

THE CAREY CONNECTION

VOLUME SEVENTEEN | SUMMER 2026

*Growing with Purpose.
Rooted in Tradition.
A Future in Motion.*

THE CAREY CONNECTION

VOLUME 17 | SUMMER 2026

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Our Mission

The Carey School inspires curious, confident, and joyful learners and celebrates childhood in a diverse, inclusive community that nurtures kindness, respect and personal responsibility.



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from the Head of School

This year's Carey Connection tells a story of momentum and thoughtful, mission-driven progress that is shaping both the present and the future of our school. *As you turn these pages, you will see a community deeply engaged in the work of growth:* strengthening our program, honoring our traditions, and investing in what comes next.

At the heart of that forward movement is our *Here We Grow* campaign. The vision of a new Early Childhood Center and a reimagined lower playground is quickly becoming a reality, and with it, an extraordinary opportunity. *These spaces will do more than expand our campus; they will transform the daily experience of our youngest learners, creating environments intentionally designed for exploration, independence, and joy.* This work reflects a clear belief: that the earliest years matter profoundly, and that Carey is committed to providing an exceptional foundation from the very beginning. The energy and generosity behind this effort, from current families and alumni alike, have been remarkable, and we are excited to share a glimpse of what lies ahead.

That same spirit of intentional growth is evident across our academic program. *This year marked the first phase of our new math rollout, and in these pages you will learn more about the thoughtful partnership between faculty and instructional leadership that has made this work so impactful.* You will also read about our continued focus on professional learning, from deepening our approach to emergent curriculum in the early years to engaging with research and conversation around neurodiversity, co-regulation, and the evolving role of artificial intelligence in education. These efforts are grounded in a simple but powerful aim: to ensure that our teaching continues to meet the needs of today's learners while staying true to Carey's core values.

You will also see how that learning comes to life in the experiences of our students. Our feature on service-learning captures an important evolution in how we think about connection and contribution, from our youngest preschoolers to our fifth graders, highlighting the ways students engage meaningfully with the world around them. Likewise, our assemblies continue to serve as a vibrant reflection of our community, offering students authentic opportunities to lead, to celebrate one another, and to live our mission in visible ways.

At the same time, Carey remains deeply rooted in tradition. *As we look ahead to our 100th anniversary, we are reminded of the moments and milestones that have shaped this school* over time from beloved events like Pauline Murray to the everyday rituals that bring us together. These traditions connect generations of Carey students, a connection beautifully reflected in this year's alumni feature, where we see the lasting impact of a Carey education carried forward into adulthood and across families.

Taken together, the stories in this magazine offer more than a snapshot of a single year. They reflect a school that is both grounded and forward-looking, one that *honors its history while embracing the opportunities and responsibilities of the future.*

Thank you for being part of this community, and for helping Carey continue to grow with purpose.

With gratitude,

Neely Norris



“

Carey remains deeply rooted in tradition while embracing what comes next.



from the
**President of the
Board of Trustees**



“

What makes Carey unique is the way our children are known, supported, and lifted up by an entire community.



As both a Carey parent and Board Chair, I find myself reflecting on just how special this community is and how grateful my family is to be part of it. What makes Carey unique isn't simply what happens in the classroom, but the way our children are known, supported, and lifted up by an entire community of families and educators who care deeply about one another.

As a board, we are energized by the path ahead and grounded in the values that continue to guide us. **Our Strategic Plan reflects a clear and heartfelt commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and wellness, priorities that reflect not just where we're going as a school, but the kind of environment we want for our children.** At the same time, we are equally focused on strengthening Carey's long-term financial foundation, ensuring that this extraordinary school remains accessible, sustainable, and thriving well into the future.

One of the ideas that feels especially meaningful is the vision of **bringing our community back together on a single campus.** For many of us, daily life at Carey has included navigating between "Little Carey" and "Big Carey" and while both have their own charm, there is something powerful about the idea of one shared home.

A unified campus means more than convenience. **It means our youngest learners grow up already connected to the broader Carey community.** It means siblings, families, and teachers feeling more closely knit in the rhythms of everyday school life. It means more moments of connection at drop-off, more opportunities for relationships to deepen, and a stronger sense of belonging that carries across every age and stage.

Through the *Here We Grow* capital campaign, we have the opportunity to bring this vision to life, creating a space where our entire community can learn, connect, and grow together. Thank you for the many ways you show up for Carey—through your time, your trust, and your partnership. **It is a privilege to serve this community and I am excited for all that lies ahead.**

With gratitude,

Kyle Morgenroth



The Heartbeat of Friday



Where Every Carey Voice Finds Its Stage

by Nate Geer, Technology Integration Specialist

It starts with a hushed, five-second countdown. Then, the chant begins, a few scattered voices that quickly crescendo into 250 students in perfect, joyful sync: "Gold-en-feather!" This is the sound of our Friday Community Assembly, the high-energy conclusion to every week at Carey. While the anticipation for the four weekly award recipients is the grand finale, the true magic lies in the thirty minutes of student-led magic that comes before.

From Necessity to Intention

The modern Carey Assembly was born during a time when we needed connection most. What began as a checkerboard of 250 faces on Zoom, complete with morning talk-show-style banter and background music to bridge the digital gap, has evolved into the cornerstone of our campus culture. We realized then that gathering wasn't just a "nice-to-have"; it was essential. Today, that spirit lives on, transformed from a digital lifeline into a vibrant, student-centered stage.



The Friday Ritual: Connection & Curiosity

Every assembly opens with tradition. Ms. Shon leads the "Good Morning Song," greeting each grade level individually as well as the faculty and staff to ensure every student and community member feels seen. From there, we catch up on life at Carey, whether it's learning about an upcoming event or getting a much-anticipated update on where our campus cats are living that week. These moments remind us that we are, above all else, a community.

The Arc of Confidence: A K–5 Journey

At Carey, we believe public speaking is a muscle that grows through a "ladder of leadership." We've built a progression that meets every student where they are:

VISIBILITY | Kindergarten & First Grade

The journey begins with seeing yourself as part of the whole. It might be a photo of a Kindergartner proudly holding their 100-day project on the big screen, or a First Grade video explaining the wonders of rainforests and penguins. These one-liners may seem small to adults, but to a six-year-old, it means they were "in charge" of the assembly that week. Nothing beats the thrill of hearing your own voice over the loudspeaker for the first time.

