



San Francisco
January 2010

Education: It Takes a City



Dear Advocates for
San Francisco's Children,

Welcome to the first e-newsletter of San Francisco's *New Day for Learning* Initiative. We plan to use this forum to keep you posted on the work we are

doing. As many of you know I have made a transition from my work at the Department of Children, Youth and Families, and before that Coleman Advocates for Children to direct this exciting initiative. San Francisco has had the privilege of being one of only two cities in the country to receive a grant from the C.S. Mott Foundation to be a demonstration site for its groundbreaking [New Day for Learning](#) report. This inaugural newsletter describes some of the basic elements of the New Day philosophy. For me personally, this has been a logical progression incorporating what I have learned about children's services, youth development, family support and community empowerment, while placing a greater focus on learning and schools. I believe that schools are the major children's institutions in our communities – the institutions that can most impact their lives. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues on this endeavor.

Margaret Brodtkin

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New Day for Learning Highlights To Date

San Francisco's *New Day for Learning* Initiative is a collaboration among the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), the Mayor's Office, the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF), and the San Francisco School Alliance. Some highlights of the first phase of work include:

- **Selecting 5 schools with high need students to be our “early adopters”** and which will serve as learning laboratories for the New Day philosophy – Hillcrest Elementary, Revere K-8, Burton High School, Muir Elementary and Drew Elementary.
- **Researching and visiting model schools**, including a 16-member delegation to visit New Vision schools, Harlem Children's Zone and Children's Aid Society partnerships in NYC public schools.
- **Partnering with the Department of Public Health, Edgewood Children's Services and Instituto Familiar de la Raza** to include 3 *New Day for Learning* schools be part of the Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative, to bring new mental health resources to the schools.
- **Strengthening community partnerships with New Day schools**, such as having community conveners work with each school, creating a network of environmental organizations to support hands-on learning, working with the Chamber of Commerce to increase internships for students, and connecting schools to services provided by city departments.
- **Co-convening a CBO Advisory Committee to the SFUSD** to address issues related to school-CBO partnerships, coordinating services at the school site level, and the teaching of 21st century skills.
- **Creating a cohort of after-school providers** working on alignment of after-school with the school day.

We have received grants from the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund to work collaboratively with the Pre-K to 3 Initiative and the SF Foundation for general support and work on community schools; and have a grant pending with the Packard Foundation on summer learning.

School Board Charges New Day with Community School Planning

On December 8, the SF School Board unanimously approved a [New Day for Learning resolution](#) embracing the goals of New Day. Resolution highlights:

WHEREAS: The *New Day for Learning* sees schools as just one of the places in the community where learning and student success can occur, and emphasizes strategies that incorporate the arts, technology, service learning, and apprenticeships to provide students with opportunities to enrich their education and connect to the adult world; and

WHEREAS: The mission of the *New Day for Learning* is to “build a network of Community schools with deep, focused partnerships based on shared outcomes for student success. BE IT.....RESOLVED: That the *New Day for Learning* propose a plan that would promote full-service Community Schools and partnerships better aligned with the educational goals of the District.

Hillcrest Elementary Exemplifies New Day Philosophy



In this photo: Hillcrest parents making fliers to advertise the Mexican Folk Dance classes they will teach after-school. Parent engagement and extended learning are hallmarks of *New Day for Learning*

Five years ago, Hillcrest was considered by many parents to be a school to avoid. Today it is one of the city’s most active and diverse schools, thriving with a student population of 498 students. There are still challenges,

but *Principal Richard Zapien* has embraced the community school vision with enthusiasm, dozens of concrete services and a firm belief in the power for positive change that a focus on deep, caring relationships between families, staff, students and community partners can create.

Hillcrest demonstrates 4 pillars of *New Day for Learning*:

- **Parent and Community Engagement** includes active parent groups, leadership development training (run through Coleman Advocates for Children), a staffed open computer lab for parents, a Father's support group, a weekly food bank and snack program run by parents, parenting classes and family literacy workshops, stipended parent-led enrichment in after school and a Family Resource Center where parents are invited to drop in anytime. A tri-lingual newsletter full of information about what is happening at the school and in the community goes out weekly.
- **Wraparound Services** include a range of mental health services, a partnership with SF Food Bank and Single Stop to help qualify families for subsidies such as food stamps and health insurance, educational advocacy and a growing information and referral network to help with multiple family needs.
- **Redefining Student Success:** teachers are working to facilitate learning experiences that are authentic and personally engaging. During a weekly teacher collaboration (TCM) and other Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, teachers have begun to create grade-level expectations for learning outcomes. Teachers are ensuring that there is a vertical alignment of standards across the grades and that students are conscious of these standards. End-of-the-year portfolio presentations are one of the highlights of the focus on new types of assessments.
- **Extended Learning:** Six after school staff begin their days at 11:00 a.m. in order to help create a warm environment in the cafeteria during lunchtime and a variety of structured activities on the yard. These same staff members also meet regularly with school day grade level teams to ensure that the curriculum in the classroom is being supported after school, creating a seamless learning day for students. School day and after school teachers also share behavior plans and other information that will help ensure both academic success and the emotional and social well-being of each child.

