

November 1, 2011

Seeding for Science!

It's seeding time at BYDS—our Pre-K kids will be starting their seeds on Thursday morning this week, and it will be a real scientific approach, with each class taking on their own method: cups; plates & paper towels; plastic bags. We're starting with lima beans—something simple--and then we'll expand into additional plants, vegetables and herbs when it becomes the right month during the winter season. We'll see which method of seeding will work best—our Pre-K students will be able to observe all the approaches and make their guesses and even determine the winner! They'll see growth in action, then they will observe and analyze, and then the real party begins for when we have the celebratory first student planting!

Helena Zach, our Pre-K teacher assistant to Linda Meyerson, is our on-staff gardening guru. She brought a superb book to school, "Kids Gardening—A Kids' Guide to Messing Around in the Dirt," written by some folks from Palo Alto who put together a community garden out there. I will enjoy looking at the initial chapters so that we are doing things right and doing what's best for the kids. Helena told me she lived out there in Palo Alto (near Stanford University) for three years...if any of you have ever spent time walking the neighborhoods of Northern California, you'll know what I mean when I say that the residential neighborhoods are incredibly effulgent—everything grows out there. My favorite neighborhood? Just walk any of the streets on the north side of Berkeley's campus (University of California at Berkeley), and you're getting one of the best natural garden walks anywhere in this country.

Incidentally, in keeping with the spirit of best practices research at Beth Yeshurun Day School, I'll be making a visit to Travis Elementary up in the Heights on Wednesday. I had the good fortune of spending an evening last week with some folks from that school, and they wanted to put me in touch with one of their parent volunteers, a Master Gardener, who they say is an amazingly knowledgeable gardener responsible for so much of what they have put together on their beautiful grounds.

I look forward to sharing with you my visit to Travis this week.