PRESENCE | Second & Third Grade

The focus shifts to physical presence. Students move to the front of the room, reading prepared lines about social studies or presenting a fun integration unit they've mastered. They learn that their knowledge has value and that their community is their biggest cheerleader.

LEADERSHIP | Fourth & Fifth Grade

By their final years, our students are truly assembly leaders. Fifth graders work directly with their teachers to plan the assemblies and partner with the CSPA Spirit Rally Team to pump up the crowd. They are no longer just participants; they are the architects of the Carey experience.

Having our students front and center every Friday is the ultimate expression of our values. We don't just gather to share information; we gather to celebrate curiosity and growth. By the time a Carey student graduates, they leave with the steady, quiet confidence that comes from having found their voice, one Friday at a time.

Thinking Beyond the Algorithm

by Audra Carli, Director of Studies and
Nate Geer, Technology Integration Coordinator



As we approach Carey's hundredth year, we're using our history as a foundation to prepare our kids for a future that's changing fast. As part of our strategic plan, we're starting to explore how our students think about AI and use AI

in the classroom and in their lives. In addition to teaching our students tech skills, we want to empower our students to think critically about technology tools they are using. **As AI continues to integrate into everyday life, our students will inevitably engage with it, making it important for us to support them in navigating this new landscape thoughtfully and responsibly.**

This makes it vital for us, as educators, to guide their understanding of Artificial Intelligence, and make sure they are not just looking for an easy answer. We want our students to embrace the "Learning Pit," that place of productive struggle where growth and learning happens, rather than using generative AI to bypass the challenges that build deep understanding and resilience, strengthening children's neural pathways. Keeping students in a Growth Mindset attitude, a concept emphasized in every grade at Carey, pushes them towards deeper thinking and away from the quick answer an AI chatbot may produce.

To prepare our students for an ever-evolving world, we're focusing on three core areas. First, we are building a foundational



understanding of Artificial Intelligence so students can better interpret and question the technology they encounter daily. Without this base, it's easy for misconceptions to take hold. Second, we are intentional and transparent when using AI tools in the classroom, naming them and explaining why they are appropriate for the task. For example, our fifth graders recently used an AI-powered image background remover during a video project highlighting Black Americans. This allowed students to spend more time on meaningful research and storytelling rather than getting bogged down with technical steps. The third and final area focuses on supporting our older students as they prepare for their next steps in education. We encourage them to practice asking meaningful questions so they are ready to thoughtfully engage with emerging technologies. **Our goal is for students to understand when and how to use AI tools effectively, while recognizing their responsibility to use these tools in ways that deepen their thinking and support their learning.**

**The future
belongs to
students who
can question,
reflect, and
think deeply.**

As students have long experienced at Carey, any technology tool is first modeled by a trusted adult. The rapid evolution of AI does not change this approach; when in doubt, students

are always encouraged to ask a teacher. As educators, we remain committed to using school-approved, age-appropriate tools that prioritize student privacy. As AI becomes more integrated into some of these tools, we will continue to keep families informed and ensure students understand how and why they are being used.

We also recognize that learning new technologies can take time. **We emphasize thoughtful use, reflection, and the importance of engaging deeply with ideas so that technology serves as a support for students rather than a shortcut.** Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that as technology evolves, our students' ability to think critically and connect with others remains their greatest strength. Together, we can help them use these tools responsibly while staying grounded in the Growth Mindset values that define a Carey education.

Service with Purpose

Through hands-on learning and community partnerships, Carey students discover the power of empathy and action

by Heather Jolly, Preschool Specialist & Christyn Marshall-Ramirez, Environmental Education Coordinator

Service-learning is a teaching approach that connects classroom learning to real community needs through action, reflection, and student initiative. It helps students apply skills, make meaningful decisions, grow personally, and build leadership. Unlike volunteer work, service-learning is education-focused: students actively connect what they learn in class to real-world impact through a structured process (investigation, preparation, action, reflection, and demonstration).

Service-learning experiences are happening both in the preschool and on the main campus. The Carey School is one of many partner organizations supporting a real community need at the Hillsdale High School Peace Pantry, providing organic fruits and vegetables from the Community Garden, and staple foods from Mi Rancho Market and Second Harvest Food Bank, to local families challenged with food insecurity. Our PK students investigated food insecurity through picture books like *Maddi's Fridge* and *Sam and the Lucky Money*, and took walking field trips to the HHS Community garden in the Fall and Spring. They investigate by learning about gardening from high school students and volunteers, connecting their knowledge with school gardening during STEAM time. Children prepare by decorating donation boxes, and then bring essential item donations for the Community Closet on their field trip as indirect action. Inspired by the read aloud *Wanda's Roses*, and with the help of our



special friends and grandparents on Generations Day, gardeners planted flowers in pots, to give with love to local families at the Peace Pantry as indirect service action. Conversations about empathy and sharing kindness, as well as photo documentation in the preschool hallways, all happen organically with teachers helping children reflect on these service-learning experiences.

Ms. Ramirez facilitates learning about food waste and food insecurity throughout Environmental Education classes in K-5. Class activities center around open dialogues about basic needs and wants, the costs and decision making involved with food, shelter, and health care, and picture books such as *Saturday at the Food Pantry*, *Those Shoes* and *Food For Hope: How John van Hengel Invented Food Banks for the Hungry*. Through hands-on learning in the Big Carey garden of fruits and vegetables, participation in food waste challenges, and active recycling and sustainability efforts on campus, K-5 students make an impact with ideas to help their community, too! Fifth graders decided to collect and assemble supplies for 60 art kits for families with young children at the HHS Peace Pantry. Second graders brainstormed which essential items

Through action,
reflection, and
student initiative,
learning becomes
real-world impact.



would be most important for families and delivered them on their field trip. They toured the HHS Community Garden, Community Closet, and did a simulation of what the farmer's market style peace pantry volunteers do every Friday morning at Hillsdale High School. Next, they traveled to San Jose to get a guided tour of Second Harvest Food Bank's distribution center, the same location that packages food boxes each week and delivers to the HHS Peace Pantry Friday mornings. Students were able to observe in person and learn how many partner organizations work together to solve the problem of ongoing poverty and food insecurity in our community.

