

# EVERY CHILD, ONE VOICE



31st District PTSA

3909 Carpenter Ave.  
Studio City, CA 91604  
(818) 761-4363

## FROM THE DESK OF MR. MARTINEZ

May 2015



### School Charter is renewed for Another Five Years

I am very proud to announce that the Los Angeles School Board of Education recently approved Carpenter's new Charter Petition at their April meeting. What does this mean exactly? It means that the Board confirmed that our school successfully accomplished the great majority of goals defined in our original charter plan.

At the meeting, School Board Member, Monica Ratliff, publicly commended Carpenter for showing growth in the following areas: Improved attendance (students & staff); Reduced student suspensions; and Increased science scores on the California Standardized Test. I was in attendance for the meeting when Mrs. Ratliff made her comments, and I was very grateful to her for recognizing the continued growth we have made.

By approving our new charter plan the board indicates that they support our new plans for the next five years. They are confident that we have the ability to manage ourselves in the areas of leadership, finance, and curriculum. Our 16-member Governance Council has demonstrated the capacity to make decisions on behalf of our school community that are both transparent and consensus driven. As a result, we decided to carry over most of the structure from our original charter.

#### What's new?

Yes, one major significant change in the new charter is the addition of a third innovative program to accompany Singapore Math and Write...From the Beginning. We will be introducing the program *Engineering is Elementary*. This program was developed by the Museum of Science, Boston. It is an excellent, inquiry-based STEM curriculum that teaches students thinking and reasoning skills needed for success. It is built around the engineering design process, and essentially teaches kids how to solve problems systematically... creating skills, optimism, and attitudes important for their futures. It is completely aligned to our school vision of providing an academically challenging program that helps every child meet their full potential while fostering critical thinking, independence and creativity. We are very excited about the addition of this program to our curriculum.

EVERY CHILD, ONE VOICE  
Newsletter  
Wins PTA District Award—  
**Honorable Mention**



Inside this issue:

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#### What's changed?

Yes, the State of California has changed its policies regarding enrollment of non-resident students. As a charter school Carpenter is required to hold a non-resident "wait list" lottery for students interested in attending Carpenter. In our previous charter we were allowed to give priority in that non-resident "wait list" lottery to the siblings of currently enrolled students. That priority was given as a courtesy in an effort to keep families together. However, we will no longer be able to extend that consideration effective August, 2015.



Well not  
yet, but  
almost...

# CARPENTER COMMUNITY CHARTER

## FROM OUR PTA PRESIDENT



As the school year come to an end I am filled with gratitude. For each and every person that volunteers their time. For the money that is donated and for the teachers and staff we are so fortunate to have. This amazing community of people that makes our school a beacon of excellence.

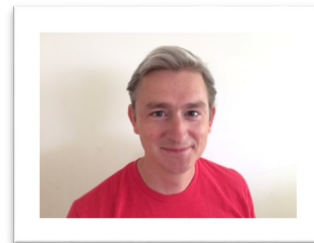
I watch as my son Matteo moves on to middle school with sweet sadness. I know he is ready, yet it's hard to let him go. Then I look at Amalia and I get excited that I have two more years here! Next year I return as PTA President, working along side such wonderful people like my PFC counterpart Amber Schaeffer and her team as well as Joe Martinez and the great staff under his command.

I am looking forward to meeting some new volunteers next year, parents who believe that what we have here is truly special and want to be a part of that. It doesn't happen on its own. It is only because of volunteers that ANY of this happens.

Please think about that this summer. Think about your experience here at Carpenter and let your heart fill with gratitude as well. It will bring a smile to your face and even a tear to your eye. Then think about how you want to make a difference next year.

Have a great summer!

*Anthony Benenati*



## PARENT *David Wood*

I grew up in Sheffield, England and moved to Boston, MA in 1991. I met my wife Dorothy in 1996 and we moved to Los Angeles in 1999. We have two kids, Sadie is in the fifth grade and Benjamin is in second.

After many years of doing jobs I found less than inspiring, I got my personal trainer certification 5 years ago and I have never been happier. Fitness is so important for so many reasons, it's not just about looking good, it's about performing and feeling better both physically and mentally. I get great satisfaction helping my clients achieve that. Here are my thoughts on a few topics I'm always asked about:

**Heart Health:** The most important muscle in the body can be worked out very effectively by simply walking 3 times a week for 30 minutes. The benefits to your overall health are many and varied.

