



# December 2019 Newsletter

VOL. 1

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## **UPCOMING EVENT**

On Wednesday, December 11, 2019, Aurora School in Oakland, California is hosting a Parent-Education event on unconscious biases and what to do about them.

There is a sign-up sheet available at the sign-in counter at school. If you plan to attend the event, please add your name to the sign-up sheet.

The important details:

- When: Wednesday, December 11, 2019, from 6pm-8pm
- Where: Aurora School, 40 Dulwich Rd, Oakland, CA 94618
- Subject: Unconscious Biases
- Speaker: Alison Park
- Attendance:
  - Free and open to any parents or guardians of an EBC-member preschool
  - No kids, but babes in arms are fine



Group C Classroom Adventures  
(Submitted by Tiffany Chin Reid, Group C Parent)

# Kindergarten Readiness

(Submitted by Dr. Angela Buchanan, Group C Grandparent)

The most challenging aspect about writing this article was reducing the amount of information to share with you. In a nutshell, what follows are the most basic competencies that the California Educational system has identified regarding school success and readiness. Understanding what is considered “competent” allows us to help children develop these competencies. If we know, for example, what competent literacy skills are, then we can better plan experiences and activities that support literacy development. One of the best tools that a parent can use to help support their child's school success and readiness is to examine the information that follows. All of this information is taken directly from the California Department of Education’s website.

The California Department of Education has developed a formative-assessment instrument entitled the DRDP© (Desired Results Developmental Profile) to assess competency. The DRDP is used by all California public schools and some private schools to measure and guide student success. When a child enters a public-school program, the teachers will use the results of the DRDP assessment to reflect on the learning and development of the child and plan activities to support the child’s unique way of learning. The DRDP is designed for use with all children from early infancy up to age 12. The DRDP takes into consideration the specific cultural and linguistic characteristics of California’s diverse population of children. This ensures that all children have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

As you read the following paragraphs, begin thinking about ways that you can further support your child’s development. There are major competency areas identified for school and life success. The DRDP is used to provide assessment about your child’s knowledge, skills, and behaviors across a range of areas of development, called “domains.” The Kindergarten domains of development include:

- **Approaches to Learning – Self-Regulation** (Attention Maintenance, Self – Comforting, Imitation, Curiosity and Initiative in Learning, Self-Control of Feelings and Behavior, Engagement and Persistence) Shared Use of Space and Materials;
- **Social and Emotional Development** (Identity of Self in Relation to Others, Social and Emotional, Understanding, Relationships and Social Interactions with Familiar Adults, Relationships and Social Interactions with Peers, Symbolic and Sociodramatic Play);
- **Language and Literacy Development** (Understanding of Language (Receptive), Responsiveness to Language, Communication and Use of Language (Expressive), Reciprocal Communication and Conversation, Interest in Literacy, Comprehension of Age-Appropriate Text, Concepts about Print, Phonological Awareness, Letter and Word Knowledge, and Emergent Writing);

- **English Language Development** (Comprehension of English (Receptive English), Self-Expression in English (Expressive English), Understanding and Response to English Literacy Activities, Symbol, Letter, and Print Knowledge in English);
- **Cognition Including Math and Science** (Spatial Relationships, Classification, Number Sense of Quantity, Number Sense of Math Operations, Measurement, Patterning, Shapes, Cause and Effect, Inquiry Through Observation and Investigation, Documentation and Communication of Inquiry, Knowledge of the Natural World);
- **Physical Development-Health** (Perceptual-Motor Skills and Movement Concepts, Gross Locomotor Movement Skills, Gross Motor Manipulative Skills, Fine Motor Manipulative Skills, Safety, Personal Care Routines: Hygiene, Personal Care Routines: Feeding, Personal Care Routines: Dressing, Active Physical Play, Nutrition, Knowledge of Wellness);
- **History - Social Science:** (Sense of Time, Sense of Place, Ecology, Conflict Negotiation, Responsible Conduct as a Group Member); and
- **Visual and Performing Arts** (Visual Art, Music, Drama, Dance).

