

SPECIALISTS NEWSLETTER

FALL 2022

VISUAL

ART



LIBRARY



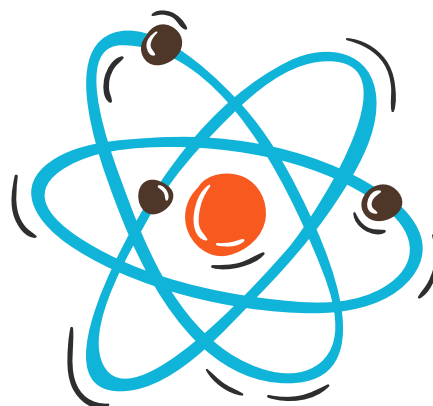
MUSIC



**CREATIVE
MOVEMENT**



PE



STEM

VISUAL ARTS WITH SETH

AROUND THE STUDIO...

- The **Apple Trees** are immersed in foundational work right now: cutting out simple shapes, primary color mixing, and making their own paint colors, which we will eventually connect to their identity work. They're now standing up to paint to get used to working with brushes. This frees up their bodies more than sitting at a traditional easel.
- **Dragon Blood Trees** will get a lot of time in the print shop this year (finally!) where they will be playing around with the Intaglio press doing some relief printing. We will be using carvings to discuss color mixing in a different medium by overlaying colors with transparency. They are also already hard at work on their class logo.
- All of the **Weeping Willows** have been filling up the sketchbooks we made with drawings and musings, and we've been making custom "greens" that will be painted onto large willow branches on the tree in their classroom. This class is most excited for a new zine library! Our first zine article will feature a "Fun Fact About Me" that they will write copy for and illustrate.



- We are reinforcing foundational work with the **Palm Trees** like tracing around simple shapes to create a color wheel. This solidifies their understanding that green goes between yellow and blue. We will soon be working on self portraits and creating their class logo.
- The **Rainbow Eucalyptus** class is very engaged in drawing the proportions of a face so every month, we are going to make self-portraits with a different medium. This month, we are working with oil pastels. This will be a great foundation for their culmination and study share work later in the year.
- It's all about building and working with their hands for the **Sakura** students. Using wood, we are getting ready to create 3D projects for their tree story, as well as delve into positive/negative space collage work. We will eventually move into atmospheric perspective and how to create the illusion of space on a flat surface.



WHAT'S INSPIRING SETH?

"I'm looking forward to the new David Bowie film; the artist Josef Scharl's landscape paintings; and I recently got turned onto The Cardigans and am enjoying their album "First Band on the Moon."

CREATIVE MOVEMENT WITH DALIDA

IN THE STUDIO...

Since the classes are named after trees this year, we are focusing on connectedness: connection to other people, how body language connects to our thoughts, and how we communicate without words. For example, when you are exploring on the dance floor and a person gives you an invitation with a hand or gesture, how do you welcome that or accept it?

With the younger students, we work on how to direct the force of energy using their local motor skills. Through various games and movement activities, we explore problem solving, communication, and time management. These age groups also break into smaller groups who learn to create a movement piece that has a structure (beginning, middle, and end) which helps them understand how to choreograph a dance and use the space. This builds their confidence, creativity, and understanding. Through these creations, they also learn the language of movement as if they are learning musical notes.



We expand on this game as the students get older so that by the time they are in upper grades, they are able to create a full story. From these stories, they choreograph dances that we present at the Sings. It's clear that classroom dynamics come into the auditorium too, which is a result of the arts integration in our school. Some students have an easier time communicating with their bodies rather than their words so we work on how to manage these tools for different abilities. Since children build up energy throughout the day, it's important to learn how to channel that energy into creative movement. We use our dance vocabulary, making sure that it is intentional and purposeful.

WHAT'S INSPIRING DALIDA?

"The Mark Morris Dance Group is one of my biggest inspirations, and they're coming to LA in October. I'm really excited about being part of their backstage crew to watch their rehearsals of the new piece they're premiering in LA."

MUSIC WITH CATHLEEN

IN THE STUDIO...

- The **Weeping Willows** are playing on the xylophones and glockenspiels, learning the C pentatonic scale, and exploring the systems of music. We've been especially focused on the element of rhythm and how it impacts the inherent "feel" of a piece. This entails a lot of mallet work to really experience how rhythm feels.
- **Sakura** students are utilizing barred instruments but in a slightly more advanced way. It is by playing these instruments that the elements of music theory are taught. These students are playing in descending thirds and fourths to create the sound of a waterfall which is found in Japanese music.
- All 4th graders, both Sakura and **Rainbow Eucalyptus**, are learning the basic notes on a recorder. As a class, we are imitating and improvising to explore this phase of creating music. The students have been refining their barred instruments mallet technique by playing different borduns. They focus on hand position and traveling the keyboard.



