

A Letter from Joy Warner

My family visited Disney World this year for the first time since Eli was born. We had the typical Disney experience witnessing pure and utter joy on the faces of our children. The Disney themes (Magic, Believe, The Place Where Dreams Come True) consistently took my mind and heart back to CCS (now all grown up – we'll have to get used to saying "CSD"). People tell me that when they walk in the doors at our school, they can feel the love and joy resonate in the halls. They tell me it feels different than every other school they have experienced. Children immediately feel at home. Here's just one example: a mother recently emailed me that after new student screening, her child said he felt like rolling down the window of the car and screaming, "This is going to be the greatest school ever!"

As you all know, many hours of dedicated, hard work go into every magical event from a class performance to service learning to excellent test scores to impressive learning to fundraising success. Our belief in this school and these students gives us the resolve to dig in and do our part to make it happen on a daily basis. We are now enjoying the fruits of our hard work and belief in the school and its philosophy. Our level of teacher applicant quality this year surpassed all other years. We were inundated with multiple impressive candidates for employment and they told us repeatedly that they wanted to work at our school because of the excellent reputation, the rigorous curriculum, the philosophy, the vision, the parent support, the commitment to the whole child, the school climate and the level of professionalism reflected by our current staff. Professors and researchers in the field of education are impressed with our implementation of sound, research-based, pedagogical practices that make learning more meaningful and effective for our students. We are continuously contacted by experts in the community and at colleges and universities asking to do research on our school, to work with our teachers and to learn from our model. There is certainly something to be said for students who learn to love learning rather than just memorizing and jumping through the hoops of school. Virtually every facet of our school is made possible because of the leadership, hard work and generosity of our staff and our families.

We are now on the home stretch to expand through high school, and I have included in this letter some important details about our plan and the fundraising needs to make this happen. As many of you know, we have had a team of over twenty members working on the development of our high school vision in the past two years, including university members and other specialists in the various fields being researched. We have read MANY books and articles on the subject. We have visited high schools and have talked with countless upper grade experts. We purposely added two new Board members with college and high school experience. We have met with college admissions personnel to discuss how to ensure that our students are competitive in the college admissions process. We have delved into the complexity of high school curriculum and we have explored some important issues surrounding the challenge of not only preparing our students for college but also preparing our students to be successful in college, as well as life. We have identified and made contact with several college experts who are willing to guide us with curriculum and college admissions processes. After two years of preparation, research and meetings, we are now fully prepared for the challenge. And most importantly, we are thrilled that Dr. Ralph Pillsbury will join our administrative team as leader of CSD High School!

As we discuss every year, parent participation in fundraising is critical. As a charter school, CSD receives public funds for the administrative costs of school operations such as teacher salaries, learning materials for students, utilities and lease payments (we receive the same amount as local public schools for these operating expenses). However, we do not receive public funds for capital expenses, which is a significant part of our annual budget. This includes capital start-up expenses associated with our school such as land, buildings, renovations, classroom furniture and equipment. Public charter schools ONLY get the operating expenses portion of public school funding. If we received the same capital funds that other public schools receive, our funding would be significantly higher and we would have less need for fundraising. In addition, our economy is struggling and we are all anxiously awaiting a turn towards a more positive economic climate. While we wait, precious funds get cut from education daily and schools are in crisis. We have been able to deflect this stress from our students and are confident that we have not allowed this economic crisis to negatively impact their learning. However, we need your help! In these tough times, we ask that you ponder this challenge as a family and set goals for supporting this important journey for our students. In addition to their dedication to quality instruction, our teachers and staff have foregone much deserved and much needed pay raises by choice to show their commitment to the progression of our school journey. These are challenging times and those of us who can will have to carry an even bigger load to make our high school happen.

Each year, the funds we raise support our general annual instructional and operational needs (for items such as furniture, computers, books and other instructional supplies, educational software, and staff development) as well as helping us pay down debt incurred in upfitting the elementary and middle school space. In addition, each year we save funds to use toward the high school building fund. Please reference "Attachment A" opposite the rendering for further details.

At the May 19 meeting to announce our high school plans, we shared the architectural rendering of the high school. Our plan includes skylights, to bring daylighting into the interior of the building, and a full-sized gymnasium that we can use for our middle and high school sports programs. High school will also require expenditures on stocking the media center, technology, and the equipment necessary to conduct state of the art science labs (to name a few).

We will borrow \$4,000,000 in order to upfit the high school space. But in keeping with our plan of controlled growth in order to not compromise our educational philosophy, we will continue to expand by only one grade level per year. Consequently, with this new loan, the related expenses for equipping the high school, and our ongoing needs in elementary and middle school, we need a sustained fundraising effort. This year, in a very difficult economic environment, we achieved our fundraising goal of \$350,000. According to our budget, if we can achieve comparable fundraising each year for a sustained period of four years, we will be largely out of the woods. Although we will always rely on fundraising to support our program, after that period we can use fundraising primarily to replenish and expand our existing resources (which could ultimately include an expanded Arts Wing in the high school space).



