primary values and help calm the children down:

**The language of Friendship is sharing and caring,
Solving our problems by using our words.
I take a breath (take a breath and let it out with an Ah)
I feel my power.
I remember my kindness.**