Students reflect in their Environmental Ed classes how their thinking has changed about issues such as food insecurity and food waste after these service-learning experiences, and consider what they can do as young children to effect change. They are given the opportunity to share out at a school-wide assembly about what they have learned and how others can join in the advocacy action. Although younger children have fewer opportunities to volunteer with large organizations, Carey empowers students to create these service-learning opportunities at school.

The Carey School is growing the service-learning program with the efforts of passionate teacher leaders, supportive administration, engaged parents, active community partners,

and most importantly, with the curiosity and agency of our students who are developing academic skills to make a positive impact in our community. We are eager in the next academic year to provide all-school professional development by international consultant and author of *The Complete Guide to Service Learning: Proven, Practical Ways to Engage Students in Civic Responsibility, Academic Curriculum, and Social Action*, Cathy Berger Kaye, M.A.. This training will provide tools, best teaching practices, and curricular connections for service-learning integration into the learning paths for all students.

Service-learning at Carey provides meaningful experiences for children that develop academic skills while making positive impacts in our community and the world!



BUILDING MATHEMATICAL THINKERS

Carey's First Year with
Bridges Mathematics

by Shannon Higa
Math Specialist

This past school year, Carey embarked on a new and exciting mathematical journey; we adopted the Bridges Mathematics program in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. Our goal was to unify our curriculum across grade levels and to ensure that number sense, conceptual understanding, mathematical communication, and creative problem solving are at the center of all math instruction. We hold a strong belief that "all kids are math kids," and it is vital for every student at Carey to embrace this identity. Our goal is to foster an uplifting community of mathematical thinkers where the study of math becomes a truly joyful experience. Through the Bridges Mathematics program, students engage with math in a very different way from what many of us remember when we were in elementary school. **By learning to think flexibly, investigate concepts thoroughly, and articulate their thinking, students develop both a deep understanding and genuine mathematical confidence.**

A big focus in Bridges Mathematics is supporting students to communicate their mathematical thinking and the strategies they use to solve problems. It is important that we go much deeper than just teaching computation; we want students to become fluent with numbers and to use creativity when solving problems. In every grade level, students have class-wide discussions where everyone's individual strategies are shared. Instead of teachers lecturing or showing how to get an answer, they provide unique problems for students to wrestle with and facilitate discussions and activities that explore concepts. In the upper grades, we have "Math Forums" where students lead their own discussions, share strategies, and give each other feedback. "In a math forum, we all share out our ideas and get to hear others' different perspectives and strategies," said a fifth grader. We also ask students to "explain their thinking" rather than just "showing their work." Another student said, **"You are free to let your brain solve problems on your own and in your own way." We want students to be flexible in how they solve problems and to show how different concepts connect, whether they use drawings, equations, or models to do it.**



As the Math Specialist Teacher in this new implementation, I co-teach with every homeroom teacher on a weekly or bi-weekly basis rather than teaching my own individual math classes. My support of the faculty looks different from classroom to classroom and week to week. Sometimes I lead-teach the math lesson, observe and provide feedback, or focus on student needs for the current lesson. In addition, I meet with each grade level team to co-plan all of the math lessons and provide support for materials, lesson ideas, and discuss instructional best practices.

After our first year of implementing the program, we have seen significant and positive changes in how our students engage with mathematics. First, Carey students are more participatory and feel more joyful about math. One fifth grader said, "I feel like [Bridges] is really fun and engaging. I like all of the Concept Quests and Work Places." When asked whether their understanding of math has improved, they said, "Yeah. Bridges has definitely taught me so many more strategies, so that's really cool." I host bi-weekly math lunches called "Math Munchies" where we engage with fun math challenges and "play" with mathematical ideas. In addition, we see that students are more comfortable sharing their ideas and strategies with their classmates. **We see that there is a higher value being placed on mathematical problem solving processes, rather than just solutions. In all grade levels, assessment data has shown wonderful mathematical growth.** Students are demonstrating mastery of skills and get frequent practice and enjoyment with Work Place games and activities. Our math curriculum is aligned from grade to grade and teachers are collaborating within grade level teams. It is already a huge success!

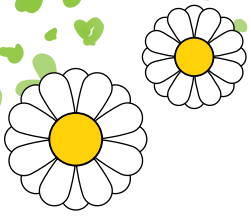
Looking ahead, we will continue to implement and grow with the Bridges math curriculum. We will be adding the Bridges Preschool math program into our PreK classes next school year and we will continue to support our K-5 teachers as they move into their second year of using the program. Finally, we plan to continue the celebration of math in our community by hosting a Family Math Festival in the Fall.



A Vision Takes Root

Construction is underway on a new preschool campus
and reimagined playground designed to inspire joy,
curiosity, connection, and belonging.





Just before the beloved Virginia Taylor Spaghetti Dinner, the Carey community gathered for a joyful groundbreaking ceremony celebrating the start of construction on two exciting projects: a new early childhood center and an updated and redesigned main campus playground.

Current families, alumni, faculty and staff came together to mark this special milestone and look ahead with excitement to both spaces opening in Fall of 2027. During the ceremony, participants planted a tree that will later be transplanted to the new preschool campus. Participants also shared wishes for the new spaces on pieces of seed paper. Each wish was read aloud and placed in the soil around the tree before being covered with dirt symbolizing the hopes and dreams being planted alongside Carey's future.

This new preschool is an investment in Carey's future and in our youngest learners. From the beginning, there was a shared vision to create spaces filled with joy, curiosity, belonging and connection for children and families from the very start of their Carey journey. The updated playground will also create new opportunities for our students across grade levels to play, connect and build friendships.

We look forward to welcoming our newest 2's class of students into this beautiful new space and watching them grow and flourish for years to come.



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Bringing the preschool onto the main campus would create a seamless learning environment where our youngest students would feel more connected to the broader community.



Scan to follow construction and progress as we bring these exciting new spaces to life.

