



Issue 3: March 8, 2011

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Get Involved

Please Donate to the Atrium Annual Giving Campaign!



Thank you to the many families who have contributed to Annual Giving 2011.

[Click here for the roster of donors!](#)

To date, 70% of current Atrium families have contributed. We still need to raise at least \$46,000 to meet our targets. If you have questions or would like to make a gift, please talk to Linda, Susan, Ashley, or our parent co-chairs: Silvia Nerssessian and Betsy Goodrich. [Click here to read much more about Atrium Annual Giving and how YOUR gift will make an essential difference!](#)

Dear Atrium Families,

Welcome to the spring edition of *Compluvium* for 2010-2011! Please read on for dates and information you'll want to have on hand.



Three essential items:

1. Please give generously to the Atrium Annual Giving Campaign.

As at almost all independent schools, tuition covers only a portion of our annual budget. HUGE thanks to all of you who have given already. More information and a [link to online giving](#) is at left.

2. Please invite your friends to an Atrium Spring Information Session! One is coming up next Thursday, March 17. Help spread the word about the Atrium! Hang posters at playgrounds, tell your Facebook friends, and call your child's former preschool director. [Click here to email Meredith](#), and she'll put posters in your mailbox.

3. Keep an eye out for the upcoming Parent Media-Use Survey. Please help us think about the best ways to reach out to prospective families. Where did *you* first learn about The Atrium? To reach more parents with interests *like yours*, where should we advertise? Quick online survey coming soon!

Warmly,

Susan and Linda

Recent Milestones

Get the Inside Scoop on 6th Grade... and Life After Atrium.

Each spring, the Atrium hosts two rites of passage:

"After looking up to the 6th graders ahead of you, it feels really good to finally be a role model for all of the younger grades."

Two weeks ago, Susan Diller hosted current sixth grade parents and fourth/fifth grade parents to talk about the sixth grade experience at the Atrium. Parents learned about the unique sixth grade program, curriculum, and the great growth that happens in the final year at Atrium. While the adults were talking, this year's fifth graders spent a morning in the sixth grade classroom, learning and talking with our present sixth graders and their teacher, Nicole.

And, on February 9th, recent Atrium alumni came back to the school to talk with and parents, students, prospective parents, and most of all our present sixth graders at Next Schools Night.

Both events opened windows into the students' experiences at Atrium and beyond.

For example, here are alumni describing their Atrium years:

"Welcoming" "Friendly" "Open" "Caring"
"Non-judgmental" "Full of hands-on discovery"
"Environmentally and globally aware" "Wacky in the best possible sense" "Ingenious: there's no place else like The

Nominate or Volunteer for Board Membership

**Info Session:
Friday, March 25,
8:45am**

Looking for a way to get involved more deeply in the school? Know anyone with strategic vision or know-how? Did your mother just scale back her law practice? Know a local business owner seeking community connections? A retired accountant?

Each year at this time, the Atrium Board looks to our community to help identify prospective trustee candidates for the coming year. Atrium trustees are stewards of the organization, working with Linda and Susan to help to oversee the mission and strategic vision of the school. In a three-year Board term, trustees gain a deep knowledge of the Atrium and have a voice in determining the direction of the school. As we look for potential Board members, we're particularly interested in strategic thinkers and team players with backgrounds in legal work, accounting, education, and fundraising.

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about becoming a Trustee, **please contact [Tara Keppler](#) or [Bonnie Waltch](#).**

Additionally, there will be an informal gathering with Board leadership for anyone interested in finding out more about what the Board is up to these days on Friday, March 25 at 8:45am.

Help Plan or Donate an Auction Item:

Atrium."

What else did they say? What kinds of things might YOUR child think and feel at that point? Click here for:

[Excerpts from the 6th Grade's writings](#)

[Quotes from alumni at the Next Schools Night](#)

Kindergarten/1st Grade Mapping Project Illustrates Atrium's Multi-Layered Approach to Learning

How carefully do you notice your daily route? What do you need to know in order to gain a sense of place? The Atrium Kindergarten/1st Grade students have enlisted their parents to help them explore their worlds by becoming close observers of their various pathways to school. Then they have explored their own ways to represent what they find through mapping and 3-D visualizations in blocks and collage.



