ATTRIBUTE 5: EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Every school in our district has created a School Transformation Plan. These plans are based on seven attributes that are meant to guide reflection on and analysis of the school. This month, Clara Scott and administrative intern Jeanne Kuban continue their monthly discussion of how TOPS addresses the attributes by looking at how the school provides effective curriculum and instruction.

By Clara Scott and Jeanne Kuban

At TOPS we are fortunate to work with highly reflective educators who continuously engage in discussion about effective teaching, stimulating and varied curricula, balancing instruction to the needs of the whole child, and eliminating the achievement gap. Any one of these subjects requires time, attention, and thoughtfulness. At TOPS, our teaching staff focuses on all of these areas.

TOPS designed and uses math and reading assessment tools. Each September, these assessments are used to identify students in need of instructional support. All school “SITs” (School Intervention Teams) take a problem-solving approach to collaboratively identify and address students’ learning challenges.

TOPS teachers used data from the WASL and ITBS test to identify areas of instructional needs. An example of this process includes the intentional changes in teaching that improved the conventions scores on the 4th and 7th grade writing portions of the WASL. Teachers aligned the writing curriculum at TOPS in grades K-8 for improved student learning as well. We look for school-wide trends indicating improvement and areas of challenge in listening, reading, writing, and math. Our staff studies individual scores and areas of improvement for individual students who do not meet standards.

While we believe that these tests do not measure all of the true learning of TOPS students, we are committed to eliminating the achievement gap that is most obvious through the disproportionality of our test scores. We remain focused on meeting the needs of all of our students, doing whatever it takes for every student to achieve academic success. One way that teachers at TOPS explored different ways to instruct a diverse student population was through a series of teacher-led technology sessions. Held throughout the school year, these sessions highlighted the meaningful uses of technology as an integral part of teaching diverse students with unique learning needs.

We are learning that student assessment data can be viewed in a useful, positive way to drive instruction and inform our professional decisions. This information can be used in a meaningful way to ensure academic success by seeing students as individuals. At TOPS, we continue to explore how we can utilize this data for maximum benefits for students, especially those who have been historically underserved by the public schools.

Next year, TOPS will work on the alignment of our math curriculum, identifying specific skills, strategies, content, and processes for every grade K-8. This careful articulation of a content area makes our teaching even more effective for all of our students.

A BIG THANKS!

By Susan Wells

As the May newsletter goes to print, our 2002 spring auction will have just been completed. As soon as we have the results — record setting numbers, let’s hope — we will announce them.

The success of this year’s event would not have been possible without the hard work of numerous people: auction committee members, families who donated items, businesses that gave so generously, staff members who donated their time and talent as auction items themselves, parents and teachers who helped our kids create fantastic art projects, the families and TOPS friends who bid on them, all the volunteers who

Continued on page 4.
REPORT FROM THE SITE COUNCIL

April 17, 2002
By Monica Hinckley

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

Ms. Scott reported that the Taste of TOPS was an overwhelming success. She thanked Junne Park for her work in translating letters to our BOC families, and Marlies van Bergeijk for organizing the volunteers and coordinating with Junne for the day’s events. She also thanked the teachers and parents for their support.

TOPS staff is hoping to have the class list set by the end of this school year; therefore, school supply lists can be sent out in June. (Note: class lists will NOT be distributed at that time.)

Our playground will open in May; there are still some railings and barriers to be installed. There will be various activities to celebrate the opening. Staff met for instruction on proper been working on developing a leadership training course for our Student Council so that they can better serve the student body they represent. There are plans for them to attend a four day camp over the summer.

In an effort to cut down class size we are considering a teacher residency program. A proposal is being drawn up to present to various colleges and universities. The idea is that we would create a co-teacher program in the classroom similar to a medical doctor’s residency. Antioch University and the Bothell branch of the University of Washington have both expressed interest.

The district has asked all buildings to develop ways for each school and its afterschool program to work collaboratively. The goal is for afterschool programs to enrich students’ academic and social skills. Suggestions included having homework support and student intervention meetings in afterschool programs. Kathy, Jennifer, Junne and Joby are in the midst of writing the proposal. We are in phase 2 of the 3-phase process, since they can better serve the student body they represent.