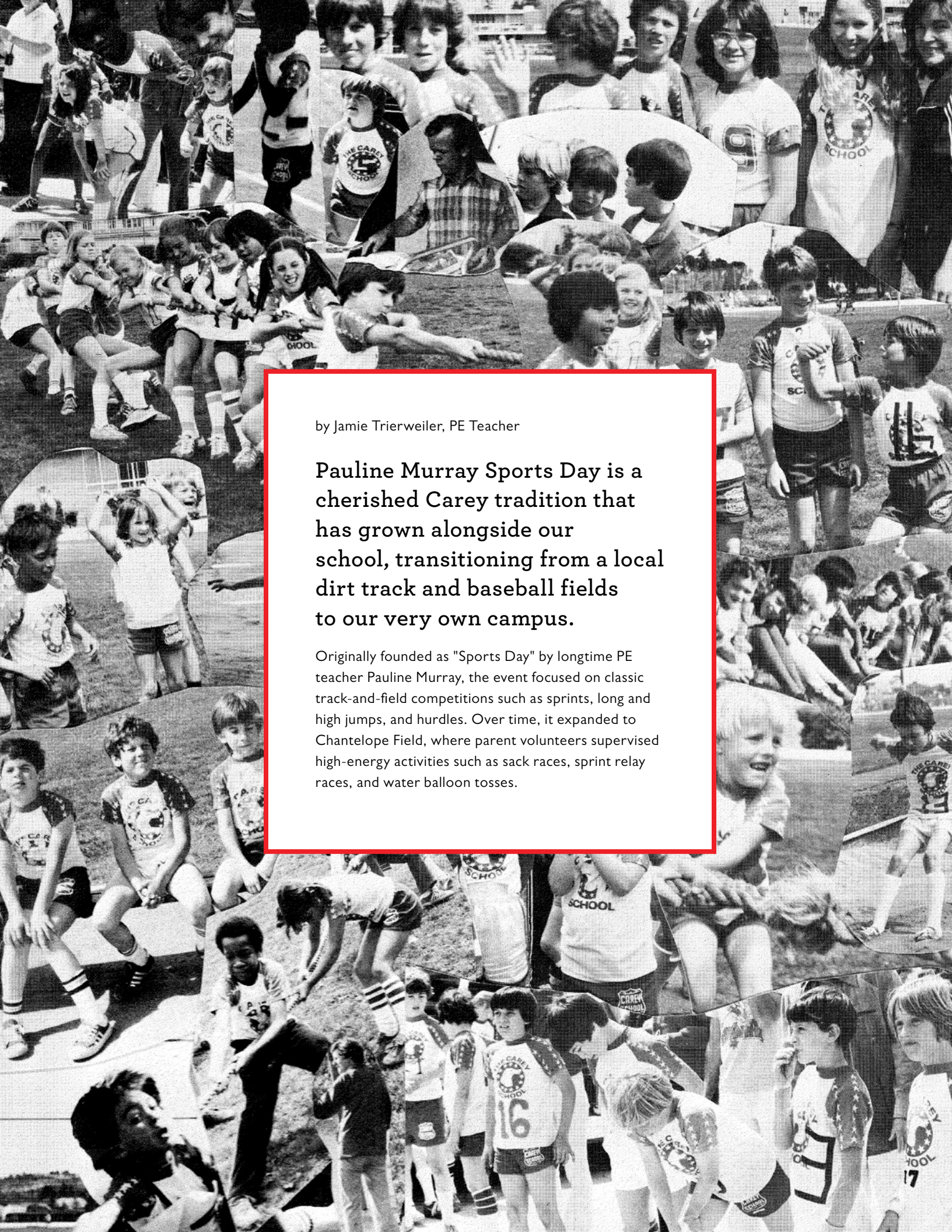




Celebrating Tradition on the Road to 100

As we continue our countdown to Carey's Centennial in 2028, we are excited to continue our series spotlighting some of the school's most cherished traditions. While these beloved events have evolved over the years, their spirit and significance remain at the heart of the Carey experience. This year, we highlight **Pauline Murray Sports Day**, a cherished Carey tradition that celebrates teamwork, connection, school spirit, and the joy of coming together as a community.





by Jamie Trierweiler, PE Teacher

Pauline Murray Sports Day is a cherished Carey tradition that has grown alongside our school, transitioning from a local dirt track and baseball fields to our very own campus.

Originally founded as "Sports Day" by longtime PE teacher Pauline Murray, the event focused on classic track-and-field competitions such as sprints, long and high jumps, and hurdles. Over time, it expanded to Chantelope Field, where parent volunteers supervised high-energy activities such as sack races, sprint relay races, and water balloon tosses.



Though the event has grown and evolved, its core values remain unchanged. It is a joyful, action-packed culmination of the school year that emphasizes participation, teamwork and connection.

By competing and making memories together, our students continue a storied tradition of field day events that has enriched the Carey community for decades.

Since 2021, the festivities have relocated to the main Carey campus. Students from preschool through fifth grade participate in a wide range of individual, partner, and team events, including the 40-yard dash, the three-legged race, and the ball-and-spoon relay. To foster teamwork and school spirit, students wear their class colors and perform grade-level cheers throughout the day. Led by our dedicated faculty and staff, Pauline Murray Sports Day remains a highlight of the year, celebrating sportsmanship, community, and fun.



Empowering Excellence

Our faculty and staff are committed to ongoing training to grow and develop their profession.



Rethinking Math Education

Lisa Duque & Shannon Higa

We had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Youcubed Mathematics Leadership Summit at Stanford. The summit was led by Dr. Jo Boaler and Cathy Williams, both mathematical researchers who are working to bring about research-based change in math education. School and district leaders from around the country came together to discuss how to help their schools shift from traditional methodologies in math education to research-backed models that incorporate mathematical mindsets and context-based instruction. We were also inspired to learn about the huge achievement gains from schools and districts that have incorporated these new practices. It was wonderful to share with fellow educators and to play and explore with the math concepts ourselves. It was fun and enriching day and helped us to envision the mathematical experiences of our students.

