



"Alumni Speak Out" Conveys Strong Messages

By Kim Lundgren

Kim is the mother of three children at Stoneridge.

Looking back on their years at Stoneridge, what stands out for our graduates? For Max Mathey, Ross Magnant, Sage Magnant, Tori Hallowell, and Molly Kalker who spoke at the Alumni Speak Out panel, their SCMS experience was defining. And for the students and parents listening on the first Monday in January, their perspectives were quite illuminating. The evening, organized by Diana Mathey – parent of two Stoneridge graduates – is an annual event that aims to give current Stoneridge families new insights into their children's education. Judging from the reaction of the audience – which included nine UE and MS students – the evening was very successful in achieving its goal.

The students began by introducing themselves.

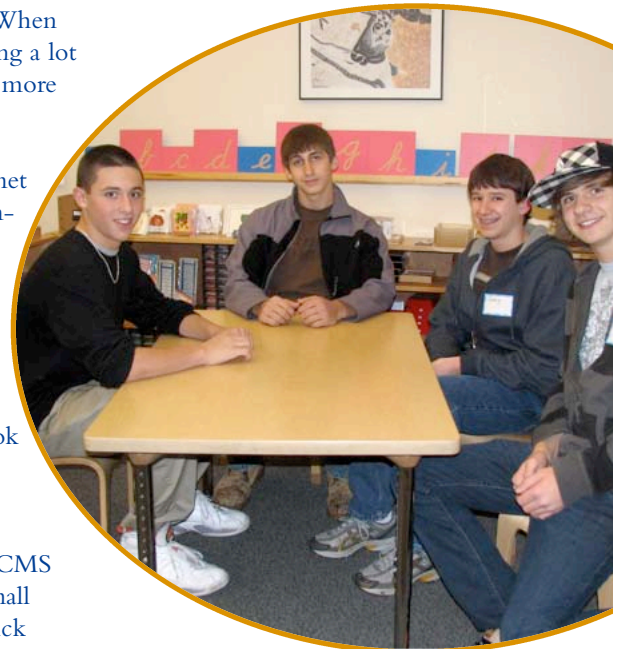
Max Mathey, a senior at Pingree School recently accepted to Northeastern University, wrote his college application essay

about Stoneridge. He cites his work ethic and a thirst for learning as two qualities connected to his experience here. "When you enjoy learning it makes everything a lot easier. You enjoy it, and you just get more out of it."

Ross Magnant, a senior at Masconomet Regional High School who just completed all his college applications, agrees. He adds, "But you also learn how to learn for yourself here. I learned how I learn." As a student of a public high school, he explained that in large classes, knowing your own learning style enables you to look out for yourself.

Sage Magnant, a sophomore at Masconomet, agreed and adds that SCMS made her more socially open. "In small classes [like Stoneridge], you don't stick with group stereotypes," she explained. Unlike some of her peers, she feels better able to be friends with people across differ

ent social groups at her school.



Reconnecting at the Alumni Reunion

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Calendar at-a-glance

Admission Open House – Sunday, January 11, 1:00-3:00 pm.

Sea Change Potluck Dinner for UE-MS Parents - Wednesday, January 14, 6:00 pm, at SCMS.

Stoneridge Parents Association (S.P.A.) Meeting - Wednesday, January 14, 8:45 am.

Sustainable Stoneridge Event – Thursday, January 15, 8:45 am. "How to Avoid Toxic Chemicals in Personal Care Products" – Presented by Elizabeth Saunders of Clean Water Action.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No School, Monday, January 19.

Inauguration Day Bake Sale – Tuesday, January 20 -for sixth-grade May trip to Washington D.C.

MSM Annual Conference – Saturday, January 24.

CH/K Room Changeover Day - Friday, January 30, 11:30 am dismissal. There will be no Kindergarten class or Extended Day Program for all CH and K students.

Parent Education Series - Charles Terranova, "Children as stewards of our world," the sustainability curriculum. Thursday, February 5, 7:30 pm.(see page 3)

Re-enrollment contracts and deposit due - Friday, February 6.

No School for TH and CH students - Monday, February 9 due to Applicant Visiting Day for prospective students.

Lower Elementary Valentine's Breakfast - Thursday, February 12, in the multipurpose room.