The court decision announced in today’s paper regarding the illegality of using race as a tiebreaker will be appealed by the district, Olchefske said. Polls show that their own direction, they must meet certain standards. The No-Bake deposits so far total $46,000. In order to raise as much as last year ($78,000), the auction needs to pull in $23,000.

SUPERINTENDENT’S VISIT

Superintendent Joseph Olchefske visited our site council meeting today. He responded to questions about budget cuts by explaining that by giving the schools the money directly they can buy the services they feel are necessary. He expressed his admiration for the alternative schools’ ability to create a community of like-minded people. He also explained that the district does not demand one central curriculum for all schools. However, he was quick to point out that although every school may have their own direction, they must meet certain standards.

Mr. Olchefske concluded his visit by saying how wonderful our school is and he thanked Clara for all that she has done. He would be pleased to hear from us by telephone or e-mail. He can be reached at 252-0100 or jolchefske@seattleschools.org

FINANCIAL REPORT

Peggy Reihle presented the July-March financial report. This past month, Friends of TOPS paid for the counselor (staff support) position ($22,500), reading posters ($95.69), art supplies ($1,500), Different Perspectives mini-grant ($450.00), multi-cultural books, ($100.95), newsletter ($130.56), diversity lectures ($35.90) and science/lab equipment ($323.73). A request for volleyball equipment was approved.

The No-Bake deposits so far total $46,000. In order to raise as much as last year ($78,000), the auction needs to pull in $23,000.

Site Council meetings are open to everyone.
They are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, from 5:00 - 7:00 pm in the school library. The next meeting is Wednesday, May 8, 2002.

About The Outrageous Publishing Service

Welcome to the ninth monthly newsletter of the 2001-2002 school year, edited by Annie Gage. Cindy Suzumura and Margie Slovan handle the layout and design. Coach Don Zemke always provides great photos. Bruce Pulmano maintains the mailing list and gets the newsletter out to you. We thank you for your contributions and welcome more – news from the classrooms, faculty, committees and the larger community, opinions, compliments, congratulations, kids’ art, photographs, additions to the calendar and anything else that needs to “get out there.”

Submit your contributions to the newsletter box in the Main Office, or to Annie Gage at gagegreen@earthlink.net, or by USPS at 2500 Franklin Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98102

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES FOR 2001-2002

The 15th of the month.

Anyone interested in working on the newsletter should contact Annie Gage at 632-2618 or gagegreen@earthlink.net.
A MESSAGE FROM CLARA SCOTT

I hope you were able to join us for our fantastic evening at the Taste of TOPS. After an international feast we had the pleasure of watching a wonderful multicultural show featuring music, poetry, plays, dancing, and martial arts. Thanks to all who helped make this event such a success. A special thank-you to Marlies van Bergeijk and Junne Park for their hours and hours of work coordinating and preparing for the big event!

Middle school teachers began an afterschool study table after spring break to assist students not caught up on their work. Attendance is required two days each week until a student has caught up and demonstrated two weeks of continued success. Students not assigned to study table may continue to take advantage of our voluntary study hall on a drop-in basis. TOPS teachers are working hard to make sure that all students are successful.

Fourth graders and seventh graders are in the midst of testing. They’re working hard on the one you hear so much about, the WASL. We are confident that our students will do well on this high-stakes test. Our staff is continuing in its commitment to close the achievement gap so all students are successful and meet standards. We are completing our first study circle, using the book Uprooting Racism by Paul Kivel. Now that it has laid a solid foundation, we are looking forward to starting our next book, Affirming Diversity, by Sonja Nieto. While the WASL is an important indicator of learning, it is important to remember that it is just part of the whole picture.

Elementary families recently received information about placing students in classrooms for next year. We are committed to creating classes balanced by size, gender, ethnicity, strengths, and needs. Teachers and support staff use professional judgement and knowledge of individual students to ensure that we make the best placement possible for each child. Class lists are reviewed by current and past teachers, support staff, and administrators. Parents are given an opportunity to provide additional information to help us make these important decisions.

