

# NEWS FROM LA ESCUELITA – FEBRUARY 2016



## CHANGES AND GROWTH

As you know from the September Newsletter, La Escuelita is getting ready to grow. After some changes in the Ministry of Education requirements and some earthquake damage, La Escuelita was able to offer only pre-school classes in 2015; and that will continue in 2016. However, with help from people like **YOU**, ambitious plans are underway!

Following requirements of the Ministry of Education, the engineering studies are done, the architectural drawings are complete, and the work has begun on the second floor! This addition will allow La Escuelita not only to go back to offering first and second grade, but to expand to the third grade as well.

Work will stop when classes begin in February and begin again at the end of the school year in December, 2016, and will be completed by the time the 2017 school year begins. In addition to the regular operating funds, you may also give specifically for this new construction. We thank all of **YOU** who have already contributed to this project and to the work of the school in general. All of this is possible only because of **YOUR** gifts.



## GIVING TO THE SCHOOL

Donations can be made for La Escuelita at any time. Checks can be made out to CEPAD USA, marked for School, Construction, or Scholarship and sent to

**CEPAD USA**

**c/o Beverly Kirkman  
5605 Groomsbridge Ct.  
Raleigh, NC 27612**

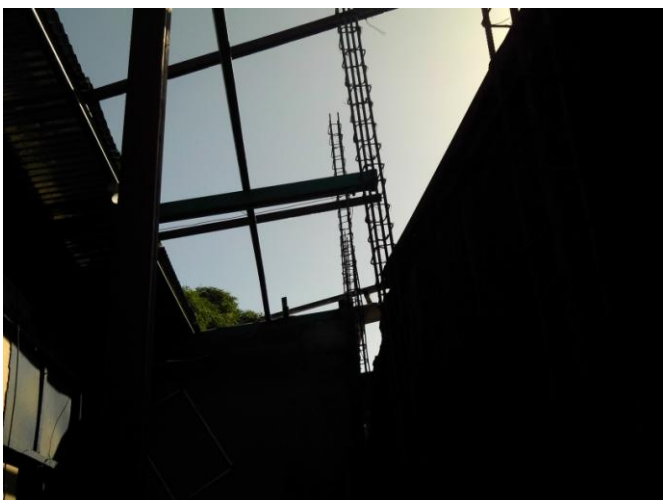
## CHECK US OUT

On the web

[www.littleschoolnicaragua.com](http://www.littleschoolnicaragua.com)

On Facebook

LaEscuelitaNicaragua



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## UNIVERSITY DEGREES

In 1996, when La Escuelita began, Ali and Leo were “empirica” teachers, which means that they learned their skills by doing, not in formal classes. They saw a dire need in their community where many children did not attend school and gave deeply of themselves to meet some part of that need.

They maintain their deep understanding of the students in their community, and now they have university degrees in education. Because of gifts to the Scholarship Fund from people like **YOU**, our teachers have completed their university educations and are now fully certified.



We are so very proud of these two women, who have come from the very neighborhood that they now serve, who have given so freely of their time and abilities, who have struggled to reach a new place in their lives, and who are now ready to make La Escuelita the finest school in that part of the city. Thank **YOU** for helping make it happen.

## 2016 REGISTRATION

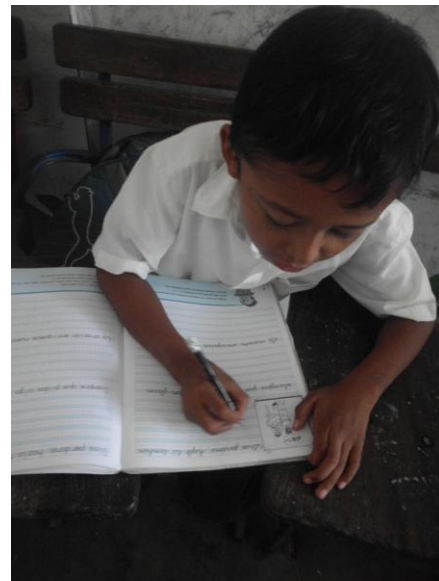
The 2016 school year will begin on February 8, but already children are being registered at a rate much faster than recent years. By the first of January, there were already 28 students registered. We expect about 80 students registered by the beginning of the academic year that **YOUR** gifts will help.

## WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT THIRD GRADE?

### *Reading - That's What!*

In the US we think about the milestone of a high-school education. But in a country like Nicaragua, a much smaller percentage of people ever get that far. Instead, the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education talks about the “battles” - the battle for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

Third grade is an important point in early childhood education, especially in a poverty-ridden area like the neighborhood around La Escuelita, where most children are not likely ever to get to high school or beyond. Educators know that students who have discovered a love for reading by third grade are much more likely to retain and build on this knowledge throughout their lives.



The teachers have always tried to instill a love of learning in their children, and through their university training they have learned how important the third grade is. Therefore they are planning for the enlarged building to include third grade. With **YOUR** help they will accomplish this goal.

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## 2015 GRADUATION

The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Graduation was held on the First of December, a little later than usual because all schools were closed for a few weeks when there was earthquake danger. Many happy children and proud parents were there, and many former students returned to watch their siblings graduate.



## TRAVEL TO NICARAGUA

*Are you Interested?*

Many of you have been faithful supporters of La Escuelita. Would you like to go and see the school in action, to meet the dedicated teachers, and to see the joyous faces of the students?

We would be glad to organize a group of people who could go to La Escuelita, but also learn more about education in Nicaragua, see some other schools, and enjoy a little of the warmth and culture of “The land of lakes and volcanoes.”

If you or your friends would be interested in such a trip, contact us, and we can talk about the possibilities.

Penn – [penngarvin@hotmail.com](mailto:penngarvin@hotmail.com)

Doug – [dougorbaker@yahoo.com](mailto:dougorbaker@yahoo.com)