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Tori Hollowell, who graduated from Connecticut College last June and recently arrived back from the Semester at Sea program, credits SCMS with her discovery early on of a love for nature. “My passions are nature, science, botany, and biology, and I think a lot of that came through Montessori.”

Molly Kalker, a junior at Pingree, feels she left Stoneridge with “a really good sense of how to accept people.” “High School can be cliquey,” she explains, but SCMS “taught me to accept people and look for the best in people.” She also “learned to express myself here both in writing and in art.”

What do you think Montessori background gave you that perhaps your peers didn't have?

Max noticed that other “kids thought teachers were big, bad enforcers or something. Here they are more like your friends, and it's okay to like them.” Ross feels that “we had been taught to be much more open to new things than our peers seemed to be.” Sage believes that “you learn how you learn, and you have a better chance to take care of yourself. You find a way to work with teachers that helps you the most.”

Tori notes the work ethic. “You learn how to manage your time and get things done and to be proud of yourself. We love to learn and we respect our teachers. Liking to learn and working hard on your assignments – and not just for the sake of a grade – makes it easier to be in high school and college.”

For Molly, the Montessori difference is that you “learned to be independent, you learn to rely on the tools that you have.”

All agreed that most of their peers had no idea what Montessori meant. They enjoy shocking their current classmates by telling them how small their classes were at SCMS. A couple came up with short definitions to help their friends understand Montessori. Tori tells people that you “learn at your own pace, it's all hands-on so you learn something and also explore it in the real world.” Molly likes to quip: “We sat on the floor. We

learned everything you learned, only differently.”

What do you miss about Stoneridge?

Max: “Sometimes you feel held back because you learn as a group and you have to go on a pace with everyone else.”

Ross: “Ditto.”

Sage agrees too. She adds, “I don't feel as close with my teachers as I did here. I miss that.”

Tori agrees with all of the above. “I miss reading about [a subject] in textbooks, writing about it, and then doing something more—like going outside, going to a museum, seeing a film.”

Molly, too, agrees. “It's hard being in a big group of people who all have to learn at the same pace. I feel so bogged down by it. I also miss being close to my teachers.”

Advice to current students?

Max: “Take advantage of your teachers, talk to them. It's not available to the same degree in high school.”

Ross: “Academically I would have pushed myself harder.”

Sage: “Because you do set your own pace, I think it would be striving to do more. Take advantage of the free art room. Now everyone in the class has to do the same thing.”

Tori: “Knowing that you have freedom, like time to read, during the day. Take advantage of access to your teachers.”

A question about test-taking brought out a fascinating point about habits of learning that all the panelists seemed to agree on. Although SCMS graduates did not take formal tests until Middle School, they all agreed that test-taking was not an issue for them.

Ross put it, “At Montessori, you learn the ‘why’ for the sake of knowing it, and when they ask you [on a test] you just tell them why.”

Max chimed in, “you understand [the material] instead of just trying to memorize things.”

Tori agreed and added her longer-term perspective of a recent college graduate: “In high school, you're still close to Montessori but you might get away from it by college. You can start memorizing facts like everybody else to get by on that next exam, but forget about the ‘why’. Remember to get back to your roots.”

Ross: “I've met hundreds of robots. Wonderful people, but they have a very methodical way to going through their school life.” To some laughter Max named rival schools whose graduates, he feels, “all learn the same way. It's just creepy.” Tori cited the Montessori idea of multiple intelligences “that other schools haven't picked up on.”

The conversation came back to the strength of personal relationships at Stoneridge, and one parent asked “Do you miss circle?” The students recounted the ways that community is created in their new schools, with sharing at assemblies or through small advisor groups. Said Tori: “I think the circle morphs. As you go on, whether it's your friends, your teachers, your colleagues, whatever, the circle is still there.”

Meet Jackie our New Business Manager

We are pleased to welcome Jackie Hibbard as our Business Manager. She will be in the lobby 8:15 to 8:45 on Tuesday 01/13, Wednesday 01/14, and Thursday 01/15. She will have a nametag on so you will recognize her. She is eager to start to get to know our families. Please introduce yourself to her.

She is available throughout the school year to answer any question that you may have regarding tuition payments, financial aid and facilities. Her office is in the Admin. wing of the school. You are welcome to stop in to see her anytime. Jackie's work hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 8:15 to 3:00 pm.



