

Dear Charter Oak Families:

This month our PTO brought back an old practice our school enjoyed years ago and that now we are so happy to see returning to our school, CHAT. These are community gatherings organized by the PTO and supported by the school where we discuss specific topics of interest for all of us.

A couple of months ago we started with CHAT on the topic of International Baccalaureate education and what it means to be an IB school. This past week, during the December PTO meeting, our parents came up with the idea of having a panel formed by the Charter Oak Leadership Team address questions, from all of you either sent previously or asked on the spot. For this panel I was joined by Irene Garneau, our Department Supervisor for Early Childhood Education, Kate Jerram, our school's Curriculum Specialist, Kirsten Sanderson, our IB Coordinator, and Tamara Acosta, our new Social Worker.

The questions covered a great variety of topics such as enrichment, communication, climate and discipline, consistency of the IB experience among grade levels, technology, awards and recognitions for students, ways to report back to the community on the family surveys, and much more. We could not get to all the questions so we hope that the experience is repeated and also that you take advantage of opportunities offered at other forums, such as Coffee with the Principal, held the first Friday of every month, where we can continue our community dialogue that I value so much.

Please stay tune for more to come. Our PTO is already working on the next CHAT, in January, on the topic on equity and diversity, which as you may know, is one of the specific areas of focus this year, not only at Charter Oak, but also across the district. My sincere gratitude to those making this happen. Our school is better because of your partnership, your ideas, your questions, and your critical friendship. I look forward to our January discussion.

In the meantime we are already well into the holiday season, which at Charter Oak is marked by a good number of traditional events. Just to mention a few, this December we already enjoyed another outstanding Family Academy, run by our School Family Resource Center, the Winter Concert, this year on Tuesday December 11th, and the *Kid's Night Out, Parent's Night Off*, on Friday December 14th, where you can drop your children at Charter Oak for a couple of hours while you enjoy some adult time for yourselves. This is the second year we do it and it is starting to become a solid tradition

in our school and a great way to collect funds supporting outstanding learning experiences for our children.

Thank you for all you do in making Charter Oak such a great community. I wish all of you a joyful and restful holiday break and a very, very happy and productive New Year.

Juan Melián  
Principal