Pave the Way

Please review the attached return form regarding the Pave the Way Campaign and help participate in achieving our \$350,000 fundraising goal.

Our school fundraisers for the year will be:

1. Annual Pave the Way Campaign
2. Golf Tournament in May

As you consider your yearly contribution, keep in mind that CSD is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Please consult your tax advisor about the tax benefits associated with your contribution. We will continue to post updates to our Annual Fund Campaign on our website at www.CSDNC.org so that you can see the progress toward our \$350,000 goal.

I recall about 8 years ago telling a friend of my grand designs for the perfect school, and my friend said "Joy, you're such a dreamer." Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "You must do the thing that you think you cannot do," and her words resonate with me beyond imagination. I believe we are all dreamers, and if we all work together and each family takes on some of the burden, we can truly "Pave the Way." We can build a high school to complete the educational experience that will enable our children to move forward in this world and perpetuate change, growth and improvement. Next year, we will have over 450 families on this journey working side by side to make our dreams become reality, but we can only make our dreams become a reality if we all work together.

Thank you for your continued support to help us **Pave the Way** to a bright CSD future!

With much love and appreciation,



Joy K. Warner
Director



Attachment A

Fundraising Accomplishments at CSD

- Five portable laptop carts as well as a fully stocked tech lab and classroom projectors and computers
- Over 50 new computers for the coming year to increase our tech lab capacity, add a smaller tech lab to our media center, add a small language lab, and additional laptops for our laptop cart that serves middle school and also increases laptop and computer availability for elementary students
- Specialized computer software that targets enhanced learning such as Rosetta Stone, Larsons Math, and Fast ForWord
- An amazing developmentally appropriate playground with cutting edge equipment
- Over 16,000 books in our elementary and middle school literacy lab and media center and that doesn't include the thousands of books that reside in our classrooms for easy access to students and teachers
- A stimulating and exciting schedule of field trip and service learning opportunities that all students get to experience at CSD including overnight trips in 5th and 8th grades
- A bus to transport our students safely to all destinations
- Multiple guest speakers, storytellers, musicians, and other artists sharing their expertise and gifts with our students to enhance learning
- A fully stocked science program with top notch equipment that allows our students to do excellent research, experiments and science labs
- Opportunities for our students to participate in a full sports program, academic clubs such as Odyssey of the Mind and Math Counts, after school musical theatre and enrichment classes in addition to the programs that they have access to throughout the school day.
- A new administrator on board a full year prior to the opening of high school to allow us to adequately prepare for our first year of high school: Welcome Dr. Ralph Pillsbury as the administrator of our high school program!
- Well stocked classrooms that are so impressive that many applicants come to apply for a job simply because they long to have a classroom stocked with what they need to effectively teach
- A foreign language program that begins in kindergarten
- An extensive staff development program that enables our teachers to stay on the cutting edge of educational research and pedagogy
- A fully staffed, varied, and well equipped arts program at a time when arts are considered frills
- A professionally designed and equipped Black Box Theatre
- A substantial "nest egg" that will allow us to obtain the loan to construct the high school
- In addition to the above, fundraising takes pressure off of our operating budget so that we can decrease student to teacher ratio and ensure that students receive appropriate amounts of individualized instruction (we have a higher staff count per pupil than any other charter school in the state).



A donation of **\$100,000** allows the donor the privilege of naming the high school **gymnasium**. The gym will be utilized by our high school as well as middle school teams and likely to house many memorable community events.



The **\$50,000** campaign level gives the donor the honor of naming the beautiful new high school **media center**.



A donor wanting to support the school at the **\$20,000** level will be given the opportunity to name the new high school's **art room**.



Donors at the **\$5,000** level may opt for a polished **granite paver** to feature an engraved quote, dedication, emblem or company logo or opt to have a sign above one of the remaining elementary classrooms.



A donation at the **\$1,000** level entitles the donor to an **engraved brick** to be featured in the new high school patio and gathering knee-wall or in the elementary and middle school bricked walkway. Each additional brick is \$500.

Please PRINT the wording to be engraved on your brick i.e. Jay Smith Class of 2015 (24 characters per line, maximum 3 lines)

I'd/We'd like more time to decide on wording.

Wording for \$5,000+ campaign levels will be obtained later.

Commitment

I/We plan to support Community School of Davidson throughout its fundraising efforts this year and beyond.

Donation

Our family/business would like to donate \$_____ to the '09/'10 "Pave the Way" fundraising campaign.

Payment

Enclosed is a check made payable to CSD.

I/We pledge this amount paying in whole or by installments prior to April 30, 2010.

I/We will pay by credit card online at www.CSDNC.org using the PayPal link on the school's website.

I/We will be donating _____ stock.

My employer, _____, will match our funds in whole or in part.

I/We would like to contribute to an endowment fund.

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

E-mail

A tax receipt will be sent to confirm the donation.



Thank you for helping us pave the way towards a brighter tomorrow!

Please return the completed form by August 1, to:
Community School of Davidson, Attn: Joy Warner
"Pave the Way" Campaign
565 Griffith Street
Davidson, NC 28036-9396