**Weight Loss:** It's a simple equation often made too complicated by people looking to sell diet programs. Calories consumed must be less than calories burned. So unless you can spend all day exercising, what you eat is the most important part of this equation. However, your exercise program should be vigorous and help to build muscle, as that in turn burns more fat. High Intensity Interval Training and/or circuit training with weights are both good options.

**Want to get strong? Don't Neglect the Lower Body:** The biggest muscles, the ones that make us faster and stronger are mainly found below the waist. For the most part, a training session filled with arm work is a waste of time for anything other than filling out the sleeves of your t-shirt. Squats and deadlifts will separate the wheat from the chaff. But make sure you use good form.

**Encourage your kids:** With a seemingly endless amount of screens to keep them occupied, it's more important than ever to get our kids involved in some form of physical activity and teach them why it's so important. It doesn't have to be an organized sport, ride bikes, splash about in a pool, use a trampoline!

## Student artwork—inspired by famous artists



## CARPENTER COMMUNITY CHARTER

### IN THE LIMELIGHT...

*Mrs. Wimmer*  
*Kindergarten Teacher*



#### **You hail from:**

I am from Los Angeles, more specifically Northridge, California. I guess you can say I am a true Valley girl. I attended LAUSD schools since I was in Kindergarten and I graduated from Granada Hills High School. We currently live in Simi Valley

#### **Tell us about your family:**

I am strongly outnumbered, the only female in my family of 5. My husband Brent and I, are constantly wrangling our 3 boys. Sean, our oldest, is currently attending Carpenter and is in the first grade. Christopher (5) will be attending Carpenter next year. He is very excited about coming to school with his older brother and mom. Our youngest, Lucas, just turned one and is busy walking and keeping up with his older brothers. We also have two dogs who are a big part of our family. Needless to say, we are always on the go and rarely have any quiet moments!

#### **Why do you teach?**

I currently teach Kindergarten at Carpenter and have taught the grade level for 10 years. I love the younger ones because you can really see so much growth from the beginning of the year to the end. The wonder and fascination that my student's all have is truly amazing. My most important job for Kindergarten, besides teaching reading, writing, and math, is to make sure that my students start their love of school early and that it continues on throughout their schooling years.

#### **What we don't know about you:**

I am a pretty active person. I grew up playing softball and was captain of my high school team. I won several all city awards during my softball career. In addition to team sports, I am scuba certified, I own a surfboard, and I love to run. Since I have had my boys, I mostly stick to the land sports. I have run many half marathons, my most reason run in San Francisco. I started running to stay healthy, but I found that it is a great way to have some quiet time and let go of stress. Once I start going, I can keep on moving. During spring and summer months, I try to run between 6 and 20 miles per week.

*Can you guess one of Mrs. Wimmer's former places of employment?: a) art gallery, b) LA Zoo , c) pineapple cannery*

(See page 9 for answer.)

### SCIENCE ROCKS!

by *Lori Belatche*



#### **Fun and Super-Easy Experiments for the Summer**

Learning does not have to stop over the summer. With a few supplies you probably have around the house, your children can continue to experience hands-on science.

1. **Raisins in Sprite.** Put 5 or 6 raisins in a clear cup. Add one cup of Sprite or other clear soda. Watch. At the beginning the raisins are on the bottom of the cup, but every few seconds they rise up to the top of the cup and then sink back down? Why? It is all about the states of matter. The raisins are a solid, the soda is a liquid and the bubbles in the soda are a gas. The gas bubbles attach to the outside of the raisin which makes the raisin rise. The bubbles pop and the raisin falls back down. When you are tired of watching the raisins, drink the soda and eat the raisins.

2. **Plant a green bean.** Buy some large green beans at the grocery store. Keep one green bean apart -- do not cook. Carefully open the green bean and see the small seeds inside. The green bean has seeds it is a fruit -- not a vegetable! Carefully remove the seeds and plant them in soil. Keep the soil moist. In a week or two you should have a little green bean plant growing.

3. **Make a rubber egg.** The shell of an egg is made of calcium carbonate -- the same thing of which our bones and shell fish shells are made. The shell reacts with acid leaving behind a "rubber egg". Take a large cup or container that is larger than the egg. Put the egg in the container. Pour vinegar over the egg until the egg is completely covered. Look carefully at the shell. Notice the bubbles on the shell? That is a chemical reaction. The vinegar is chemically changing the shell and in the process the shell is dissolving. After a day or two, the shell should be completely gone. You now have a "rubber" egg.

