Welcome Back to TOPS!

Professional Development Days
On Wednesday September 24th school will be dismissed at 1:20 and there will be no school on Friday October 10th for Professional Development.

Back to School Packets
A packet was sent home with the youngest child in each family. Please fill out all of the forms (everything green should be signed and retumed) and tum them in to the office or any of your children’s teachers by Monday Sept 15th. If you need extra copies of anything or have any questions, please contact Maureen at mwgermani@seattleschools.org or 545-1771.

Curriculum Nights
This year we are going back to our previous system of curriculum nights for each grade level (i.e., there will be NO All-School Open House this year). Note that this means children should NOT attend the Curriculum nights. Teachers will use this time to talk about their plans for the school year and make clear their expectations. It is important for an adult from every family to attend to help make the school year as successful as possible. Grades will be split between two nights in order to help parents of multiple children. Meet in your child’s classroom.

Thursday Sept. 18th 6-7 pm 1st, 2nd, 5th and 6th grades  
7:00 State of the School Address  
Thursday Sept. 25th 6-7 pm K, 3rd, 4th, DHH  
7:00 State of the School Address  
7:30-8:30 7th and 8th grades

Also see the attached flyer for details on the curriculum night presentations by our reading, writing and math specialists.

State of the School
This age old TOPS tradition will be combined with Curriculum night this year. Come hear about the focus for the year at TOPS and meet the new staff members and the new Assistant Principal! State of the School will be presented twice: Sept 18th and 25th, at 7:00 in the
lunchroom. This is an opportunity for all of us to come together as a community and focus on making the program the best it can be for all of our kids.
**New TOPS Webmaster**

Michael Drew (father of Wen Drew) has stepped up to replace long time TOPS webmaster Jack Lee. Michael is in the process of catching up on needed updates to the web site. If you or your TOPS related group or committee has information for him, please contact him at webmaster@topsk8.org. Many thanks to Jack for his long time service, and to Michael for being willing to take on this critical job!

**Find Your (Volunteer) Niche**

As you know from the parent handbook and orientations, all TOPS families are expected to volunteer a certain number of hours (40 per two parent, 20 per one) a year to the school. That is one of the things that makes TOPS exceptional. So how do you find your niche at TOPS? Some people dive right in and complete their hours in no time (I can think of at least three who put in more than forty hours on just the elementary play!). Others find it more difficult. Why am I asking this question right now? Because now is the time to review how you contributed to TOPS last year and think about what you want to do in the future.

Here are some of the positions that one of you will need to fill this year:

- Room Reps—a key position, still needed at many grade levels—greatly appreciated!
- No Bake Fund Committee—I’m looking to beef up this committee (we have a strong core), if you are interested in publicity, if you have some organization skills you would like to apply, this could be good for you, work is starting now and continues to January.
- Auction Committee—a variety of jobs—small to large
- Drama Committee—Madalyn Corbit is looking for more bodies, brains, and imaginations
- Escrip—help Julie Wroble make a bigger push for this source of free money
- Volunteer to work in others’ classrooms—Special Ed in particular could use you
- Stewardship Committee—work with teachers and help organize school events
- Something that I have skipped (I only have so much space!), but you know needs to be done!

Very few of these jobs require you to be available during the day. If you can fill any of these positions, check the right box on your green “Volunteer Involvement” form (in the Back to School Packet) or contact Maureen Germani at mwgermani@seattleschools.org or 545-1771 to sign up or to talk about the other opportunities that are available. If you are looking for more volunteers for a project, let me know. Thank you for all that you do to make TOPS tops!

**REAL Green Card Policy**

If your child needs a “green card” to ride a bus other than their own, you MUST send a written note, either by hand or by fax, to the office. For years Helen allowed us parents to sneak by with phone calls because she recognized so many voices, but now the real policy must be followed. The TOPS fax number is 206.252.3511. Notes can be put on file for repeated green card needs; include the dates the card will be needed. In any note, include the bus number and the stop where your child will get off. It’s also good to list who your child will be going home with if that is relevant. Need a green card? SEND A NOTE!

**Lunch Accounts**
Those little brains need food to learn! Make sure your child’s lunch account has a positive balance. Contact Annie Meyer 252-3523 or ammeye@seattleschools.org to check on your account or to apply for free lunches.

**Music and Ice Cream Social**

Save the date: Sunday October 5th, 1-4 p.m! Bring your musical instruments (including your voice) and come to the TOPS Gym to meet and greet friends in the TOPS community, play and listen to music, and eat ice cream! This fun event is sponsored by the Coalition for Social Justice and will feature the kick off of the No Bake fund drive. Contact Karen Sthuhldreher or Brad Angell with questions.