The assessment for each age group differs based on developmental differences associated with each age group. Children develop differently across domains and across different age groups. Within each domain, children may move over time from earlier levels to later levels or in some cases from later levels to earlier levels. These are all typical ways that children display their growth and development.

How can you support your child’s development? The best thing that you can do is to embrace knowing that “Play is Learning.” If you look at recommendations at the California Department of Education’s website, you will find a publication exactly entitled “Play is Learning.” And, as a regularly-aired commercial on TV states, “Talk, read, listen, sing and play with your child.”

Another recommendation is to look at the domains identified and use them as a guide for a wide variety of experiences that help to support school success. Try to expose your child to a wide variety of experiences. Allow them time to play and explore. You don't have to spend a lot of money. Going often to the local libraries and parks, taking daily walks to look at different plants and bugs are some of the best resources. Letting your children see you read is an extremely important influence. Helping them with hand-washing before and after every meal, and after every toilet trip, support health and hygiene. The most routine things are truly important learning experiences. Having children help set the table, clean up after meals and after themselves, and straighten

their bed covers promotes high self-esteem and a sense of responsibility. When your child has a meltdown, give him or her a chance to calm down and say, “I hear what you are saying...You are saying (and repeat what they have said, or are upset about). So, what can we do about...? (go into problem solving mode with them...) This helps with self-regulation and communication skills. Everything that happens in the course of the day is truly curriculum for your child. Children learn by doing. This is the most important take away.

For more information about development and how you can support your child, visit [www.allaboutyoungchildren.org](http://www.allaboutyoungchildren.org).

For more information about the DRDP (2015), see the following links:

<https://www.desiredresults.us/drdp-forms>;  
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp>;  
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/em/kinderinfo.asp>; and  
<https://drdpk.org/drdpk.html>.



**DRDP (2015)**

**An Early Childhood Developmental Continuum**

## **How to Stay Sane and Healthy and Not Go Broke During the Holidays: Have a Mindful Holiday**

(Submitted by Alanna Carbis, Group C Parent and Newsletter Editor)

Although it is arguably the most wonderful time of year, it is also a truth universally acknowledged that the Holidays can leave people emotionally and financially bereft. But, my friends, it does not have to be that way. The joy of the Holiday season can be brought even into the most menial of Holiday tasks, and without breaking the bank. Here are some of my tried and true tips for how to have a mindful and joyful Holiday season from start to finish!

### **Tips to stay sane and healthy and not go broke:**

- ❖ ***Start all your preparations early.*** For example, if you plan to send out personalized Holiday cards, starting early will allow you to take your time selecting the card template you like best, ordering it without having to pay for expedited shipping, and potentially taking advantage of available promotional

offers. When you start early, you don't have to make a quick decision, which makes the process feel more enjoyable and is likely to save money. Starting early also gives you the space to add more joy to the process. If you receive your personalized Holiday cards in November or early December, you may be more likely to plan a night when you can make the entire experience of sending out Holiday cards a part of your Holiday joy. Your night can involve sipping a hot chocolate, watching a festive movie, while addressing envelopes. And you may be more likely to involve your children in the process if you don't feel rushed. Your little ones may be able to apply stamps to envelopes, or it may be enough just to enjoy their company while the festive movie plays and you prepare the cards to go out.

- ❖ ***Make sleep a priority.*** The Holidays are a busy time, so making sleep a priority must be a mindful decision. Doing so will help you better enjoy the joyful busyness of the season and will fortify you against those nasty bugs that often circulate in November and early December. One surefire way to make the Holiday season less fun is to get sick. Not to mention that getting sleep will allow you to make better decisions, which can also stymie impulsive spending. Starting your Holiday preparations early (see above) will give you some of the space you need to get enough sleep because you won't need to jam shopping and letter-writing and baking and visiting into a few short days or nights. Committing to a few really special activities, rather than trying to say "yes" to every available activity, will prevent Holiday burnout and exhaustion and make each activity more meaningful and enjoyable. Also, if your kids get the sleep they need, they are less likely to have meltdowns, and that is more enjoyable for everybody.
  