Designing Classrooms for Belonging

Joseph Miller

I had an invaluable opportunity to participate in "CATDC Neurodiversity x Co-Regulation" this year, which deepened my understanding of why classroom regulation is essential for children to feel emotionally safe and belong. Predictable, consistent routines benefit all students, particularly those who are neurodivergent or have learning differences. Routine expectations are crucial for regulating nervous systems, providing space for "take off" and "landing" during daily transitions, and fostering learning success and joy. When students are distracted or uncertain of instructions, a built-in "pathway forward" must be in place in the classroom so they can re-enter and resume learning without shame or threat. When

overwhelmed, core elements of classroom regulation, such as choice, neutral teacher observation, and manageable workload chunks,



provide a stable "floor" for individual redirection. These principles from the Neurodiversity x Co-Regulation course align with Carey's mission, which enabled me to apply them to my classroom culture and management skills, enhancing students' joyful learning experiences and sense of emotional safety.

Beyond the School Day

Laura Baran

This year, I attended SPARC, a national conference for independent school leaders in after-school, enrichment, and summer programming. It was a valuable opportunity to connect with peers, both local and national, to discuss best practices and innovative approaches to these dynamic programs. We explored how programs like After School Adventures, Extended Carey, and Camp Carey have evolved from traditional childcare into intentional spaces where social-emotional growth and connection are prioritized. I returned inspired with new ways to build on our offerings, amplify student voice and choice, and ensure the 'Carey magic' continues seamlessly right up until pickup.



The Power of Thinking Classrooms

Danielle Robertson

Attending the CMC (California Mathematics Council) North Math Conference this past December was truly transformative to my teaching practice. I've always been an educator who values learner agency - I believe that learners are co-creators of their learning experiences and of the curriculum. Attending this conference exposed me to the work of Dr. Peter Liljedahl and his explorations of 'building thinking classrooms.' His work has unlocked a whole new, brilliant toolkit that has enabled me to offer opportunities for fifth grade learners to unlock new understandings that are far beyond that of a 'typical' primary school experience. Not only are they reasoning in mathematics far beyond their grade level, but their thinking in all disciplines has been challenged in profound ways. It's been a truly inspiring year thanks to the CMC North Conference!



Creativity as a Collective Right

Taylor Dorstewitz

The Reggio Emilia approach is a student-centered education philosophy. A major highlight of attending NAREA (North American Reggio Emilia Alliance Winter Conference) was hearing from the guest speakers, Valentina Violi, who is a pedagoga, and Filippo Chieli, who is an atelierista. Hearing their examples of how creativity is a child's collective right was very inspirational. The knowledge and examples from this conference have already been so useful and enriching. At Carey's Preschool, we follow a similar approach, with an emergent curriculum that explores the interests of the children. When providing experiences that are fun and engaging, the environment becomes their "third teacher," not only fostering students' joy of learning but also their natural development.



First Impressions from their First Year at Carey

The Hum Tao Family

Choosing a school for Marceline as she prepared to enter kindergarten was going to be daunting under any circumstance. Doing it from Houston added an extra layer of challenge. School websites only tell you so much, and without an established community to tap for honest perspectives, we felt like we were mostly guessing. We knew we'd need to see the schools with our own eyes. The many round-trip flights to the Bay Area with our little ones had their challenges, but we wrapped up each trip so thankful we'd made the effort. While we saw examples where website slogans clashed with in-person conversations, Carey's mission was genuinely reflected across every interaction. Carey's messaging went beyond academics, clearly valuing the intentional effort to foster a community around our children, something our time as transplants in Houston made us appreciate.

The whole family was sold on Carey after Feather's Frolic. Several older children brought Marceline and Louisa to explore the garden, telling them all about how they grew the strawberries and when to pick them, patiently answering our girls' many questions. Our girls left asking when they could hang out with the nice big kids again.

We were struck by the poise and confidence the students displayed while talking to both younger children and adults. Multiple events displayed their kindness without prompting, confidence with humility, and curiosity without limits.

We are happy to say that Carey has met every expectation we had. Marceline truly loves school, telling us all about her day from pickup, and we get an encore at dinner. She's most eager to brag about her classmates who've gotten belt promotions for jump rope, learned a new monkey bar skill, or how loudly they all cheered for a classmate that got a golden feather. She's developed community not just within her classroom or grade, but across the school including her older buddy and nest. Meanwhile, Carey has helped our family find lifelong friends and build a community that has already made us feel at home.

As our youngest daughter, Louisa, prepares to join Little Carey in the fall, we feel grateful that both of our children will grow up in a community of students, families, educators and staff that truly value curiosity, confidence, and joy.



Lauren, Derrick, Marceline and Louisa

The Aklivanh Family

This is our first year at Carey, and in many ways, it marks a new chapter for our entire family.

As two dads raising three young children, Oren (6), Noa (3), and baby Ari, we spend a lot of time thinking about logistics (snacks, schedules, sports gear...so much gear), but even more time thinking about community. Living away from extended family, the places we choose to invest in become our village. So when it came time for Oren to start kindergarten, we weren't just choosing a school, we were choosing where our family would belong.

As parents, we had all the usual questions. Will he feel comfortable? Will he find his people? Will we?

Oren answered those questions quickly in his own way, by running into school each morning with excitement and ease. Oren is curious, strong-willed, and full of playful energy, the kind of kid who throws himself fully into whatever he's doing. He is also, in his own words, "definitely the fastest kid in the class," a title he takes very seriously and reminds us of often, usually while sprinting through the house. Watching him build new friendships from scratch with that same confidence and joy has been one of the most meaningful parts of this year for us.

One moment that captures our experience as a family was the Carey Camp Out. We showed up not really knowing anyone and with a 3-month-old in tow. More than a few people looked at us like we were slightly out of our minds, which felt fair. But what we found there was something special, a community where every family shows up a little differently and that difference is welcomed. Between juggling bedtime routines in a tent and getting to know other families under the stars, we realized we were exactly where we were supposed to be.



Chris, Eyal, Oren, Noa and Ari

Since joining Carey, Oren has continued to grow in ways we see every day, in his confidence, his curiosity, and his willingness to try new things.

As we look ahead, we hope Noa and Ari will one day have the opportunity to be part of this same community.

