



# THE CARROLL SCHOOL CONNECTION

Fall 2009

[www.carrollschool.org](http://www.carrollschool.org)

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## MESSAGE FROM STEVE WILKINS

The Carroll community is extremely energized and focused on the theme of success for all of our children. The core themes for 2009 are:

**Carroll’s Team:** We believe that our team of extremely well-trained and dynamic adults is truly operating as an organized, synchronized system.

**Student Process:** We have fortified our “Paper Shepherd” approach to collect essential student information including biographical data, testing data, parent conference notes, case study notes, “what works best” list, and historical information from previous year’s teachers.

**Educational Technology:** Every Carroll student utilizes significant levels of technology every day. Symphony Math, keyboarding skills, SMARTBoard activities, and the Middle School laptop program are but a few examples of Carroll technology in action.

**Cognitive Development:** The fundamental notion is that we can help children become better thinkers and processors of information.

**CarrollMath:** The emergence of *CarrollMath* as a significant improvement in the delivery of math instruction for our children continues.

**The Two Campus Solution:** The Board of Trustees is bold and visionary in their decision to purchase the former Bartlett School campus. Efficiently addressing Carroll’s very challenging space constraints will improve the quality of the learning environment for every student and faculty member and will allow us to offer Carroll’s educational program to more students who need our services.

## CARROLL NEWS

### Bartlett Campus Acquisition

In late October, Carroll’s Board of Trustees voted to proceed with the purchase of the former Bartlett School campus. Carroll is able to capture this exciting opportunity thanks to the tremendous generosity within our community – our supporters pledged nearly \$4 million since the beginning of August. This year, we will continue our fundraising efforts to reach our goal of \$6.5 million, in order to pay down the mortgage to a sustainable level.

The reasons to acquire the second campus, located only 3.1 miles from Carroll’s current Lincoln campus, are compelling. The addition of this new campus allows Carroll to alleviate overcrowding on our current campus, improve the learning environment for students, and provide adjacencies of classroom and tutorial spaces for teachers and tutors, increase the ability to educate more children with dyslexia, and meet the high demands for admissions – especially in the middle school years.

In addition to being able to educate approximately 100 more children, Carroll will add a ninth grade program, and improve our athletic offerings with an expansive, newly built gym and a playing field on the new campus. Carroll will also consider offering office and clinic space to professionals in allied fields such as speech and language, occupational therapy, cognitive development, and counseling.

Carroll has a promising future. The shared vision of our community will allow Carroll to remain true to our mission of educating children with language-based disabilities, such as dyslexia; give us the opportunity to improve, expand, and enhance the quality of our education offerings; and make it possible for many more deserving children to remediate their learning difficulties.



Bartlett Library

## Cognitive Development



*Developing Cognitive Skills*

Carroll has introduced a cognitive development program into our curriculum. The program incorporates specific interventions or therapy-based interventions based on the development principles of Dr. Jean Piaget. Dr. Piaget's work provided the foundation for the advancement of specific activities for cognitive development intervention.

What is cognitive development? It is a process of developing intelligent thinking and increasingly advanced thoughts and problem-solving ability from infancy to adulthood. Three of the twelve cognitive domains, Logical Reasoning, Visual-Spatial Thinking, and Sensorimotor Development, are incorporated into programs at Carroll. Every student will receive work in logical thinking in math class, and a small group of students, who are part of a pilot program, receive lessons incorporating visual-spatial and sensorimotor development.

*Logical Reasoning:* Carroll's math program emphasizes developing our students' cognitive skills with lessons that develop logical and strategic thinking in problem solving, discovery of solutions, and fluency of math facts. One example of a lesson developing logical reasoning is "What's My Rule?", a game where children use the attributes of color, shape, size, and thickness of manipulatives to group, sort, and recognize patterns. One other way to develop and measure logical reasoning is to assess a student's understanding of the concept of conservation of quantities. For example, a teacher can have two equal balls of clay, and then roll one ball into a tube-like shape. The student who does not have an understanding of the concept of the conservation of mass, will say that one shape of clay now weighs more than the other.

*Visual-Spatial Thinking:* Carroll is developing a pilot program, by conducting assessments of a group of students in the Lower School, to determine their levels of understanding of visual-spatial thinking. One way to assess visual thinking is by exploring patterns, shapes, and symbols and seeing if a student can "match from memory" and replicate the placement of certain shapes and/ or the placement of manipulatives in a particular pattern. The earlier stages of visual thinking help

children with symbol recognition in both language and math, as well as handwriting and drawing. Later stages of complex thinking prepare the student for higher levels of comprehension, organization, graphical representations and understanding complex subject material like composition writing and science where one must mentally visualize the material.

*Sensorimotor Development*, the most fundamental of the cognitive domains, is based on how a child explores his/ her environment through the adaptation of motor skills. One example of an activity designed to assess sensorimotor development is called "starfish." A teacher will ask a child to put his/her right arm over his body, and then right leg over the other leg. A child needs to coordinate his knowledge with how to move his body according to the request. The requests increase to higher levels of coordinated activities. A child needs to have an adequate mental map of his body to understand how he spatially interacts with the world, and coordinate body axes for more complex movement activities such as jumping rope or riding a bicycle.

The goal of the cognitive development program is to "fill in" underlying cognitive deficits, bring forward higher levels of thinking through different activities and lessons, to affect change in students' brains, and advance higher levels of understanding and ability in each of these three domains. Ultimately, students who raise their levels of cognitive thinking will approach their curriculum more successfully.