**Site Council Meeting**

Site Council held their first meeting of the year on Sept 10th. New Board members were elected. (But I don’t know who they are yet!) Contact one of your grade reps with questions or input:

- K-2: Barbara Rockey, Catherine Staunton, Cliff Shettler
- 3-5: Walter Zisette, Susan Welch, Loan Ngyuen
- 6-8: Dan Hurley, Tamara Kincaid, Betsy Wells

Site Council meetings are generally the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 5-7 and are held in the library. All TOPS Community members are always welcome to come to the meetings and provide input.

**TOPS Writers**

TOPS will have eight writers published in this year’s ‘Writers In The Schools” WITS Anthology, Dive Down into the Loud. The book launch will be held at 7 pm in the Bertha Knight Landes room at Seattle City Hall (600 Fourth Avenue) on Wednesday, September 24. WITS is funded at TOPS by your generous donations to the No Bake and Auction. The writers who will have their work published this year are:

- Tuuli Snow
- Anna Duncan
- Kwame Salmi-Adubofour
- Joey Hardy
- Kellen Lambert-Vail
- Abby Takahashi
- Eliana Schwartz
- Andy Johnston

**Box Tops, Escrip, Ink Cartridges**

“Box Tops for Education” can be turned into the jar in the office. We’re looking for a new coordinator for this year (pretty quick, at-home work about three times a year). Contact Maureen if it sounds like your niche: 545-1771 mwgermani@seattleschools.org.

Register for escrip: Just log onto www.escrip.com and click on the link at the right that says “Sign Up – It’s Free.” Our group is “Friends of TOPS.” In 6 relatively short and painless steps you can be helping to contribute to the programs that make TOPS great! Please call (206/324-4829) or e-mail Julie Wroble (jwroble@comcast.net) with questions.
We will no longer be accepting ink cartridges for recycling—Staples changed their policy and no longer accepts bulk quantities. Individuals can still take their cartridges there to be recycled but TOPS will no longer benefit.

**Yearbooks Still Available**

Did you miss out on buying a 2007-2008 yearbook? You are in luck! Colette Hubbard has some left in the office. They can be purchased for $20. First come first served, get them while you can!

**Chinese Program**

The TOPS Chinese Language and Culture program is starting classes for grades 1-5 at the end of October and for Kindergarten in January. Now in its fourth year, the program provides Chinese language instruction that is fun and developmentally appropriate. The emphasis is on speaking and listening with some character writing. It gives children early exposure to this important world language, instilling in them a love of language and appreciation for diverse cultures. Grades 3-5 meets on Tuesdays, with K and 1-2 meeting on Thursdays. Complete information on the TOPS website and in the office, or email Nancy Bacon at nancy@bahiastreet.org.

**Picture Day**

Picture Days will be Oct 14th and 15th. Keep an eye out for an envelope/order form. Talk to Don Zemke if you have questions leave a message at 252-3510 or email dwzemke@seattleschools.org.

**Parking at TOPS**

Parents, please DO NOT park in the school parking lot during school hours (even if there happens to be a space available!). The lot has 23 spots and roughly 45 people work in the building (and not all of them drive sexy little scooters!). Whenever one of us takes one of those 23 spots we are forcing someone who works in the building to either run out halfway through the day to move their car or to face a ticket. I know, we feel like we won the lottery when we find an open spot in the lot, but they really should be reserved for the staff. Many thanks for your consideration!

**Lost and Found**

Now is the time to do some preventative work on your kid’s wardrobe! Pull out a permanent marker and write your name and phone number on every piece of clothing your kid might take off at school (you might be surprised at what they consider outerwear!). Items that are labeled generally make their way back to you, but anonymous items are donated at the end of every semester. Preserve your investment (and your sanity): label today!