For a family like ours, that sense of belonging isn't just important, it's everything. And at Carey, we've found not just a school, but a place that feels like home.

Moments of Magic ✨





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Throughout the year, our classrooms and campuses have been filled with moments that capture the true spirit of learning — sparks of curiosity, creativity, and connection that leave a lasting impression. Every month, our Director of Studies, Audra Carli, has shared these “Moments of Magic,” and this collection brings them together to celebrate the incredible learning, growth, and joy that define the Carey experience. These photos offer a glimpse into the many ways our community makes each day meaningful, and serve as a reminder of just how much magic a year can hold.

Faculty Milestones

5 YEARS

ROSSI MARTIN
Fifth Grade Assistant Teacher
by Christina and Pablo Lema



Each of our three children has had the pleasure of having Mr. Martin as a teacher over his five years at Carey — in different capacities, but with the same result: they adore him. As sports parents who are reliably the loudest cheering section at any athletic event, we

consider ourselves experts on support and enthusiasm. And it is our expert opinion that Mr. Martin is the loudest and most wholehearted supporter of every child who crosses his path at Carey.

From his first Carey days as an assistant teacher in Sierra's fifth grade class, it was clear Mr. Martin has a rare gift. He is outgoing and warm, but also refreshingly honest. Sierra still today remembers that his nickname for Sierra was "4'11" because she swore she was 5'0". Seriously, he is the kind of teacher kids trust precisely because he tells it like it is while always making them feel capable. That is a line only the most talented educators can walk. Similarly, in Adriana's fifth grade class, she noted that Mr. Martin sets realistic goals without ever dimming a child's ambition, and that he explained even the most challenging concepts with clarity and creativity. As PE teacher for Matias, the review was simple and decisive: Mr. Martin is a mushroom...he is a fungi! Mr. Martin shows up every single day with energy, humor, and genuine investment in every Carey kid.

But what has moved us most is watching him at fifth grade graduation. When Mr. Martin speaks about a child on that graduation stage, the depth of connection is obvious. **He doesn't just know his students — he sees them. The care and pride in his voice makes clear that each child has left a real mark on him, just as he has left one on them.**

Rossi, thank you for five wonderful years of making our children feel encouraged, seen, and ready for whatever comes next. Here's to many more!

SYDNEY NEVES
Preschool 3's Teacher
by Nick Craig



When both of our children, Ryan and Emma, entered Carey's 3s program, they did so like many young children with equal parts curiosity and uncertainty. Starting school for the first time can feel overwhelming and for many families it marks one of the first major steps toward independence. From the very beginning, Sydney created an environment that immediately put our children at ease and transformed that uncertainty into confidence, excitement and joy.

What has stood out most about Sydney is her incredible ability to make every child feel safe, supported and truly known. When I asked Ryan what he remembers most about Sydney, he quickly shared, "She helps us all get along and become close friends," while Emma sweetly added, "She helps me understand my feelings and my friend's feelings." For children so young to identify that so clearly speaks volumes about the impact Sydney has had on them.

Social and emotional learning is one of the most critical foundations in early childhood education and Sydney has an extraordinary gift for teaching those lessons with care and patience. She has a unique ability to connect individually with each child, helping them navigate emotions, build friendships and develop the interpersonal skills that will serve them for the rest of their lives. These are lessons that extend far beyond the classroom and help shape who they become both personally and professionally.

Sydney's warmth, kindness and natural connection with children make her truly exceptional. She brings a presence to the classroom that allows every child to feel understood and empowered to grow into their best selves.

On behalf of our family and so many others, thank you Sydney, for the profound impact you have on our children during some of the most formative and meaningful years of their lives.

BRENDA CAMPOS

Kindergarten Assistant Teacher

by Lisa Wertheimer

Brenda has filled her classroom with curiosity, kindness, a little bit of BTS knowledge, and a sense of wonder that her students will carry with them long after they leave. That kind of impact doesn't happen by chance. It comes from the care that Brenda brings to everything she does.

I can still remember my son's first day of Kindergarten at The Carey School. Like most kindergartners, he was feeling shy, nervous, and unsure of what to expect from his new teachers and new school. The school was huge to him at the time, and walking all the way from the front gate to the back of the school was excruciatingly long to him. His nerves would build and build with each step he took. However, at the end of this journey was his classroom with Brenda and Mrs. Martin. We thought we won the lottery with this powerhouse of a team known as KM. These superheroes would greet their students with a high five, a handshake, or a hug every day. Brenda would meet my son with such genuine care, patience, and warmth that it changed everything for him. She didn't rush him. She took the time to understand him, to comfort him, and to gently help him come out of his shell. Because of these two Superheroes, what started as a scary new experience, became a place where my son felt safe, supported, and loved. That kind of compassion leaves a lasting mark, and it's something for which our family will always be grateful.

In these five years, Brenda Campos has done far more than deliver lessons. She has sparked curiosity, built confidence, and created a space where students feel seen, heard, and valued. Whether it's helping students find their voice through writing about the life cycle of butterflies, celebrating their 100th day at school, or sharing her love for stories like *The Rainbow Fish*, she has made learning both meaningful and memorable.

But don't just take my word for it. Karena Martin is also a superfan of Brenda. Karena wants you all to know that she is, "so thankful to have worked with someone as grounding, kind, and caring, as Brenda! Even in the toughest moments, her calm nature made the impossible feel possible." Karena's thoughtful reflection of how much Brenda means to her is just a small glimpse into how much respect her colleagues have for her as well.

Brenda, we know this is just one chapter in a much longer story of influence and inspiration you will create. Thank you for everything you've done, and everything you continue to do. To quote BTS, you light up our lives like dynamite! Congratulations to you!



JOSEPH MILLER

Fourth Grade Teacher

by Eric Pao

When you first meet Mr. Miller, one thing that immediately strikes you is his smile. It's a smile that puts both nervous students and nervous parents at ease. It's a signal that everything is going to be just fine and that you're about to have an amazing, heartwarming interaction.

Every school morning, for the last 5 years, Mr. Miller has taken in twenty or so children in various states ranging from sleep deprivation and mild illness to anxiety and hyper activity. He has then expertly guided them through their school day infusing each one with his combination of personal attention, skilled diplomacy, and infectious happiness. His knowledgeable approach to childhood education, his embrace of the social-emotional learning that Carey is known for, and his genuine enthusiasm has become well known on campus, as obvious and comforting as the smile on his face.

