

September 6, 2005

Dear Castlebay Lane Parents,

Welcome back to a brand new school year! We extend a very special welcome to those of you who are new to our Castlebay Family. Our teachers are extremely dedicated, our staff is tremendously hardworking, and our parents tirelessly volunteer. Together we make Castlebay a truly outstanding school.

Castlebay Lane Elementary is supplemented and supported by PATH (Parents and Teachers Helping). Unlike a traditional PTA (Parent and Teachers Association) there are no association dues, so 100% of the monies raised by PATH go directly to our school and fully benefit our children. With this letter we begin our Just Think Campaign, by far the most important fundraiser of the year.

The California state budget has dwindled over the years, with public school funds being some of the hardest hit. LAUSD is given just enough money to provide teachers, books, and a minimal support staff to teach basic academics. In spite of this, Castlebay's amazing faculty helps our kids excel to the point that we consistently rank among the highest performing elementary schools in the state. However, Castlebay has an even tighter budget than most LAUSD schools because we do not qualify for Title 1 funding, the federal program of monetary incentives. Our children are privileged to be getting such a strong education, and we parents must understand it's up to us to provide at least the \$150,000 of Title 1 funding we do not receive.

Our exceptional children, who work so intensely in class, desperately need enrichment that the state budget can't provide. Last year only 27% of Castlebay families donated to the Just Think campaign, shouldering the responsibility of providing services for 100% of the students. With these limited funds we were able to provide computer classes, an art program, a music teacher, a fulltime librarian, and additional support for the teachers.

That's a good start, but our incredible children deserve more. We can only afford to give music and art to each grade level for half the year; both programs should be offered the entire school year. More importantly, the state mandates 10hrs/month of Physical Education (PE) for our children, but does not provide the money for an instructor. **This means there is currently no formal PE program at Castlebay.** It is vitally important to our kids' health and happiness that we raise enough funds to provide one. These additions are well within reach if every family participates in Just Think. Below is a comparison between what our children are currently receiving against the private school system, and what they could be receiving if every family contributes. With a onetime donation of less than a month's tuition at a private school, your Castlebay student could be enjoying the equivalent of a private school education. We must raise at least enough money to maintain our current programs. But just think, if we meet our goals in the next two months, the proposed programs could be put into effect by the start of second semester.

Classes/Services	Private Schools	Castlebay: LAUSD Budget	Castlebay 2004-05: Plus PATH	Castlebay 2005-06: Goal
Certified PE Program	Twice/week	None	None	Twice/week
Art	Once/week (all year)	None	Twice/month (1/2 year)	Once/week (all year)
Music	Once/week (all year)	Once/wk (1/2 year; 3 rd -5 th grade only)	Once/week (1/2 year, all grades)	Once/week (all year, all grades)
Computer Class	Twice/week	None	Once/week	Once/week
Librarian	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time	Full-Time
Nurse	Full-Time	6hours/week	6hours/week	15 hours/week

PATH Logo with
address

We are striving for **100% PARTICIPATION** in the 2005-2006 Just Think Campaign, since 100% of the students benefit from the money donated. It is a very easy way to show your commitment to your school and to your child – all you have to do is write a check or authorize a charge on your credit card. **Any amount you can give is greatly appreciated**, but to meet our minimal goals **we are requesting those families who can to make a tax-deductible donation of at least \$500 per family**. This amounts to about \$1.37 per day. Just think, for about the cost of a cup of coffee a day, you can ensure that your child's world of learning is everything you want it to be.

Whether your children are just beginning elementary education or nearing their closing years here, the window of opportunity for us to shape their love of learning is fleeting. Castlebay will not be successful without all of us doing everything we can. Please send your donation back to Castlebay today.

Your children thank you for your support and commitment.