Sustainable Stoneridge: "Children as stewards of our world"

Thursday, February 5, 7:30 pm

Director of Curriculum Charles Terranova will give a talk on "Children as stewards of our world," which will focus on the many ways the Stoneridge curriculum equips our students to help create a sustainable world. The presentation is under the auspices of Sustainable Stoneridge.

Before becoming the Director of Curriculum at Stoneridge, Charles was the founding head of one Montessori school, head of two other Montessori schools, and has consulted to many Montessori schools internationally. He is trained as a TH, CH and Elementary teacher and has taught CH and Elementary for many years.

Sea Change Summer Program Potluck

Parents and students from UE and MS are invited to attend a Potluck to learn about the Sea Change SUMMER PROGRAM. Sally Bradley-Goldring, who has experience hosting a student in this type of program, will join us. The Potluck will be held at Stoneridge on Wednesday, January 14, 6:00 pm. Please contact Corey McLaughlin (Maddy's Mom) to RSVP.

Welcome Endicott Student: Danielle

Please give a warm hello to Danielle James, a creative arts therapy student from Endicott, who will be spending her January Break working here at Stoneridge. She will be assisting in Stay and Play, Extended Day and AfterCare in January. Her efforts are greatly appreciated by us all.

Doubly Accredited

A year ago, we received our first accreditation by the Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE). We are very pleased to announce that just last week we received full accreditation by the American Montessori Society (AMS). Stoneridge is now doubly affirmed in the rigorous world of excellent independent schools.

Trustee Update

It Takes a School

-Eric Karlberg, Board Member

Note: Eric serves on the Board. He wrote this article with the assistance of his wife Crystal, who chairs the Parent Education Committee. They have two children at Stoneridge.

Everyday I listen to my clients' concerns regarding how they will be able to leave their families well taken care of when they are gone. We all worry about what we will pass on to our children when it's our time to go. Of course, money is what my clients are talking about, but I hope that my wife and I can leave behind a different kind of legacy for our children. Certainly, any money we can leave our children might be helpful to them, but what could be more important than the messages we send our children through our everyday actions? Stoneridge helps us as parents convey some very profound messages.

Stoneridge is a school that encourages parents to get involved and thereby show our children how important they are to us. For any parent who wants to get involved there is a committee to join or a classroom that needs a class parent. For those who have less time to commit there are opportunities to drive to and from field trips or the chance to read to the younger kids during their library time. There are speakers to hear, workshops to attend, or science and art fairs to experience with our children. Being part of what goes on at our children's school says to them, "You are important to me!" Even the act of bringing in snack, which may seem like a small gesture, makes children feel important.

Stoneridge also helps children learn that we are all part of a larger community. Completing Turkey Chores and donating to this year's mitten tree helped us talk as a family about giving to others. Having multi-age classrooms contributes to this sense of being part of a community. The older students gain confidence through helping their younger friends; the younger students feel secure in the knowledge that there is always someone to help them with whatever they are working on.

In the Stoneridge classrooms, our children are given choices that they would not be given in a more conventional classroom setting. What a powerful message to send to our children: we trust you to know what's right for you; we trust you enough to let you go at your own pace. By having the chance to make their own choices, our children share the responsibility for their own education.

A belief in self and community. These are amazing gifts that we can pass on to our children. Could we accomplish this alone? Maybe. Is it easier with the help of the passionate faculty, interested administrators and caring friends we have found at Stoneridge? Definitely!

Stoneridge Parents Association Meeting

-Wednesday, January 14, 8:45 am

Attention: All Parents

The Stoneridge Parents Association will be holding its winter meeting on Wednesday, January 14 at 8:45 am. Please join us! We will review and wrap up our fall events, discuss our current SPA activities, and there will be special information about our upcoming spring auction and celebration. Come for some coffee and treats and catch up on what's been going on at Stoneridge!



One parent's reaction to "Understanding and Responding to Allergies" a presentation by Nancy Bixbee

—Anne Brady

Anne serves on the Board and is the mother of two children at Stoneridge.

On December 2, 2008, I had the pleasure of attending a wonderful presentation on allergies by Nancy Bixbee, our school nurse. As the parent of a child with food and environmental allergies, the talk was of special interest to me. The attendance was small but the group was very engaged and the talk was well received.