My son, Ben, absolutely loved his time in Mr. Miller's class. He loved the games they played, he loved the lessons, and most of all he loved the music infused into the curriculum. Many days after school, when I asked Ben how his day went, he would start by gushing about the music that Mr. Miller had played for them. "Have you heard of Tracy Chapman?", he'd ask. Most of the time, we'd end up queuing up the "new songwriter" on our drive home and we'd talk about the themes, what they meant, and how the artist felt when they made their song. It's this sort of dialog and inspiration that the children take with them from Mr. Miller's class and from which we all benefit.

In a complicated world where our kids are trying to find themselves and find their place in society, Mr. Miller has excelled at creating a safe, positive learning environment and, as one of those aforementioned nervous parents, I cannot be more happy to have Mr. Miller at this institution. Congratulations on your five year anniversary with the The Carey School!



10 YEARS

LYLY PHAM

Third Grade Teacher

by Vivian Lovett

We're celebrating ten years of someone who is truly one of a kind, Lyly Pham. From the moment she walks into a room, you can feel it (and more often than not, hear it)—her warmth, her energy, and her unmistakable joy. It's the kind of presence that lifts everyone around her.



Even before Celeste was in Lyly's class, she confidently declared that 3rd grade with Ms. Pham would be "more fun than Disneyland." That's a bold claim, so I followed up with Celeste at the end of the year—and she stood by her assessment. By chance, we actually ran into Lyly at Disneyland and ended up sharing a ride together. That experience stuck with Celeste so much that she later chose it as the topic for one of her main writing assignments in 3rd grade. That says a lot about how much Lyly connects with her students.

What makes her truly extraordinary is not just the joy she brings, but the care and intention behind it. Third grade was a pivotal year for Celeste, a time when she was really growing and finding her footing. Lyly created a space where Celeste felt supported and encouraged, while also gently but firmly pushing her when she wanted to give up. She made sure Celeste never felt defeated and instead helped her build confidence in herself in a lasting way. And somehow, she does all of this not just for one student, but for every student who walks into her classroom.

Thank you for ten incredible and impactful years, Lyly. Our community and our kids are better because of you, and our family is certainly better because of you. And for Celeste, your classroom is truly the happiest place on earth.

25 YEARS

KARENA MARTIN

Kindergarten Teacher

by Lauren Hum

It was so surprising for me to learn that Karena Martin is celebrating 25 years at Carey! Despite her youthful glow, her 25 years at Carey are obvious because Karena has developed the kind of wisdom that only comes from decades of nurturing young minds.

Kindergarten is one of the hardest grades to teach. It is the first time students coming from various backgrounds are asked to spend hours each day in a structured classroom and dedicate their time to traditional learning. In this complex environment, Karena is well known by families as a teacher who observes every little detail and approaches each child thoughtfully. She tailors lesson plans and behavior plans to help every student succeed and feel a sense of belonging in their kindergarten classroom.

A few months back, my daughter Marceline started wearing glasses, and as her parents we knew she was a bit nervous about this change in her appearance but we figured she would adapt eventually. On her first day with her glasses, Karena immediately noticed Marceline was anxious about what her friends would think. So she started the morning meeting by noting that Marceline was wearing glasses. She gave her a compliment and then led the whole class in a discussion about how some people need glasses to help them see, Mrs. Martin included. After that intentional morning conversation, Marceline came home excited about her glasses and proud to wear them, just like Mrs. Martin.



Parents and families describe Karena as someone who immediately puts you at ease, has the ability to find joy and humor in the little things, and makes every child feel special. During school-wide events you often see older students stopping by her classroom for a hug and quick catch up. I know my daughter will be one of those kids when she is older. Karena is well-loved by the whole community.

On behalf of all the students and parents who have had the fortune of knowing you in your 25 years at Carey, thank you for absolutely everything.



Julie, Ellie, Olivia, Theo and Albert



A Community That Stays With You

Reflections from the Lee Family, Proud Carey Alumni

by Julie and Albert Lee

We still remember those first weeks of kindergarten drop-off with Olivia. Every morning, she'd hold onto one of our hands for dear life. We'd anxiously walk her up to the gate, gently pry her fingers loose, try to give a reassuring smile, and then watch her head inside, never looking convinced this was a good idea. On our way back to the car, we'd both be feeling that unique kind of parental worry you only really understand if you've been there before.

By the end of 5th grade, that same little girl stood up at graduation in front of her class and gave a speech. It was funny, thoughtful, and so confident that it honestly surprised us. It was one of those moments when you realize, almost without noticing, your kid has grown up right in front of you. Those six years at Carey didn't just teach her facts; they helped her become more herself. We think that encapsulates the Carey experience. Carey brings out the best in your children while giving them a broad set of tools to succeed wherever life takes them next.

We had three kids go through Carey over about a decade: Olivia first, then Ellie, then Theo. Each of them found their own way there and built close friends with whom they continue to make memories today. Our whole family was drawn into the community as well. Walking with neighbors at Walkfest, spotting the numerous friendly faces at the Spaghetti Dinner year after year, hanging around at pickup

just because the conversation was good. Many of the friendships we made back then are still among our closest. There's just something about going through those early parenting years together that fast-tracks friendships in a way that's hard to find later on. When Olivia graduated from high school last year, several families organized a celebration for all of her Carey classmates. It was one of the best days of the year, seeing all the kids together, thriving, and reminiscing with a hilarious and amazing group of parents.

We could go on and on about the teachers and staff, and our kids still go back to visit them whenever they're home from school. That probably says more about Carey than anything else we could write.

Now, Olivia's a college freshman. Ellie's a junior in high school, and Theo's a sophomore. They're confident, curious, and honestly just fun to be around. So much of who they are took shape in those early Carey years, in classrooms where someone really saw them and quietly nudged them to believe in themselves a little more.

Carey brings out the best in your children while giving them the tools to succeed wherever life takes them next.