- ❖ ***Order gifts online (and early).*** Ordering gifts online is helpful for so many reasons. You avoid long lines and pushy people. You can easily compare prices across different stores (Amazon is not always the cheapest! But their quick and reliable delivery is incomparable.) Although not necessarily great for the environment, the gifts often come in brown boxes that you can more easily hide from your kids (win-win if you can find a good use for those boxes later on). And online shopping is a helpful way to keep track of what you bought or what you still need to buy. Often in conversation, my daughter will casually mention a toy she'd really love. When she's distracted, I will find the item and keep track of it by adding it to my (usually, Amazon) cart. I can then decide later what I will buy of the things she has mentioned. So easy! In addition, I can very easily buy gifts during small pockets of time, rather than needing to set aside a decent chunk of time to go shopping.

- ❖ If you have to send any gifts internationally, buying them online and having them sent directly to the recipient truly is a cheaper and much easier alternative to buying, wrapping, and sending packages that can end up stuck in customs for a month.
- ❖ Also, if you can buy presents throughout the year, whenever they are on sale, you can save a lot of money. The downside to this approach is that you have to store the presents throughout the year, which is not easy when you live in a small space with prying little ones.
- ❖ ***Make lists.*** Make a list of the gifts you need to buy and the tasks you need to complete. This will help to set expectations and to keep you on track and, potentially, on budget, reducing stress in myriad ways. And crossing off your to-dos is quite a dopamine release!
- ❖ ***Make your own gifts.*** Homemade gifts are often the best. A loaf of pumpkin bread, a lovely craft, can really lift someone's spirits. And homemade gifts are often cheaper than store-bought ones. If you start early (I know, I know, I've said it already!), it will be a much less stressful experience.
- ❖ ***Drink lots of water.*** It probably goes without saying but drinking a lot of water will keep you healthier and more energized throughout the Holiday season. It is often hard for me to get my 8 cups in, so I have a few tricks I've found to be helpful. I keep track of my water consumption in an online app. It's quick and very effective at keeping me mindful of how little water I've consumed in a given day. In addition, I'll often try to have a water bottle with a built-in filter on hand, so that I can drink clean water wherever I go. I also often drink warm water with lemon or sparkling water, because they feel more like a treat to me than regular water.
- ❖ ***Share your tasty treats.*** If you make or buy or receive some sweet treats, share them with friends, family and coworkers. That way you spread cheer and the calories!

## **Focus Your Energy on Making Wonderful Memories with Family and Friends**

- ❖ Identify the traditions that are important to your family and weave those into your Holiday season. Here are some examples of some wonderful Holiday activities that you can share with your family:
  - Cook together.

- For some sites with delicious recipes, try the following:
  - Bon Appétit (<https://www.bonappetit.com/>)
  - The Spruce Eats (<https://www.thespruceeats.com/>)
  - Oh She Glows (<https://ohsheglows.com/>)
  - Minimalist Baker (<https://minimalistbaker.com/>)
- Read Holiday books together.
- Watch Holiday movies together. The binge-watching I do of Hallmark Christmas movies is my husband's least favorite part of the Holidays!
- See a Holiday play or The Nutcracker ballet.
  - The New Ballet School in San Jose does a wonderful one-hour rendition of The Nutcracker for very small children, called "My Very First Nutcracker." I took my daughter when she was 2 and it was delightful! See <https://newballet.com/performances>.
  - The Oakland Ballet's Nutcracker is also lovely and was age-appropriate for my daughter last year, when she was 3: <http://oaklandballet.org/wp/performances/graham-lustigs-the-nutcracker/>. We have tickets for this year's performance, as well.
  - No children under 3 are allowed at the San Francisco Ballet's Nutcracker, and their website states that the show is most appropriate for children 5 and older. See: [/www.sfballet.org/productions/nutcracker/?gclid=CjwKCAiAlO7uBRANEiwA\\_vXQ-\\_chyKlyqc3uglRXAddZaeIuE2ZTnG6OgQRiHgwREQUOAqY3KhGW-RoCrIsQAvD\\_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds](http://www.sfballet.org/productions/nutcracker/?gclid=CjwKCAiAlO7uBRANEiwA_vXQ-_chyKlyqc3uglRXAddZaeIuE2ZTnG6OgQRiHgwREQUOAqY3KhGW-RoCrIsQAvD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds).
  - The Bay Area Children's Theater is currently putting on a wonderful show called, "Construction Site on Christmas Night," through December 29th. See <https://bactheatre.org/shows/ConstructionSiteXmas>. A bunch of Group C and former FNPS students attended the opening performance of this show on November 16th.
- Sip some hot chocolate and tour the local Christmas lights.