**See you in the science lab next year!**

# CARPENTER COMMUNITY CHARTER

## A Note from the PFC President

“Thank you to the amazing PFC Board and all the PFC volunteers for all you did this year. Your time, ideas, talents, and determination will be felt for years to come... Parents can and do make a difference and I can't thank you enough!”

– Amber Schaeffer



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ The school year might be winding down, but the **Annual Giving Campaign** is still heating up! We are now 93% of the way to meeting our budget needs for next year (2015-2016) school year. It's not too late to do your part to insure our kids continue to have music, PE, dance, media lab and science...and it's not too late to get an awesome green Carpenter Community Charter magnet for your car. Donate by check or credit card...every dollar counts!

# 93%

## PARTY BOOK PARTIES

Sunset Tour of City Hall – May 22 at 6pm – This one is open to everyone and it's great new way to see the city and learn something about the art and architecture in Downtown Los Angeles!

Coach Marty Comedy Night – May 31<sup>st</sup> at 6pm – Don't miss out on the fun! You'll be laughing for days and see Coach Marty in a whole different way!!

Bike Ride with Mr. Martinez – June 7<sup>th</sup> at 11am – This is fun for the whole family!! The perfect way to end the school year! Only a few spots left!



## SAVE TIME & MAKE CARPENTER MONEY!

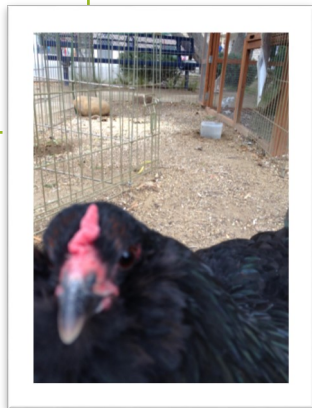


When you shop on **AMAZON**, you can make money for Carpenter! Thank you to those families who chose Carpenter as their charitable organization on Amazon Smiles because you made Carpenter \$811.15 (March/April)! Get your summer, soccer, and camp gear online. How about those upcoming birthday party presents you forgot. And don't forget Father's Day. Click here to start! <https://smile.amazon.com/> Choose Carpenter Community Charter as your charitable organization and use that link every time you shop on Amazon.

For questions, please email: [debbiecerrito@iheartmedia.com](mailto:debbiecerrito@iheartmedia.com) or [noellebensu@gmail.com](mailto:noellebensu@gmail.com).

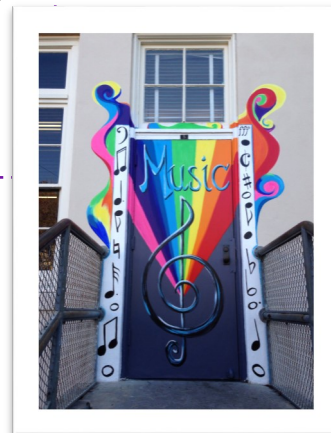
### SCIENCE ENRICHMENT

Bye-bye Charlotte!  
See you in the fall!



### MUSIC ENRICHMENT

Adios Mrs. Taweel!  
Have a great summer!



## CARPENTER COMMUNITY CHARTER



***FOCUS ON ART: Enriching our children's lives, one brush stroke at a time...***

**PFC**  
PARENTS FOR  
CARPENTER

**Did you have the chance to study Picasso at age 6? Could you create a portrait using geometric shapes at age 10? Did someone show you how to create your own Chagall at age 7?**

The Art Program, now in its fifth year, is Carpenter's newest enrichment program. We are fortunate to have a talented artist, **Lauri Jon Caravella** as our instructor. She brings years of experience to the students, plus her own unique passion and joy of art.

The benefits of the Art Program extend beyond just creating a creative outlet for our children. Studies time and again show that education thru art helps build confidence, enhance self-esteem, encourage and promote individuality, tolerance, focus, problem solving, cognitive skills, fine motor skills, self-expression and imagination.

The curriculum in our Art Program allows students to explore their creative sensibilities through different art mediums. The program incorporates math and science (anatomy, biology and critical observation). Students also learn about mechanical and spatial comprehension. There is an emphasis on observation, recognizing that anything we draw can be broken down into simple shapes. The Art Program teaches children skills and techniques they can use in their curriculum projects and assists the teacher with achieving art standards. The lessons are based upon the work of a specific artist, art history or technique. Participation in the art program is based on teacher request.