Nancy started off by referring us to four books that have informed her thinking on allergies:

Allergies: Diseases in Disguise by Carolee Bateson-Koch

Healing the New Childhood Epidemics: Autism, ADHD, Asthma, and Allergies by Kenneth Boch, M.D. & Cameron Stauth

Is Your Child's Brain Starving? by Michael R. Lyon, M.D.

Gut and Psychology Syndrome: Natural Treatment For: Autism, ADD, ADHD Depression, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Schizophrenia by Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride.

She then began the substantive portion of her talk by explaining that allergies are a response to an overload on the body's systems and that they can affect all systems. There are certain factors in individuals that contribute to an individual's tendency for their systems to become overloaded:

- They may have a genetic predisposition; children inherit the tendency toward allergies.
- Biochemical individuality; some of the individual's systems are not quite right.
- There is something wrong with their metabolic state. They may have a somewhat compromised digestive system in which food is not broken down enough so proteins get into blood stream whole (as opposed to being digested into component parts) and the body reads these whole proteins as intruders to attack.
- Digestion may not be as it should be so

that they are not getting trace minerals from foods. Or they may have too acid a digestive system or inadequate flora in the digestive system.

- Improper diet (not eating healthy foods)—We no longer eat seasonally in our society and, therefore, repeat foods much more frequently than our bodies may be adapted to handle. In addition, processed foods contain no living enzymes making it impossible for our bodies to use the vitamins and minerals these foods might contain.

When there is an overload, the body responds as if there is an intruder, as if to say "this is not right." When the system is at its peak it may react to nutrients, pollen, spores, and danders as intruders, thus leading to symptoms of allergies.

There always is the hope, of course, that the body can heal itself and that allergies can be outgrown. Nancy talked about the conditions that our bodies need to heal themselves.

The steps toward health that all individuals can take are to:

- Decrease the toxic load on the body by being careful of chemical exposure and toxins in food;
- Drink good clean water;
- Carefully watch nutrition, consuming whole foods with the right balance of enzymes from fruits and vegetables and keeping acid and alkaline in balance;
- Build up the immune system through use of supplements of vitamins and minerals and fatty acids, consulting with a nutritionist or acupuncturist for guidance on possible deficiencies to address; and
- Maintain emotional balance.

For the allergic individual there are additional steps, to be made in consultation with qualified practitioners, that may be helpful in eliminating allergies. Some individuals have been successful in eliminating their allergies by controlling the acid/alkaline (pH balance) of the blood, through diet, so that the system does not become too acidic. If the system is too acidic, the proper balance of enzymes to

digest foods will not be present. Drinking plenty of good, clean (non-chlorinated) water helps in this as does eating alkalizing foods such as bananas, raw apples, and raw carrots. Taking whole food supplements can help as well. Nancy told us about some alternative therapies that have helped, many of which are also listed on the Asthma and Allergy Foundation's website, such as Natural Allergy Elimination Treatments (NAET), Holistic Nutrition treatment, homeopathy, essential oils and flower essences, and exercise and yoga.

For a parent like me—the mother of a child with multiple allergies, who also is reluctant to pile medicine upon medicine to keep his allergy and asthma symptoms under control—Nancy's talk provided new information that made a great deal of sense. It also gave me a sense of hope that someday, through some simple and non-invasive methods, we may gain control of, and eventually conquer, our son's allergies. I now have a sense that there is something I can do to help my boy overcome his allergies and live a life without the restrictions they currently impose.

Cultural Enrichment Visits this Winter

We will be adding color and energy to our already rich school life over the next couple of months with visits from the Yorick Marionette Theatre, Judith Black and David Coffin. All three are much acclaimed in their fields of theatre, storytelling and singing and will be a joyful addition to our winter days.

A warm welcome
to the new
family member in the
Galante, Gillis, and
Potter families.
Congratulations
to you all!



Sustainable Stoneridge - How to avoid toxic chemicals in personal care products

Thursday, January 15, 8:45 am

Did you ever wonder about all those chemicals with long names in your soap? shampoo? Deodorant? Are they healthy for you? Are they safe for the environment? Aren't there simpler, safer, alternatives?

Wonder no more!! Elizabeth Saunders, of Clean Water Action (CWA) will be joining us at Stoneridge on January 15th, at 8:45am to answer these questions and more!! Ms. Saunders is the Environmental Health Legislative Director for Clean Water Action. CWA is a member of the Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow, a coalition of citizens, scientists, workers, parents, doctors, health advocates and more working to prevent harm to human health, and the environment, from toxic chemicals.

