



## *The Way of Mindful Education*

Dear Parents,

We have been very lucky to have Charley Allen visiting many of our classrooms each week to conduct mindfulness sessions with our students. Charley set forth the perfect ground work for our mindfulness initiative, including introducing us to Cary Saltgaver, an educator who specializes in bringing mindfulness to schools and students of all ages.

Yesterday, Cary began a sixteen week program in grades TK-6. This is very exciting! It provides an opportunity for students and faculty to experience this program and for the teachers to learn how to conduct these exercises/meditation/mindfulness activities with students now and in the future.

The students love these sessions! They are integrating the practices and we know that over time they will have a profound effect.

Cary will be sending updates each week so that you know what the curriculum is focused on and can discuss it with your child.

Cary was trained to do this work at an institute focused on mindfulness in schools in the Bay Area. The materials/resources that we are using that come out of this institute are:

***The Way of Mindful Education*** by Daniel Rechtschaffen and ***The Mindful Education Workbook - Lessons for Teaching Mindfulness to Students*** by Daniel Rechtschaffen. Both are available on Amazon Smile (a plug for Amazon Smile as it benefits SMS if you enter the SMS Amazon Smile portal at Amazon.com)

To quote from the book about the effect of these practices on students:

"The field of mindfulness in education is young, but the research is already confirming what thousands of teachers and students are learning firsthand. For teachers, mindfulness reduces stress, helps them focus, and makes them happy (Roeser et al, 2013). Students are more emotionally regulated and attentive, and their learning improves. The classrooms are more peaceful, there are fewer conflicts, and kids like each other more (Zoogman et all, 2014).

Of course you can see how this program is a perfect complement to our Catholic school focus on peace building, respect for self and others and a deep belief in the power of prayer and spirituality. Many religious faiths practice mindfulness - mediation! Mindfulness also has to do with being open-minded, something that schools want to cultivate - central to learning is open-mindedness!

Many parents have shared their enthusiasm for this program and interest in it. So, we will keep you updated!

Sincerely,

Mary Ann McQueen