Brennan's home-to-school map
(Click to enlarge)



Emelia's home-to-school map
(Click to enlarge)

Liz Perekrests, their teacher, explains, "First we engaged the children in drawing their bedrooms and the classroom. Then we started modeling, a technique which connects a map and the dimensions of daily life. The children created 3-D models of their "most special" places using recycled materials. We looked at details and analysis, as we discussed what made these places special to each child.

"Then we moved outward. Looking at a map of Eastern Massachusetts, we marked our homes on the map and discussed the relationships between spaces, learning cardinal and relative directions.

"Families joined us for the next project, in which each child noticed landmarks on the way to school and then consolidated them into a map. This project helped us talk about daily transitions from school to home, gave us a recognition of each others' experiences -- sometimes shared, and sometimes quite different -- and touched on a key building block for learning: sequencing."



John's special place: his bedroom
(Click to enlarge)

Students are videotaping their presentations and finishing up their artwork. Please keep any eye out on the ramp for their work in the next week or so.

Exploring Biodiversity in the Recent Karuta Workshop

On January 13, 2011, Atrium School welcomed an Environmental KARUTA Workshop. Atrium students connected with children's visions of biodiversity from around the world as showcased in the United Nations' Children's Environmental Paintings exhibition -- and explored their own ideas on the subject.



KARUTA is a traditional Japanese card game. Players listen to the reading card (Yomifuda) and compete to grab the corresponding picture card (Torifuda) among those spread out on the floor.

[Please enjoy this short video to see what the students did!](#)

CLICK TO WATCH THE VIDEO:
Environmental Karuta Workshop
at The Atrium School

The Atrium Annual Auction to Benefit Financial Aid!

The Atrium Annual Auction -- set for Saturday, April 9, 6:00-11pm -- raises essential funds to support economic diversity at our school. Each year, Atrium parent volunteers organize and run the auction under the auspices of the Atrium School PTA. Please plan to attend, to invite your friends to join you and to bid, and even to help with preparations.

The Auction Committee is looking for help with donation solicitations, party planning and technology. If you can contribute your time, expertise or items, **please contact:**

[Jessica Sattler](#) or [Deanna Kanavas-DeRocher](#).

Coming Up



Photo by William Freedberg.

Make a Seed Pot with Evelyn Ortiz: Sunday, April 3, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Sponsored by the Diana Korzenik Fund in Memory of Amy Morrison.

You and your whole family are invited to join the Atrium's treasured friend Evelyn Ortiz for an afternoon making seed pots in the Pueblo tradition. RSVPs to rsvp@atrium.org are appreciated, but not required, to help us plan supplies.

Evelyn is a renowned potter from Acoma, New Mexico, whose work appears in many museums, including the MFA. Her visits as artist-in-residence are a memorable Atrium tradition. Atrium graduates have received the gift of one her seed pots since the first class graduated in 1989. This year, Evelyn will spend Sunday afternoon with families and then Monday with Atrium students.



One of Evelyn's early visits to the Atrium.

[Click here to read the whole story of Evelyn Ortiz and the Atrium School.](#)

Sign Up for Summer Session: June 13 - July 8, 2011 Start your child's summer with four fun weeks at The Atrium!

Animal Adventures Week will include animal visitors and a trip to the zoo. **Science Around Us** will feature some Mad Scientists and a trip to the Museum of Science. During **Shining Sea Week**, kids will take a Harbor boat trip and go to the beach. And students in **Arts All Day** will create a work of art to give to the school as well as visit an art museum.

Campers will also have the opportunity for water play at Filippello Park, cooking, games, and crafts.

For more information, please see the brochure in your mailbox, or contact Carol Copeland at ccopeland@atrium.org.

A Pre-K to 6th grade school in Watertown, MA, the Atrium engages children in hands-on experiences and meaningful learning. For nearly 30 years, an Atrium education has delivered small classes, passionate faculty, strong academic foundations and innovative approaches. Our warm, involved and diverse community is what makes Atrium so special.

Thank you to each and every one of you for your insights, ideas and engagement.

With appreciation,
[Linda Echt](#) and [Susan Diller](#)
Co-Directors, Atrium School

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