Participants will learn important information about some toxic chemicals commonly found in our homes, how to choose safer alternatives, and what is happening here in Massachusetts to solve this problem. In particular we will discuss the issues of toxic chemicals in personal care products and cosmetics as well as the chemical Bisphenol-A, a substance found in some plastics and many other sources.

Auction - Celebrate Our Journey

Gretchen Putnam, Auction Chair

Now that the snow is swirling and we are all back from vacation, the auction committee is hard at work getting ready for this year's on-line auction and another fun party to celebrate our community and Stoneridge's 20th Anniversary.

Please save the evening of April 4 to come have a great time at the Auction Party at the Hellenic Center in Ipswich and don't forget

to pick up your 20th Anniversary mug in the lobby.

We'll be sending out information about donations soon, so please start thinking about the places you love to go or experiences you would like to share with other families.

As always there is lots to do to make the auction a successful fundraiser for our school. Your help is always welcome in both big and small ways.

Application to Other Schools

While the program at our School is designed to serve children through Middle School years, we recognize that some families may also want to consider other schools prior to eighth grade. Just as with our eighth graders, we view the process of "applying out" to other schools as an opportunity for the School to support you in considering these options. If you decide to pursue an application to another independent school or transfer to a public school, we ask that you make an appointment to talk with the Head of School or Assistant to the Head. This meeting will be an opportunity for us to talk about your child and your educational choices, and for us to learn about the School from your perspective.

Please call the School Office to set up this appointment. If you have forms from other schools for teachers to fill out, they should be brought to this meeting or dropped off at the School Office after the meeting. The teachers (up through Upper Elementary) request that they not receive school forms directly, but rather receive them through the School Office. After the faculty fill them out, the School Office will track the forms and ensure they are returned on time to the schools to which you are applying or transferring.

When you are applying for your child to attend other schools, you must request in writing the release of school records to the other schools. Our School will send written assessments from the last two semesters and results of standardized testing, unless specifically requested otherwise.

Inclement Weather, Delay of School, and Close of School

The decision to close school is made by 6:15 am. An email is sent to all families. To learn if the school is closed due to weather:

- Check your email.
- Call the main phone number and listen to the recording.
- Turn your television to channel 4 (WBZ), 5(WCVB), 7(WHDH), or 25 (FOX)
- Turn your radio to 1030 (WBZ).

No announcement will be made on our website.

Because our students live in many different communities throughout the North Shore, parents must exercise their final judgement about the safety of traveling on roads. The highest priority is always the safety, health, and well-being of our students and families.

Stay and Play

We are happy to announce that Stay and Play will start on January 20. Stay and Play is for three and four year old children who stay at school for lunch and outdoor play-time before being picked up promptly in the hall outside CHII at 12:55 p.m. The charge for this program is \$16 per day. You will be billed through the Business Office.

Spaces are limited, so please speak to Pat before January 15 if you would like to enroll. We will try to accommodate everyone's requests but may have to allocate spaces by raffle. Occasional drop-ins are welcome on a space-available basis.

Children House

Reminder to CH families. If you want your children to stay for Extended Day you must sign up in the office with Pat the day before. This is the only way we can be assured of proper staffing. Thank you.



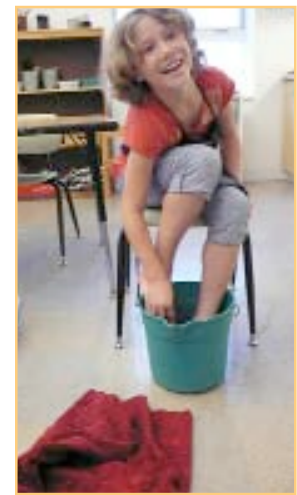
January marks the time I like to take a glance over my shoulder to appreciate the year we leave behind. I am so grateful for the fun and laughter I am privileged to share with your children as they create both masterpieces and messes. I'd like to share with you some of my favorite moments:

This is Celia. She is pretending to be Buddy. Buddy is a clay doll that many of the LE children have created thanks to Kaitlyn who first created him.



And recess art is still so much fun. Because only a few children participate, once in a while this art teacher tends to agree to a bit of messy art making. This time it was painting a la Jackson Pollack that Lila, Hattie, and Elizabeth created ~the deluxe version with splattered feet and socks!