- A main component of the Orff Schulwerk method is movement, and we've been exploring that extensively with the **Apple Trees**. We recently enjoyed the "Apple Tree, Apple Tree" song and game that reinforces steady beat and form. Some children become a tree and some become worms that travel in and out of their rings while they sing.
- The **Palm Trees** have been exploring music through games like parachute play and reversing direction dictated by musical shifts. They have enjoyed rhythmic echoing clap backs using hand drums which reinforces the imitation phase of how we learn to create music.
- Orff allows for numerous opportunities for differentiation, and the **Dragon Blood Trees** (who are using sheet music to play instrumental pieces) are learning two different, multi-part songs: "Four Square" in six parts and "Springbok" in eight parts.



WHAT'S INSPIRING CATHLEEN?

"I recently attended a weekend mindfulness retreat in Oceanside that was restorative and introduced me to some interesting practices."

LIBRARY WITH KATIE

AMONG THE SHELVES...

- **Rainbow Eucalyptus** are understanding library systems and growing as independent readers.
- The **Weeping Willows** are building skills at sounding out, rereading, and solving words. They are "scooping up" phrases, and using punctuation to read smoothly and with meaning.
- The **Sakura** class has been honing skills for Literature Circle work by focusing on tools for talk, having deep conversations, asking audacious questions, & recognizing an author's moves.
- Our **Palm Tree** friends are working on building good reading habits, sliding through sounds, rereading to think deeper, and reading more, more, more for longer periods of time.
- Library lessons for the **Dragon Blood Trees** are supporting their Memoir unit by exploring different styles of memoir, looking at how authors use emotion, descriptive sensory language, and dialogue to add compelling narrative to their essays.
- The **Apple Trees** have been learning how to pick out, check out, and take care of their library books. We'll be talking about how we read the world, use books to learn about our world, and connect their thinking to letter recognition, understanding characters, and story retelling.



LIBRARY NOTES

All classes have been celebrating LatinX culture, and banned books. These are some of our favorite reads from the fall.



Class Library Days

Students have opportunities to visit the library throughout the week. Below are their scheduled class times and best days to return books.

Apple Trees - Wednesday

Palm Trees - Tuesday

Weeping Willows - Wednesday

Rainbow Eucalyptus - Tues/Thurs

Sakura - Monday

Dragon Blood Trees- Monday

Please remember to keep your library books in a safe place at home and in backpacks.



WHAT'S INSPIRING KATIE?

"There is an incredible book called **All Thirteen** about the cave rescue of the Thai boys' soccer team that shouldn't be missed. It has four medals on its cover, including a rare Newbery Honor for a Nonfiction book!"

PHYSICAL ED WITH JUAN

ON THE YARDS...

- The **Dragon Blood Trees** are deepening their problem solving skills through team oriented games like Medic Ball and River Crossing. There is also a main focus on cardio exercises, not only so they get accustomed to high-energy work but also to reinforce the importance/benefits of an active lifestyle. This work will be brought full circle when they learn about what happens in their body's cardiovascular system when they exercise.
- The **Palm Trees** have been focusing on physical activities that promote self awareness, good sportsmanship, and gross motor movements. They engage in activities such as themed relay races, obstacle courses, and ball games such as Temple Run which reinforces spacial awareness.
- Many of the **Apple Trees** are still easing into their body's capabilities so they play games for fun and to learn the vocabulary of their gross motor movements like skipping, twisting, & sprinting. We also focus on safe play with games like Octopus and Red-Rover.



- **Weeping Willows** have had a lot of fun with games that strengthen their classroom as a whole like Who's Missing. This builds up their awareness of every classmate, even when one is hiding behind a wall. Turtle Tag is another favorite that builds endurance and encourages teammates to communicate and ask for help.
- The **Sakura** are diving deeply into one sport of their choice. The children are then broken up into groups in which each student is assigned a role: stretching/warm up specialists, physical trainers, tactical coaches, skills coaches, and rules & equipment managers. We rotate the sport once we have explored it completely.
- **Rainbow Eucalyptus** love games focused on agility, whether they use it in the game of Pac-man or Capture the Flag. Invasion games have been a great medium for this group to strengthen their collaboration, problem solving, and quick feet!