- Volunteer as a family or use the time before Christmas or Hanukkah to help your children set aside some of their toys to donate to less fortunate children. If you're interested in buying toys for those in need, you may consider involving your children in the process and explaining to them what your contribution means.
- The Holidays, with their focus on celebrations and get-togethers, can be acutely painful for those who are lonely or grieving. Pay attention to those around you who may be suffering and give some special love to neighbors, friends, family members who you think may need a little extra love during this time.

Have a wonderful Holiday season!



Ella Carbis (Group C), making a snow angel, Winter 2018.

## **Safety Corner**

*Some Lessons Learned from the Safety Meeting with the Fremont Police*  
(Submitted by Rebekah Dhand, Group C Parent)

If there is an active shooter: **RUN, HIDE** (in the safest place), and then **FIGHT** as a **last resort**

**All parents, who are working at the school, should do the following as soon as there is any indication that there is an active shooter or the threat of an active shooter at the school:**

1. Lock and barricade all doors (if available, use hoses installed with velcro on the building's doorframes);
2. Close the metal shades and window blinds. If there are window curtains, those should be closed as well;
3. Turn off the lights;

4. Silence all phones. Know that you can call 911 by hitting the power-off and the volume buttons rapidly five times;
5. Locate the fire extinguisher, which can be used to (a) break the windows (at the CORNER not the CENTER of the windows) to escape; or (b) as a weapon (to spray the shooter and knock him on the head);
6. Locate the kitchen knives and adult scissors to be used as weapons against the shooter;
7. Distribute the weapons to adults;
8. Locate the key to the back gate, if exiting the back gate is the safest escape route; and
9. Locate the emergency backpack, and already be familiar with its contents.

FPNS staff will be refining active-shooter action plans in the coming months, so stay tuned. We hope that we will never need to implement these lessons but it is always best to be prepared!



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## **Greetings from the Fundraising Team!**

Thank you for your support of our school. As a non-profit organization, one of our priorities is to keep tuition low to reach as many families as possible. To support additional activities and improvements at the school, we rely on donations and contributions from our families and supporters.

This year, we are focusing on improving our outdoor spaces, starting with the sandbox and mud kitchen. We are very grateful for the wonderful support of everybody at our fall festival and want to extend a huge thanks to everybody involved in food donations and organizing the event! We raised \$613.40. Also, thank you so much for your popcorn sales; we raised \$1772, and will be keeping 50% of that amount!

Coming up in January, we will start asking families to fulfill their fundraising commitment to the school. Each family is required to purchase or sell 4 tickets to our **silent auction fundraiser event** (details to come) and to acquire a silent auction donation. The silent auction donation can be an item, gift card, or anything else you want to donate or can get donated. I will have more information and the support that you will need to solicit donations from local businesses should you decide to go that route!

In the late spring, we are planning a **Touch the Truck** event, more information to follow, but if you have connections with anybody who has a cool truck or car that they would let us use for the event, I would love to connect with them. If you have a connection at the county library, Fremont police, Fremont fire, or Republic Services, we are particularly interested.

Thanks again for all your support of our school! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask me.

Stacy Gohman, Fundraising Chair, [fundraising@fpns.org](mailto:fundraising@fpns.org)



## Meet the 2019-2020 FPNS Board!

We asked and they answered. Please take a moment to get to know your FPNS Board Members a bit better.



### **Katie DeAnda, President, Mom of Ella in Group B**

#### ***What is your current profession? Do you have any hobbies?***

I am a middle school teacher. I have a B.A. in Dance and an M.A. in Teaching. My hobbies include dance, yoga, and staying busy with my kids: Olivia-15, Ella-3, and Julian-1.