In April, parents of fourth-grade students attended sessions on “Growing Up Female” and “Growing Up Male,” both sponsored by Planned Parenthood. Middle school parents attended a forum on adolescent males. The discussion focused on understanding and coping with changes during this sensitive time. The next middle school parent forum will focus on adolescent females.

In order to close the achievement gap and reduce our student-to-adult ratio we urge you to volunteer in your child’s classroom. One thing that makes TOPS a great place is its parents! We need your help!

The Eastlake play area will be opening soon. Our kids haven’t had a lot of space in which to play, so we are excited about the new space and equipment. But in order to keep kids safe, we need your help with supervision. Please contact Marlies, our volunteer coordinator, at 252-3541. If you can volunteer for a recess each week, it would be a big help. Better yet, volunteer in your child’s class and supervise at recess on the same day!

Cheers!
Clara

PARKING, DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROBLEMS

By Clara Scott and Bruce Denton

Shortly before spring break we witnessed a traffic accident near TOPS, at the corner of Boylston and Louisa. Fortunately, the accident occurred before school was out so no students were injured.

Although the bus loading zone was intended for quick drop-off and pickup, it was full of parked cars, which has been an ongoing concern. Because the bus loading zone on Boylston was full of parked cars, a school bus was forced to park too close to the corner, thus obscuring the view of the driver turning onto Boylston from Louisa Street.

As a result of this accident, Seattle Police have notified us that cars parked in the bus zones on Boylston and Louisa will be subject to ticketing, effective immediately.

Cars that pull into the bus zone to drop off or pick up students may also be ticketed.

We understand that this may cause an inconvenience, but wanted to pass on the message from the Seattle Police. Although it may take longer, it is possible to find parking on the streets in the neighborhood around TOPS. Parking, then walking to the school to meet your children, might be a safer and less costly option for your family.

Thank you for your help keeping TOPS students safe!
FROM THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

By Marlies van Bergeijk

In early April, we celebrated our cultural and food traditions at the 3rd annual Taste of TOPS. Aside from being nourished by the wide variety of foods, seeing so many families come together was truly wonderful and nourishing to the soul as well. Thanks to all of you for keeping this TOPS tradition alive and well. Special thanks to Junne Park for her hard work in the publicity department and for organizing the entertainment part of the evening.

This month I want to highlight the efforts of Eden Malkoc, our fearless TOPICS coordinator, who managed to breathe new life into this longstanding program at a time when its mere survival was in jeopardy. Eden has been instrumental in getting teachers, students and parents jazzed again about TOPICS. This has been no small task and she has done this entirely on a volunteer basis. Please let her know how much you appreciate her efforts. I know many students do; they are excited on Thursday and Friday afternoons when they embark on new learning experiences.

In the past, our AmeriCorps volunteers made sure TOPICS were organized. Eden has added some great tracking systems and her personal touch really makes a difference. Because it does take that kind of investment and follow through; I will be submitting an RFP to the Site Council requesting that next school year a small stipend be made available to the person organizing TOPICS.

Typically March through June are months when many volunteer hours are donated due to day and overnight camps, all the projects done for the auction, the auction itself, ongoing class activities and projects, study circles, the art walk, the elementary play and 8th grade passage. Please keep track of those hours and report them to me before the school year is out.

Our kids are lucky that collectively and individually we give so much of ourselves to this school community. Thank you all!!

ABOUT D.E.A.R.

By Esra Comert-Morishige and Abby Chin-Martin (4th grade)

D.E.A.R. stands for drop everything and read! On March 29, 2002, Mary Chao's 4th grade class brought in popcorn and snacks to eat and sleeping bags to relax in. D.E.A.R. is a good way for students to raise reading abilities and have a party at the same time.

In Mary’s class, we don’t just get awarded parties. We earn them by walking in quiet lines. Now we are going to interview two of Mary’s students.


Del Brummet says, “I enjoy D.E.A.R. because you get to sit around instead of doing school work. I am reading The King Fisher’s Oceans.”