Our art instructor, Lauri Jon Caravella says, "I am honored to give Carpenter children this creative gift that is truly our passion. We offer children true creative freedom, and an outlet to express themselves in a way they often don't have throughout the school day. It is truly amazing to see their creative minds at work producing innovative ideas like when they study M.C. Escher and create marshmallow clouds and furniture hanging from the ceiling."

Below is some of what your child might be learning in our **Art Program**. The curriculum includes:

- **Drawing:** Shapes, Gestural, Perspective, Lighting/shading, Character Design, Life Drawing
- **Painting:** Water color, Acrylic, Oil pastel
- **Color:** Color wheel, Color gradation and color blending, Lighting/shading
- **Different Mediums:** Drawing fundamental, traditional watercolor & acrylic technique, 2-D, Found and recycled items
- **Art History:** Followed by projects inspired by artist being studied

At Carpenter, our mission is to educate the whole-child, and through superb enrichment classes such as our Art Program, we give our children the best education possible.

*For more information about PFC's Enrichment Programs, please contact Amber Schaeffer at [amberschaeffer@hotmail.com](mailto:amberschaeffer@hotmail.com)*

# CARPENTER COMMUNITY CHARTER



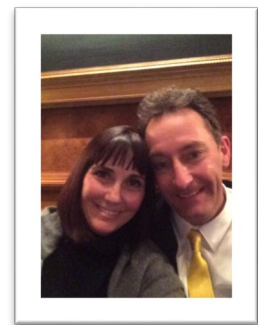
## THANKS TO THOSE WHO WENT THE EXTRA MILE...



So many parents have contributed to Carpenter over the years, and it's nearly impossible to identify and acknowledge each one, but we would be remiss if we didn't thank the following people whose children will be moving on to other schools.

### *Jill & Tom Kenney*

- Contributions included: Room Parent; Teacher Appreciation Chair; Teacher Appreciation Co-Chair; Career Day Co-Chair; Safety Committee; Halloween Carnival Committee; Green Team Committee; Spelling Bee Host; Dinner Dance Auctioneer; Dinner Dance Procurement; Beautification Day
- Nora is moving on to... Walter Reed Middle School (brother attends Walter Reed also)



### *Lauri Jon Caravella*

- Contributions included: Room Parent; PFC Art Volunteer; Dinner Dance Design Coordinator; Graphic Design for Book Fair; Earth Day, Walk-a-thon; Positive Behavior Support Team; Kinder Banners; Track Meet, 5th Grade T-Shirt Design; Playground Board Game Design
- Maricella Marsilii is moving on to... Honors Humanities Academy at Walter Reed Middle School



### *David & William Seymour*

- Contributions included: Room Parents; Music Night; Gala (dinner dance); Firefly event; Pizza party for the Encore students; Co-5th Grade Liaison / organizing the 5th Grade Culmination party; Assisted on a variety of other committees
- Madison is moving on to... Millikan Performing Arts Academy



### *Debi Haynie (formerly Debi Sher)*

- Contributions included: Co-Chair Halloween Carnival; Co-Chair Partners in Education; PFC board; 5th Grade Liaison; Kinder Liaison
- Samantha is moving on to... Berkeley Hall School (brother attends Berkeley Hall also)



# CARPENTER COMMUNITY CHARTER



## THANKS TO THOSE WHO WENT THE EXTRA MILE...

### Sara Laurenzo

- Contributions included: PTA Chair; Community Outreach; Carpenter Cares; Teacher Appreciation; Room Parent; Candy Split; UNICEF; Pennies for Patients; Spelling Bee; Jacket Donations; Shoe Drive; PTA Financial Secretary; Grade level coffee hospitality; Book Exchange; Book Fair; 5th grade activities and tshirts; Halloween Carnival Presales; Enrollment and Strategic Planning Committees
- Nick is moving on to... Millikan, (siblings attend Notre Dame, North Hollywood High)



### Andrew Silver

- Contributions included: PTA President; 5th Grade Liaison; Golf Tourney Founder/Organizer; Halloween Carnival *New Haunted House* Developer; Room Parent; Movie/Music Night Security; Parent Rep on Teacher Hiring Committee; Parent Rep on School Autonomy Research Committee; Book Exchange Co-Chair; *Grade-Level Coffees* Co-Founder; PTA Parliamentarian
- The Silver family will be moving on to ... Traveling the world together for a year or two. Working from the road while home-schooling the boys and seeing where this adventure takes us.