Art is an adventure into chaos and then —back to order!



We were very pleasantly surprised to be gifted with a whole box of red plastic caps to spice jars. I wondered what the children would make with them, but never imagined what Zak, Collins, Jack and Jamaica came up with—



Eyeglasses, some with red laminate lenses!

All the artists of SCMS are grateful when you save your corks, bottle caps, buttons and other bits of glitter that make our constructions extra special, like in this wonderful restaurant complete with stools, tables, and happy family coming through the door Miriam in LE has made.



I can't wait to see what the New Year will bring us!



Middle School Workshop on Internet Safety

Mark Gustavson, MS Coordinator

A dilemma for Middle School parents: they increasingly trust their children to act responsibly in the “physical world,” but what amount of trust should they extend to their children in the digital world?

On December 10th, two agents from the FBI, Jeremy and Matt spoke to our Middle School students and parents regarding this topic. The importance of the event to our families was evident in the turnout: almost all MS students attended with one of their parents. The agents presented the information about Internet safety with humor and stories from their own experiences. The event was limited to MS students due to the frank discussion of the problems that sometimes emerge online.

Some time was spent on practical pieces of effective parenting for the online child:

- Talk to your child about sexual victimization and potential online danger.
- Spend time with your children online. Have them teach you about their favorite sites.
- Keep the computer in a common room in the house, not in your child's bedroom until trust has been developed – usually when your child is in their teens.
- Teach your child the responsible use of the resources online. Don't let this be the sole responsibility of a school or other source.
- Whatever they read online may or may not be true.

Much of the discussion focused on the dangers involving student use of Internet social sites (e.g., MySpace and Facebook). Jeremy and Matt emphasized that a viewer may not always know with whom they are speaking and sharing information when online. Also, they told the group how information, once posted online, can never be deleted. This kind of permanence of information struck home for the students. What began as a discussion focused on the students smoothly flowed into a discussion involving their parents. Both students and parents asked questions. Both parents and students were able to

ask many important questions during the presentation, showcasing Stoneridge's open communication and the comfortable setting for the presentation.

The Internet is often presented in two dichotomous ways: as a wondrous tool or a scary bogeyman. The presenters emphasized that the important skills and cautions that parents have already taught their kids to use in the “physical world” can be extended to the digital world. The same level of scrutiny parents apply to their child's physical safety should mirror the online behavior. Teach them that the wise decisions they make in their daily world apply online.

Our appreciation to Matt Oesterlin (father of one of our MS students) for arranging this workshop for us.

Announcing a NEW After School Gymnastics Program

K + 1st Grade - Mondays from 3:05 – 4:00

2nd + 3rd Grade - Wednesdays from 3:05 – 4:00

Starting after the February break, Cici Fougere will be teaching after school gymnastics in the multi purpose room. Cici has over ten years of gymnastics coaching experience and is excited to be able to offer gymnastics here at Stoneridge. Registration forms will be in mailboxes next week.

Basketball Game Schedule

Come Support our Basketball Team:

Stoneridge vs. Glen Urquhart School
 February 3 @ Glen Urquhart School
 Girls 3:45-4:45
 Boys 4:45-5:45

February 10 @ Glen Urquhart School
 Boys 3:45 – 4:45
 Girls 4:45 - 5:45

Swimming

Cici Fougere, Phys. Ed Director

This winter and spring, as part of the Physical Education program here at Stoneridge, the Kindergarten and Lower Elementary students will be sharpening up their swimming skills! Stoneridge students will be swimming at the Beverly YMCA's state-of-the-art, Olympic sized, swimming pool on Thursday afternoons from 2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. For 6 weeks, students will be learning how to swim as well as learning about safety and rescue skills that they can use for a lifetime. Students will be working with skilled swim instructors and each other to make it a pleasant and educational experience. **The first group of students to swim will be Lower Elementary A; they will begin on Thursday, January 8, 2009.**

All students will be transported to the YMCA by school bus. Students must be picked up at the YMCA at 3:10 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or Cici Fougere @ 978-927-0700 x332.

What to bring

- o Swim suit
- o Towel
- o Plastic bag for wet items
- o Swim cap – if necessary
- o Bubble – if necessary
- o Swim goggles – optional