The Hillcrest school leadership is also looking at how schools can be given the autonomy and flexibility to use resources and staff more effectively, giving them the ability to create a stronger school community. This is emerging as an important theme for *New Day for Learning*.

Says Stefanie Eldred, the Hillcrest Community School Coordinator (funded through a California Department of Education Healthy Start Grant, one of only a few in the state) "We're committed to the community school model, but until we became a *New Day for Learning* school, we felt like we were on our own in terms of how to both progress and sustain what we have. Now we have the opportunity to collaborate and learn from others committed to the same goal. We feel we are part of a movement."

Education Update from Inside the Beltway

On the federal level, 2009 included many opportunities and insights into the priorities of President Barack Obama's administration. For education, the biggest indication came in the more than \$100 billion education package passed last year as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). States have to agree to four "assurances" in order to be eligible to receive this education funding. (California has just passed legislation making the state eligible.) The "assurances" are:

- Creating a robust P-16 data system that tracks individual student performance and fosters continuous improvement;
- Developing college and career-ready standards and assessments for all students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities;
- Improving teacher effectiveness and placing our best teachers in our most challenging schools; and
- Intervening effectively in chronically low-performing schools.

These "assurances" are seen by many as a blueprint for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), known as the No Child Left Behind Act. In 2010, all eyes will be on whether the reauthorization of ESEA will take place (most say it will be postponed for a year), and how states and districts fare in competitive programs included within ARRA, such as the Race to the Top and Investing in Innovation programs.

While policy decisions can seem a million miles away from the work being done in classrooms and communities day to day, there are critical decisions being made that can directly impact young people — decisions that should be informed by the voice of people like you — educators, parents, community and business leaders, young people and concerned citizens. We will work to keep you informed on the happenings Inside the Beltway! Stay tuned!

How You Can Help: Enrichment Programs Needed at Drew Elementary

Charles Drew Preparatory Academy, a Pre-K – 3rd grade elementary school is looking for community partners to help expand enrichment programs for their students and the families of students. Drew would like to be able to offer classes in dance and body movement, visual arts, theatre arts, cooking, music, and science, as well as opportunities for more field trips. Drew Elementary is located in the Bay View, two blocks off Third Street. **If your organization has a program or service that might be offered at Drew either after school or over the weekend, please contact Margaret Brodkin at brodkinm@sfusd.edu, or 355-2202 to discuss the possibilities.**

New Day Opens a New Office



A New Day Open House was attended on November 6th by dozens of community and city department partners. Pictured at left are Margaret Brodkin, *New Day for Learning* Director, Molly Matull of the DCYF Citizen's Advisory Committee, Andrew Russo of the San Francisco Family Support Network, Jane Kim of the SFUSD School Board, Ellie Rossiter of Parents for Public Schools, and Stefanie Eldred of Hillcrest Elementary.

Our office is at 135 Van Ness, an administrative office building of the SFUSD, in room 117. Come by and visit.

Happenings



Presentation on 21st Century Skills- sponsored by the CBO-SFUSD Advisory Committee. Guest speaker will be Bernie Trilling from the Oracle Foundation, the partner for 21st Century Skills and author of *21st Century Skills: Learning for Life in our Times*. January 25th, 3:00pm; Board of Education Board Room. Call Margaret Brodkin if you wish to attend.

Symposium on Community Schools – February 25th, featuring nationally recognized community school leaders from Portland, Long Beach, and the Bay Area. This will be an all-day working meeting to begin to develop a community schools plan for San Francisco. Space is limited, so contact Melanie Hopson at hopsonm@sfusd.edu if you wish to attend.

Community Convener meetings on how CBO's can partner with schools to teach 21st century skills – Call or e-mail Tracy Brown to learn about the meeting in your neighborhood: tracy@dcyf.org, 554-8960.

How to Reach Us

Margaret Brodkin

brodkinm@sfusd.edu

Phone 415.355.2202 x 1574

Jamie Harris

harrisj@sfusd.edu

Phone 415.355.2202 x 1573

Melanie Hopson

hopsonm@sfusd.edu

Phone 415.355.2202 x1575

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