### Heidi Reber

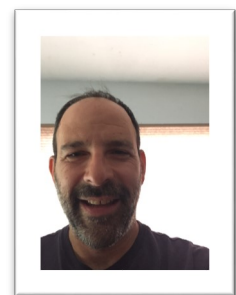
- Contributions included: Governance Chair Secretary, and Charter Renewal Lead Petitioner; Spelling Bee Chair; Keyboarding Bootcamp Instructor 3rd/4th Grades; Curriculum Committee; Technology Committee; Strategic Planning Committee; Budget Committee
- Nolan is moving on to... Walter Reed IHP (brother attends North Hollywood HGM)

*I hope to still be at Carpenter teaching third grade! Gone, but not really gone. :-)*



### Jay Davis

- Contributions included: Room parent; PTA Financial Secretary; Security Co-Chair; Halloween carnival committee; Dinner Dance procurement; Walk-a-thon volunteer
- Spencer is moving on to... Walter Reed IHP



# CARPENTER COMMUNITY CHARTER

**Every Kid Counts Week** was everything I envisioned it would be. The first day classrooms read books on disabilities. This was great because children gained more compassion and understanding through knowledge. On the second day **“Wear Blue” if you celebrate everyone being unique**, was wonderful. When I came to school and saw the sea of blue on campus it warmed my heart greatly.

The Parent Education speaker Susan Hollar spoke to parents about “How Children With Special Needs Can Make Friends”. Parents came up to me afterwards and told me that was a fascinating conversation. One of the greatest highlights for me was our assembly “Great Americans Overcoming Disabilities” where we honored Temple Grandin, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Helen Keller and Stevie Wonder. We hired professional actors to bring these amazing people to life and they did an amazing job.

It was a beautiful and a wonderful week, and it was great to have so much support from the PTA, students, parents, our Principal Mr. Martinez, teachers, and school administration. If you would like more information on our committee please contact me at [cynthiamorgan06@yahoo.com](mailto:cynthiamorgan06@yahoo.com).

Thank you,  
**Cynthia Morgan**  
 Chair, Every Kid Counts Committee

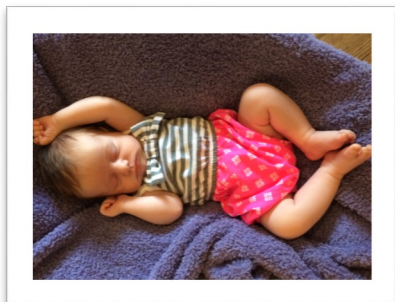


## Introducing... THE NEWEST COUGAR CUBS

### Laney Paige Sponder

April 16, 2015  
 7lbs, 1oz

Parents:  
 Kelly Sponder (Kinder Teacher)  
 and Roger Sponder



### Haven Je Evangeline Latsch

April 17, 2015  
 5lbs, 6oz

Parents:  
 Rae Toledo Latsch (CCC Dance  
 Teacher) and Chris Latsch

Sister: Harper

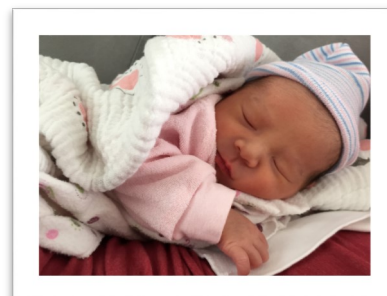


### Zoe Lillian Hong

May 7th, 2015  
 6lbs, 1oz

Parents:  
 Melodie (1st Grade Teacher) and  
 Paul Hong

Brother: Grant  
 Sister: Elle





## CARPENTER COMMUNITY CHARTER

*Ever wondered what the Student Council at Carpenter is, and what they are up to?*

### Here's a glimpse... STUDENT COUNCIL



*by Carissa Larsen and Mackenzie Messer*

The Carpenter Student Council is made up of two representatives from each third through fifth grade class that have a desire to be more involved in our school community. At the beginning of the year, each class elects two representatives and then those members can run for an officer position. School-wide elections happen in the fall and this year Justin Park was elected our President, S.J. Schaeffer our Vice President, Lily Slotnik our Secretary, and Justin Krell our Historian (see picture.) These four officers have extra duties that include joining Mr. Martinez for the morning announcements and helping lead Student Council meetings.