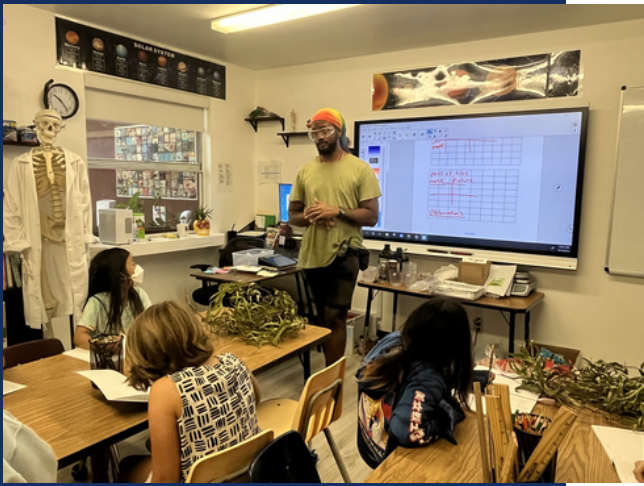
WHAT'S INSPIRING JUAN?

"Lately I've been motivated to change my daily mindset by waking up earlier to get a good head start on my day. It gives me positive energy and time to plan for a productive day."

STEM (THE "E" IS FOR ENVIRONMENT) WITH CHRIS

IN THE LAB...

- The **Sakura** are studying the sensory systems of animals- how animals use sight and how bees use their senses to pollinate. We will soon be moving into a study on morse code and learning about coding. We will end the year with green energy and forces of nature.
- The **Apple Trees** are observing and learning about the plants and animals around campus. We will soon be looking at how we interact with our environment, how weather affects what we wear, and how we protect ourselves from harsh conditions. In the Spring, we will study the forces of push and pull to coincide with the CCS Pan Derby!
- The **Palm Trees** are studying... palm trees! We are examining how they survive and defend themselves against environmental stressors. Next is a study of the sun and moon which will connect with our study of light and sound. We will end the year exploring water- its properties, the water cycle, and the water on our planet.



- We are learning about wildfires and their significance to the ecosystem with the **Rainbow Eucalyptus** which will evolve into a study of climate change. We are then off to Space Camp to study the qualities of planets in our solar system before we move onto the ecosystem of LA and the life cycle of its' animals.
- The **Dragon Blood Trees** are immersed in thinking about gravity- how it works within our solar system, how it affects roots and branches on Earth, and how it's related to all the different sections and ecosystems of the planet. We will end the year learning about the chemistry of Earth by testing and identifying properties of natural materials.
- Our **Weeping Willows** students will dig deeply into the relationship of their namesake and the LA River, learning about how a plant's environment shapes its life. We will also embark on a study of matter which will conclude with the students building something based on the different materials we've explored.



WHAT'S INSPIRING CHRIS?

"I've been really inspired by the work citizen scientists have done to contribute to the scientific community. They have helped to identify new species of plants, animals, and fungi and have recorded observations of animal behavior. There are only so many scientists so their work is really valuable to data!"

FALL 2022

WOODWORKING WITH CARLOS

IN THE WOODSHOP...

I've been working a lot with the Dragon Blood Trees recently, because we are building new easels for all the students to use. I meet with them a few days a week and we measure, cut, and construct the new easels from scratch. Next month, I am going to work with the Sakura class to build the Little Free Library that they've been designing. Once that is complete, we will put it up outside CCS for the entire neighborhood. The Palm Trees are excited to refurbish the lemonade stand in the North Yard this year, so I will be working with them on updating the structure and adding some designs. There will be a lot of woodworking opportunities this year, and I'm looking forward to working with all the classes on projects that inspire them.

WHAT'S INSPIRING CARLOS?

" In the middle of my senior year in high school, a teacher came up to me and told me that I could do anything I want in life. I always think about that teacher and this message which still inspires me."

These specialists provide myriad access points to a classroom's curriculum, making hard to grasp subjects within reach. They are an integral part of a CCS education and seamlessly embody our mission:

Children's Community School is a progressive school dedicated to teaching children to think for themselves, collaborate successfully with others, and take responsibility for their own education in a safe and loving environment.

CCS embraces the principles of diversity, self-determination and participation in democracy. We foster critical thinking, compassion, and respect for each student, their community and their world.