Eli Price

Carey Class of 2019

As I prepare to go off to college, I find myself looking back to the place where my education began, The Carey School. Although it has been a long time since I attended, a few memories from Carey have stayed with me.

The first memory that comes to mind when I think of Carey is not mine but instead one that my mom told me countless times. On my first day at drop-off before starting kindergarten, I told her that I was not ready to go to school because I would not make any friends. By the end of that day, however, I came home and told her that I had already found a best friend. This story has particular significance for me now because, like my kindergarten self, I am about to enter a new chapter in life without knowing anyone beforehand.



As the years went forward, I have some more memories of the community and my friendships there. I remember not wanting to leave aftercare until the last moment so as not to miss anything. I remember playing tag by the new red slide just after it was constructed. I also remember watching an animated movie called Flatland about two-dimensional shapes for an afterschool club. We enjoyed it so much that we must have watched it five times. In fifth grade, we did a reenactment of the American Revolution with costumes and roles assigned to each person. One classmate played the role of George Washington. He only had one line to say, “these are the times

that try men’s souls.” It was not a big line, but he made it the center of the show by saying it so many times, at the wrong spots, that by the end of his scene everyone was laughing. To this day, whenever George Washington is mentioned, my mind goes to the Hall of Feathers at Carey.

To fill in the gaps of what I don’t remember, I looked through a handful of boxes and binders of the schoolwork I did in fourth and fifth grade. It struck me while going through my old work that Carey had prepared me quite well for my academic future. I learned important skills about writing and reading, and I studied much more advanced topics than I expected. One example is how I interviewed my aunt about her experience fleeing South Vietnam as a child for a project. This project taught me how to communicate with adults, conduct an interview and research a historical topic.

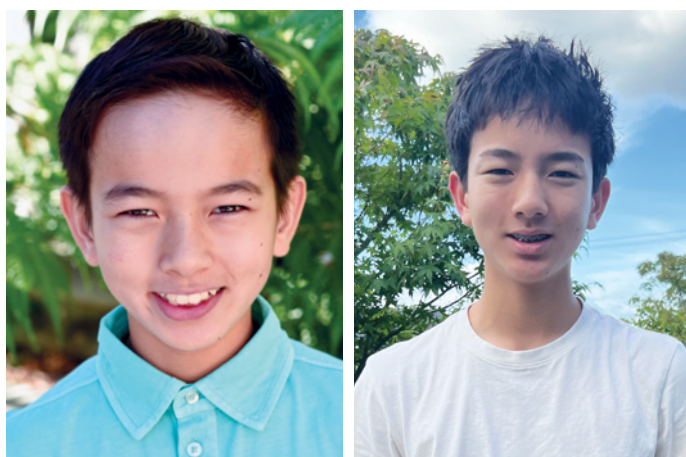
Now, while preparing to take the next big step in my life, I will look to my memories from The Carey School for guidance. At the very start, Carey helped me take a big step walking into kindergarten for the first time.

Over the next six years, the school prepared me for the future both academically and by teaching me the value of friendship, creativity and community, values that continued to guide me through the past seven years at Woodside Priory. As I go to college, I am grateful for the opportunities Carey gave me at the start of my education and like my first day of kindergarten, I will walk into Villanova not knowing anyone, but ready to find my place.

Noah Lochbaum

Carey Class of 2023

While I graduated from The Carey School a while ago, their lessons have stuck with me for the entirety of middle school. My experience at Menlo has shaped the way that I have thought about friendship. Friendship is complex and it comes with lots of



benefits and issues. Friends are not only people that make you laugh, but people who are vulnerable with you and don't judge you negatively for who you are.

When I first stepped on campus, I was afraid of not having people to seek comfort in, but I immediately found what I was searching for. I was walking through the locker hallway when I came across a boy named Kou. At that time, I didn't know his name, but when he closed his locker and saw me, he asked me what my name was. I was shocked, and didn't even think before I said, "What's yours?" We kept asking each other that same question over and over again even during our grade camping bonding experience to get to know each other. Since the day we finally introduced ourselves, we have been extremely close. The Carey School helped me cultivate this amazing friendship with Kou. Their lessons on inclusivity and belonging helped me make him feel heard and seen, which I think is a very important part of making new friends.

Leaving behind middle school is going to be a bit of a bittersweet experience for me. I am sad to say goodbye to my peers in middle school and my amazing teachers. On the positive side, I am looking forward to trying new things in high school and have much more freedom in what I choose to do whether that is sports, clubs or even classes. As I move from grade to grade, I will always keep in mind my time at Carey.

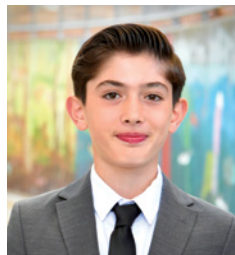
One of the many amazing things I remember from Carey was golden feathers. Watching others get called up with smiles on their faces made me feel happy for them. Golden feathers not only show what students are doing in the Carey school community, but they also give students recognition for what they did.

I remember when I got my first golden feather, my sense of belonging was boosted while also providing me with the motivation to keep doing good things. Carey has taught me many of the core values I live by: kindness, respect, and responsibility. Their values align with Menlo's a lot and I will never forget the impact Carey has made on me and who I am today.

Congratulations



Ada Atali



Jake Barizon



Alessio Baroni



Shaan Bauer



Ethan Bresnahan



Ellie Chan



Rory Chen



Emily Cheng



Felix Colaco



Alana Dirrenberger



Daniella Elgasseir



James Feng



Dominic Gambina



Elodie Hwang



Leah Jurek



Desi Kadakia



Reia Kuo



Juliet Lochbaum



Katie Luo



Izzy O'Brien

Carey Class of 2026



Ezra Price



Aiden Pu



Kabir Ramdas



Itzel Ramirez-Marshall



Madhavan Rao



Artie Rind



Chloe Salins



Ben Seem



Aaryav Shah



Olive Song



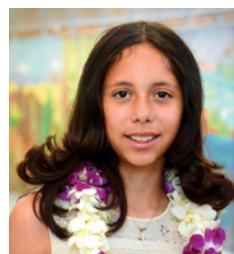
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Save the Date: Walkfest is on November 8, 2026