Approximately once a month all of the Student Council members meet during lunch and discuss upcoming events, plan fundraisers, and share ideas they have to improve Carpenter. They are responsible for reporting the information from the meeting back to their classmates and a primary grade class so that the entire school remains informed in regards to Student Council decisions.

One of the goals Student Council has is raising money by selling things like Valentine's Grams to the student body so that Student Council can purchase an item for the school at the end of the year. After sharing many great ideas and voting for their favorite, this year's Student Council is currently pursuing installing a donation box on campus that can be used for years to come to donate money to a local charity.

With the upcoming Special Olympics being held in Los Angeles this summer, Student Council members are also currently volunteering their time and creativity by making inspirational posters for the athletes (see picture.) These posters will be used to greet and cheer on the athletes from the Czech Republic and Brazil when they arrive in their host city, Studio City, this July.

To finish out the year with a lot of school spirit being represented, Student Council members sent home a flier of four upcoming Spirit Days in which they hope the entire student body will participate — May 26-29.



L to R:  
Justin Park, S.J. Schaeffer, Lily Slotnik,  
Justin Krell

# CARPENTER COMMUNITY CHARTER

## A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

*Lori Plager*

### FAILURE IS AN OPTION

No one wants to see his/her child fail, but really, how many kids do things perfectly the very first time. Isn't that why they are attending school? Yet why do I feel anxious when my son misspells a word on a test, subtracts rather than adds, or does a sub-par job on a project? Will the teacher think I'm not overseeing his work? That I'm not on the ball? That I don't care? Should I let him turn in that mediocre work and have him hoisted on his own petard? Where do we draw the line between being a helicopter parent and one who would rather watch the latest episode of *Cheaters* while eating chocolate covered pretzels (the thin ones) from Trader Joe's? *Apologies to any parents who are involved in the production of Cheaters. It's a very entertaining show.*



This will go down on your permanent record... Will it really? And then, so what? How many college admissions departments do a deep dive into your child's elementary school records? When my son started Kindergarten at Carpenter, I scrutinized every line of homework. Now that he's finishing second grade, I do less and less. It's not that he's a savant, it's that I now understand that Carpenter has given him permission to fail. (Uh, right Mr. Martinez?) Fail doesn't mean not try, it means do your best, and then do it again. Do it until you achieve a level of excellence that is truly your best. Now I have to translate that concept for my son, and put it into practice.

When your child is born, you hope that they have some unforeseen natural talent that eclipses effort and propels them to a level of success never seen by mankind - a perfect OLSAT score, the next Einstein, Messi, Shelton (that's Blake minus whatever is in his cup), Callas, Spielberg, Mother Theresa, etc. Wouldn't it be nice if we didn't have to prompt them to do their homework, practice the piano, or show them how to catch a ball? We could just bask in the effortlessness of their "gift". As much as there's a part of me who wishes for that life of super powers for my son, I really don't. It doesn't serve the purpose—which is how will my child thrive when I am not present? If they don't practice picking themselves up and doing it again, whatever it is, they will not know how to protect themselves—physically and emotionally.

In one of Malcolm Gladwell's books he talks about why people achieve. The concept is simple actually; it's practice. When you do something over and over, correcting it until it's as perfect as possible, you get very good at it. I'm not advocating a hands-off approach if your child is disrupting the class or failing tests on a regular basis. I'm also not saying that you should put them in any sort of dangerous situation. I'm a big fan of invisible nets. In some cases however, you just have to let them fail. The winners will pick themselves up, sometimes with a lot of crying and foot-stomping, and they will do it again. They will practice failing, and you will practice biting your tongue. You will practice not having the smartest kid, or the fastest kid, or the most articulate kid. You will practice restraint because, in the best interest of your child's survival, they have to do poorly sometimes.

What I like about Carpenter's philosophy, (noting that this is not written or in any way "official"), is its tolerance for failure. As I close out my third year at this school, and think back on conversations I have had with my child's teachers and administrators, I am amazed by their level of compassion and, admittedly, unlike me, their ability to make their expectations realistic. When you think about it, they've had more experience with children than any of us. They expected a flawed child who makes mistakes. To be able to take the pressure off of both the student and the parent is a fabulous gift, and I am grateful.

So, if your child is not the top student in the class, not the fastest runner on the track, not the most angelic and cooperative child, it's really okay. Give them a little kiss, and then make them get back on that proverbial horse. Relish the momentary freedom of imperfection - because at Carpenter, failure *IS* an option.

See you later alligators,

*Lori*