**Dates to Note**

Sept 18th  Curriculum Night (6 or 7:30 by grade) & State of the School (7:00)
24th  Early Dismissal -- 1:20 Professional Development
25th  “Danger Books” Assembly 5th-8th grades Gym 1:30
25th  Curriculum Night (6:00) & State of the School (7:00)

Oct 3rd  TOPICS 2:00
5th  Music & Ice Cream Social at TOPS 1-4 in the gym
8th  Site Council Meeting 5-7 p.m. TOPS Library
8th  How to teach a TOPIC 5-6 in C104
10th  NO SCHOOL - Professional Development Day
14th  Picture Day - Middle School
15th  Picture Day - K-5
20-24 Spirit Week
24th  Middle School Dance 6:00-
31st  Salmon Parade Kindergarten 10:00

Nov 5-7  6th grade camp
From the Principal’s Office

Welcome To Our New Staff

Assistant Principal
Welcome to Jeanne Kuban, our new assistant principal at TOPS K-8! Jeanne comes with a wealth of experience to share with TOPS students, families, and staff. Jeanne was most recently an Instructional Services Coach for the Seattle Public Schools in the area of Literacy. She worked extensively with Teachers College at Columbia University, bringing Writing Workshop to many schools in our district. Teachers may recognize Jeanne as a presenter of Literacy Professional Development throughout the district. Having been a Reading Specialist and classroom teacher, Jeanne brings broad knowledge of children, learning, and teaching. Additionally, Jeanne did her administrative internship at TOPS several years ago. Many parents may remember her.

Jeanne shares her life with her husband and best friend, Charlie. They enjoy the company of two interesting and wonderful sons, Daniel and Peter, both graduates of the University of Washington. Jeanne and Charlie enjoy long walks along the Ship Canal, good bike rides, and are still working on that handstand in yoga.

PEAK Teacher
Please join me in welcoming our new PEAK teacher, Michael Adams to the kindergarten team. Michael was a former secondary teacher in Michigan and most recently a sub for Lana, the previous PEAK teacher, and taught chess in the afterschool program. Michael is the father of two TOPS students, Nina and Milo Adams.

New Custodian
Our night custodian, Scott Anderson, has transferred to West Seattle Elementary School, close to his home. We are very fortunate to have Kieu (Q) Bui join our staff as the night custodian. He is the parent of Anthony Bui in Sarah Marks room.

Transportation Concerns
The first two weeks of school is always a very challenging time for students, parents, staff and the transportation department alike. Please be assured that we are working directly with transportation to correct the problems. We have had a bus supervisor on site for several days assisting us with getting students transportation problems corrected.
Thank you for your patience and understanding!

Cheers!!!
As the new school year is on its way, our first TOPICS session is looming just around the corner. I am CALLING OUT TO ONE AND ALL for help in this year's TOPICS program. Topics is a 2 hour long session in which you get to teach a small group of multi grade students anything you like; from yoga to bird house building, from knitting to painting, the options are endless!

Topics will be held 8 times (see list below) throughout the school year and each session is only one afternoon long (1:00-3:00). I strongly encourage parents to give TOPICS a try. You can teach anything you like (and I have loads of ideas if you need help getting those wheels in motion).

Are you nervous about signing up for TOPICS when you still have so many unanswered questions and concerns? Well, I have just the cure for you. An informative hour long "HOW TO TEACH A TOPICS" will be led by Sarah Marks (Topics Coordinator), on Wednesday, October, 8th from 5:00 to 6:00 PM in classroom C104. Also, you are more than welcome to join me during a TOPICS session to be an observer/helper to see how the flow of a TOPICS session goes.

**TOPICS Dates 2008-2009…..1:00 to 3:00**

Friday, Oct. 3
*Wednesday, Oct. 8........HOW TO TEACH A TOPICS (5:00 to 6:00 in C104)
Friday, Nov. 7
Friday, Dec. 12
Friday, Jan. 16 (Theme....SOCIAL JUSTICE)
Friday, March 13
Friday, March 27
Friday, April 24 (Theme....Cultures of our World led by International Exchange students from the University of Washington....parent volunteers will only be needed to assist these Topics and not led a Topics)
Friday, May 8 (Theme....EARTH DAY)

Please email me (Sarah) at slmarks@seattleschools.org (or stick a note in my mailbox in the office) with any questions or concerns.

PS Even though TOPICS is only offered to first through fifth grade students, the teaching of a TOPICS is open to Kindergarten through eighth grade parents (:
Curriculum Night

September 18th and 25th

Meet with the Specialists

Math- Debbie Bermet
Writing- Jacque Ensign
Reading- Carla Fetterley

This year on both Curriculum Night’s you will have the opportunity to meet with the TOPS’ specialists. We will lead short workshops at the beginning and end of both evenings, at 5:30 and 7:30. We hope you will be able to join us.

B201 Carla will be talking about doing reading homework with your 1st through 5th grade child.

Library Debbie will explain the developmental stages of computational fluency (i.e. how kids learn math facts).

Library Loft Jacque will be talking about supporting your child in the writing process.