AUCTION THANKS

Continued from page 1

planned, set up, served, and cleaned up the day of the auction, and our wonderful office staff who helped collect items and get our flyers published. Thank you all!

We tried some new things this year such as a raffle, a dessert dash, some new auction software, posting items on the Web site, and thank-you notes to all businesses that donated to the auction — things that we hope will add to the success of this and all future auctions.

With this just-completed auction fresh in your mind, please call or e-mail Dan Tobin with any ideas or suggestions for next year or Tammy Luthy if you would like to get involved in the planning.
**TOPS CALENDAR**

**MAY – JUNE 2002**

**MAY**

2 (TH) ................. Class Picture day
6 (M) .................... Race and Education Study Circle II, TOPS Library, 6:30 p.m.
8 (W) ..................... Site Council @ 5:00 p.m. in the LRC State of the School Address
14 (T) ................... 2nd-7th graders attend Holes, SCT, 10:00 a.m.
16 (TH) ................. Spring Choir Concert, time TBA
17 (F) .................... Learning Improvement Day, No School
22-24 (W-F) ............ 7th grade camp
27 (M) .................... Memorial Day Holiday
29 (W) .................... Room Reps Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
31-June 1 (F-Sat) .... Art Fest and Elementary School Play

**JUNE**

1 (Sat) .................. Elementary School Play
4-7 (T-F) ............... 8th grade camp
5-6 (W-TH) .......... 3rd-4th grade & BOC, Camp Arnold
11 (T) .................... Spring Concert, 10:45 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
12 (W) .................... Site Council Meeting, 5:00 p.m.
12-14 (W-F) ........... 5th grade camp, Camp Kirby
14 (F) .................... 2nd grade Slumber Party
18 (T) ................... 8th grade Passage
19 (W) .................... Last student day

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCE POLICY EXPLAINED**

*By Clara Scott and Linda Downing*

This year, the Seattle School District’s Truancy Office began a close monitoring of unexcused absences reported by schools. What could this mean for you?

If your student is absent from school and the TOPS Attendance Office is not notified by the end of that school day, the absence must be recorded as unexcused. The absence may also be unexcused if the reason does not fall within the list of acceptable excused absences as listed below.

Attendance is included as part of your student’s academic history on file with the District. The District Truancy Office can and does look into attendance reporting from our school and immediately sends notification to your home about any unexcused absences. Two or more unexcused absences in the same month require a conference with the school to discuss possible intervention strategies. Ten or more unexcused absences mean that a student is eligible for a truancy petition. At this point, the courts step in.

To reduce contact by the truancy office, the TOPS attendance office needs to hear from you about an absence as early as possible. A 24-hour voice mail (252-3518) is set up for attendance messages, and written notification is also accepted. Please do not make our teachers responsible for notifying the office if your student is absent.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES:**

- Unplanned absences are excused when your child’s personal illness or injury, or the illness or injury of a family member, prevents your child from attending school.
- Planned absences are excused when you submit a request to the principal at least three school days before the start of the planned absence, usually for a family trip of short duration, or special one-time event. Absences for longer than twenty consecutive school days may result in your child being dropped from school enrollment. (See related article, Long-Term Absence Policy.)
- Absences due to short-term discipline of your child are excused.

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:**

- All other absences are considered unexcused, including absences caused by the student or parent oversleeping, student missing the bus, transportation problems, student needed for babysitting, student job requirements, etc.
- A parent request to “excuse my child’s absence” without a stated reason or with a reason that does not meet the above criteria for excused absences will result in the child’s absence remaining unexcused.

**LONG-TERM ABSENCE POLICY**

*By Clara Scott and Linda Downing*

TOPS receives many requests each year asking permission for students to be absent from school for extended periods of time. If students made prior arrangements with their teachers to complete the missed classroom assignments and/or make another academic requirement, these requests were granted.

Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, TOPS policy on longer-term absences will be aligned with district policy. This policy reads in part: “Planned absences are excused when you submit a request to the principal at least three days before the start of the planned absence. Long-term absences or a succession to long-term absences may affect whether your child will be promoted. Absences of longer than twenty consecutive days may result in your child being dropped from school enrollment.”