## Everyone@One



*Learning Strategies*

This fall, Carroll's teachers and tutors are meeting to focus on six principal strategies and to discuss how to integrate these strategies into Carroll's daily lessons. The strategies are: Memory, Organization, Checking, Comprehension, Attention, and Shifting. Each strategy has identified components. For example, components of Comprehension that are currently being explored and discussed are Activate Knowledge, Graphic Organizers, Question/ Clarify, Predict, Visualize, and Summarize. The underpinnings of Memory are Mnemonics (the process of developing and improving memory), Body Movement, Rehearse/ Repeat, Association, and Graphic Organizers.

## Everyone@One (continued)

Every team has the task to identify four ways to incorporate each of the strategies into their subject areas. For example, one group identified that the Lower School students benefit by checking their work with the COPS approach—reviewing Capitalization, Overall Appearance, Punctuation, and Spelling, and when the children reach the 6th grade, they move to an approach that is more sophisticated: CARRP—Cut, Add, Replace, Reorder and Proofread. An additional system identified that benefits students in the Middle School is POWER—Plan, Organize, Write, Edit/ Revise and Rewrite. As the students advance, they need consistent strategies to revise more extensively, thus benefiting their work in each subject area.

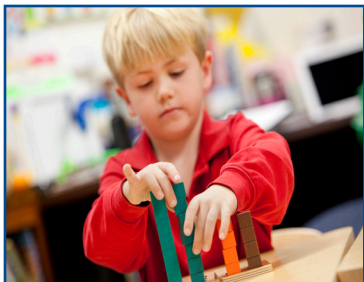
The ultimate goal is to have a system in place that provides consistency in every grade level, the horizontal aspect, and consistency throughout the Lower and Middle Schools, the vertical aspect of Carroll’s curriculum. When this consistent, systematic approach is employed by teachers and tutors from the Beginning Readers program through to the 8th grade, our students will follow a developmental scope and sequence giving our students the skills and strategies to become independent learners.

## They Got It!

During a recent Beginning Readers class, Mrs. Wilkins was reviewing numbers with her students. The students had manipulatives, primarily wooden blocks, placed in front of them on a table.

Speaking to a student who had several manipulatives, Mrs. Wilkins asked, “Do you recognize the pattern...can you think about the number? How do you know it is 5?” A young student answered, “I recognize 4 and then I just add one more and I know it is 5.” Mrs. Wilkins asked a different student what number of blocks was placed in front of her and the student answered, “I know it is 6. I just know what 6 looks like.”

Recognizing numbers, rather than needing to count to determine the total number, is a breakthrough as students gain their number sense. On this fall morning, the children “got it” and their teacher was thrilled!



*Math Lesson*

## KIDS @ CARROLL Students’ Voices



*Rowing Dories*

Three 8th grade students share their impressions from their unique Carroll experience on Bumpkin Island, where they camped for three days and two nights, rowed dories, canoed, and explored the harbor island.

“...The trip was an awesome experience. I enjoyed the night walk most of all because it was relaxing, fun, and enjoyable to have time just to think, be alone, and listen to the sounds of the night. Camping was “OK” because I did not get much sleep, but I liked being outdoors! I really liked dory tipping even though the water was freezing! Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the trip!” --Caroline

“Being with two best friends on an island is one of the greatest experiences of one’s life. We might not realize it yet because we are all young eighth grade students, but the trip to Bumpkin was in some ways life changing. Everyone on the island changed slightly even though they might not see it themselves. When Bumpkin comes to mind, I think of Indians and their teepees and their struggle for food everyday.... ‘Everyone in the eighth grade had to come out of their comfort zone’, as Mr. Brown said, on the island. We found out what it was like to live with no running water, no big houses, and no warm comfortable beds. Friendships became stronger on Bumpkin. Mr. Brown made sure we all had a time to remember forever.” --Ben

“I thought the trip to Bumpkin Island was really fun. I enjoyed being with my friends. I achieved my goal of becoming closer to my friends as I explored Bumpkin with them. I really liked the night walk because it was relaxing. It was nice to be alone and take a break from all of the socializing. The trip should definitely be continued for years to come! Thank you to the 8th grade teachers and Mr. Brown for making this possible!” --Corey



*Lessons on the Beach*

The Carroll School  
25 Baker Bridge Road  
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**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Homecoming, Wednesday, Nov. 25, 11 am - 1 pm**

**Fall Festival**

How do Carroll's students and faculty like to have fun after eight weeks of working hard at school? They celebrate their achievements with a fun-filled Fall Festival. Carroll's campus was filled with the joyful sounds of children playing capture the flag, teammates cheering as their friends ran an obstacle course, and squealing as they tossed a rubber chicken as far as they could. Children sported ghoulish, painted faces, learned how to tie-dye shirts, grind apples in a cider press, and of course, make Carroll's famous pickles. To make the day complete, students, teachers, and parents enjoyed the beauty of the fall colors in the woods of Lincoln as they rode a hayride around our campus.



*Estimating the Pumpkin's Weight*



*Hayride Fun*

**CARROLL QUOTES**

"When I think of The Carroll School, I think of a place that has made me a person again."  
*Alumnus*

"Our teachers are always there for us. You never have to be afraid to ask questions."  
*7th Grade Student*

"Like most Carroll School parents, we spent years trying to find the right learning environment for our child. It is such a relief to have our daughter at The Carroll School."  
*Parent*

"Here at Carroll we found the answer to our hopes and dreams and we see it in our son's inquiring mind every day."  
*Parent*