#### ***What was your most significant take away from last year? Any “aha” moments?***

Seeing Ella transfer school and social skills to home-life. All of the fun songs she would come home singing!!

#### ***What are you looking forward to or what excites you most about serving as a member of the board of trustees?***

I am looking forward to seeing the school grow in enrollment and program offerings. FPNS is such a special community!!

#### ***What was your previous role? What was that experience like for you? Suggestions for improvement?***

I was previously a Group A parent. I loved seeing Ella become a student! We had a wonderful core group of classmates and teachers. It was hard at first learning about all of the expectations, commitments, and co-op format but the parents were a great support.

I was in charge of maintenance for my co-op role. Amanda, previously a Group C mom, helped me learn what to do and how to get the job organized.

#### ***What kind of leader do you believe you are?***

I think I am the strong but quiet type. I hope to lead by example.

#### ***What are your best personality traits? Your weaknesses?***

I listen and try to come up with solutions. Sometimes I can be impatient with a lack of action or efficiency.

***Describe the qualities you seek from a leader.***

Action, efficiency, understanding, compassion

***If your position was being held by someone else, what would your expectations be? How attainable are your expectations?***

I think a Board President should listen to the community and create action. I hope this expectation is attainable.

***Vanessa Cardenas-Kim, Vice President,  
Mom of Jasmine in Group B***

***What is your current profession? Previous profession? Do you have any hobbies?***

I am currently a stay-at-home mom. I was previously a preschool co-teacher, and a school-age before and after care program teacher. My hobbies include all things food-related (mostly dining out and trying new restaurants, cooking when I get the chance). I recently started family bike excursions after many years of not riding (basically, since I was a kid). I also enjoy traveling near and far, hanging out with family and friends (whether exploring new places or just enjoying each other's company at home), and going to Disneyland.



***What was your most significant take away from last year? Any “aha” moments?***

Feeling like I belong at FPNS and have people who respect me and support me so that I can be comfortable, as a member of the community, just being myself.

***What are you looking forward to or what excites you most about serving as a member of the board of trustees?***

Growing as a leader, helping to build a stronger community at our school.

***What was your previous role? What was that experience like for you? Suggestions for improvement?***

I was previously a teacher's helper for Group A. I enjoyed helping with planning events and communicating with the other families, because it helped me to develop a better relationship with everyone.

This year, I'd like to work on stepping out of my comfort zone and being more confident in myself and my skills. I want to use my voice to communicate better and share my ideas the best way I can (even if my methods are unconventional), so that I can use my strengths to serve FPNS.

***What kind of leader do you believe you are?***

I'm a planner, and I need time to process ideas before speaking. I tend to lead by serving others and being a source of inspiration.

***What are your best personality traits? Your weaknesses?***

I see and treat everyone as equals. I truly want to help others, but I can appear aloof and uninterested because I am quiet.

***Describe the qualities you seek from a leader.***

In a leader, I seek someone who is kind and fair. I seek someone who is willing to teach others and help with shortcomings rather than just judge and dictate. I seek someone who has a collaborative approach, and is flexible to an extent.

***If your position was being held by someone else, what would your expectations be? How attainable are your expectations?***

I would expect an FPNS Vice President to be someone trustworthy, dedicated, and organized. I would expect them to be someone who agrees with the mission and values of the school and can serve as a model representative. I would expect them to be someone who will help get the job done.



***Anne Ying, Treasurer, Mom of Sophia in Group C and Oliver, 5 months old***

***What is your current profession? Previous profession? Do you have any hobbies?***

I am currently a stay-at-home mom. In my previous life, I worked in property management. My hobbies include exploring small towns with my family and looking for hidden gems (like delicious food and unique shops), biking, badminton, and snowboarding (in my previous life).

***What was your most significant take away from last year? Any “aha” moments?***

Last year, I realized how important it is to give children a sense of stability and routine. Even when teachers come and go, the kids should still feel safe and comfortable at the school.

***What are you looking forward to or what excites you most about serving as a member of the board of trustees?***

Since this is the second year with a new director, I am looking forward to seeing all the changes that were implemented take shape. I'm also excited to serve with a brand-new board.

***What was your previous role? What was that experience like for you? Suggestions for improvement?***

I was also previously the Treasurer. It took a while to familiarize myself with the process and to streamline everything, but I think things should go more efficiently this year.

***What kind of leader do you believe you are?***

I think I'm a more laidback leader. I like to listen to the group's opinions and have them choose their tasks rather than tell them what to do. I tend to be a pushover when the group consists of peers or people older than me.

***What are your best personality traits? Your weaknesses?***

I am loyal and hardworking, and I will make sacrifices to complete what I promised to do. But I also tend to say yes to too many things and not know how to say no.

***Describe the qualities you seek from a leader.***

In a leader, I seek someone who respects the group for their individual points of views and talents. I seek someone who listens first before talking. And I seek someone who can demonstrate competence and expertise and earn the group's trust.

***If your position was being held by someone else, what would your expectations be? How attainable are your expectations?***

I expect the person who is Treasurer to be timely with the deposits and statements, and also promptly answer any correspondence directed their way. These expectations are very attainable.

## **Featured FPNS Staff Member of the Quarter: Elissia Forsyth!**



Please take a moment to get to know FPNS staff member, Elissia Forsyth, a bit better. She helps FPNS run smoothly every day and always with the warmest smile on her face.

***What is your current profession? Previous profession? Do you have any hobbies?***

I am currently the Administrative Lead at FPNS. I previously worked as a Program Manager managing early intervention programs for children on the Autism spectrum. I then left this job to stay at home and raise my 2 daughters. FPNS is my first job since having children. My hobbies

include hiking, jogging and being outside.

***What was your most significant take away from last year? Any “aha” moments?***

My take away was learning to breathe.

***What are you looking forward to or what excites you most about the new board of trustees?***

I love FPNS and I want to see our school flourish and grow for years to come. The Board has a significant role in making this happen.

***What was your previous role with FPNS? What was that experience like for you? Suggestions for improvement?***

I was Board Secretary when my youngest attended FPNS for 2 years (4 years ago). Now I attend board meetings as an employee representative of FPNS. I don't have board voting privileges. I loved being the Secretary, attention to detail is a definite strength of mine.

***What kind of leader do you believe you are?***

I don't see myself as a leader, more as a collaborator (I like to work with others vs. calling the shots).

***What are your best personality traits? Your weaknesses?***

My best personality traits include being a good listener, getting along well with others, my attention to detail, and good intentions. In terms of weaknesses, I am very hard on myself/perfectionist, and I need to believe more in myself.

***Describe the qualities you seek from a leader.***

The qualities I seek in a leader include open-mindedness, being a good listener, having good communication skills, considering multiple perspectives and not just their own, doing the right thing and not just following their own agenda.

***If your position was being held by someone else, what would your expectations be? How attainable are your expectations?***

As an employee of FPNS, I would want someone else who took my place to think about long term goals for our school, how we can reach more families in our community, ways we can make FPNS more sustainable and thrive for years to come.

## **New Staff Members!**

Please welcome the newest additions to the FPNS Staff:

- Crystal Christenson  
A Group Associate Teacher
- Reena Patel  
C Group Lead Teacher
- Renee Rauholt  
C Group Associate Teacher

Stay tuned for their bios in the next FPNS Newsletter!

## FPNS HAPPENINGS



Group A Friendsgiving  
(Submitted by Jessica  
Belanger,  
Group A Parent)

Group A  
Halloween  
Party  
(Submitted  
by Jessica  
Belanger)





Group A Pumpkin Patch Field  
Trip  
(Submitted by Jessica  
Belanger)

Group B Classroom  
Adventures  
(Submitted by Wendy  
Auyeung, Group B Parent)







Group B Field Trip to the Japanese Tea Garden  
(Submitted by Wendy Auyeung)



Group C Classroom Adventures  
(Submitted by Tiffany Chin Reid and Angela Buchanan)





Group C Halloween Party  
(Submitted by Angela Buchanan)