Particular attention should be given to the policy regarding absence longer than twenty days. Each year there are many families on our wait list at each grade level. We want every student’s placement at TOPS to remain secure.
A DATE WITH HISTORY

By Leo Griffin

Talk of snow didn’t hold them back from heading north. So with a van full of props, laptops, papers and videotapes, Ms. Hart and the TOPS twelve made their way to Shoreline Center. Twelve students feeling prepared, but slightly anxious, headed to compete in the Junior Division of Puget Sound Regional History Day on March 20th, 2002. The TOPS twelve competed with hundreds of students from the North King County area of Educational Service District 121 (Bainbridge, Shoreline, Northshore, Lake Washington, etc.). Statewide, over 2000 students compete in the event.

It was a little difficult not to get caught up in the activity of it all; hundreds of school students unloading their entries pertaining to the theme “Revolution, Reaction and Reform.” Papers, Performances, Documentaries and Exhibits were the categories students could enter. The students representing TOPS were Daniel Heller, Justin Savage, Graham Downing, Sylvie Kovnat, Isabel Blue, Ali Haruta, Carolyn Moore, Jordan Burns, Sophie Raider, Brendan Griffin, Nat Schacht and Christoph Krumm.

First up were the Documentaries and the Individual and Group Performances. Every entry in these groups had to present their topic and answer questions from a panel of judges. Justin presented a documentary on the Korean War, Graham’s movie briefed on Pearl Harbor, while Sylvie, Isabel, Ali and Carolyn visited the impact of the Sixties and Beatlemania through their group documentary. Nat, Brendan, and Christoph portrayed the 1968 Summer Olympics while, Sophie and Jordan historically re-enacted the Salem witch trials. Daniel submitted his paper on another witch hunt - McCarthyism. Then it was time to wait for the results. “I wasn’t really sure how the judges would rate our projects, so I told the kids how proud I was of them, no matter what happened,” said Karen Hart. “This was a big deal competition. We were going up against lots of experience from 6 other middle schools, and TOPS was competitive in every category it entered,” she added.

After lunch the semifinalists were announced. There were more competitions and judging and finally, an awards ceremony that seemed to rival the Academy Awards in length. Sophie Raider and Jordan Burns won the award in their category for best use of original source material. Christoph, Nat, and Brendan placed second in the Group Performance category and Daniel placed fourth in the historical paper competition.

Wish these last four the best as they go on to Washington State History Day, May 3-4 in Ellensburg. For TOPS’ first time at the regional competition, our school did remarkably well.

OUR KINDERGARTEN BUDDY PROGRAM

By Anna Ludwig (5th grade)

At our school, we have a kindergarten buddy program. Each fifth grader gets to be paired up with a kindergartner, and we get to do a lot of fun stuff together. Every other Tuesday, we take our kindergartten buddies to P.E. to show them the stretches and play fun games. What I like about my kindergarten buddy is that she is funny, always cheerful, jumpy, and cute. Her name is Marianna. We have baby salmon the kindergarteners hatched from eggs. Later, when they are old enough, we bring them to the river and let them go.

Having a kindergarten buddy can be fun.
Chess Club Qualifies for State Tournament

By Susan Davis

On Saturday, April 13th, eleven members of the TOPS chess team, including two players who come from other schools to play on our team, traveled to Tumwater, WA to compete in the statewide chess tournament.

How did so many TOPS chess players get to qualify for the Washington State Scholastic Tournament? Practice, practice, practice! They also had to win at least three out of five games at any of the local tournaments. To reach that point, the players attend chess club every Tuesday after school in the 3rd and 4th grade commons area. Three classes are offered with master chess teachers. The classes are determined by skill and experience level. Mark Morales (a TOPS parent) functions as the chess coach and organizes the whole operation.

The Chess Club participates in many local, all-day Saturday tournaments. There is usually a lot of waiting around while the kids wait for the next round to begin. Players have plenty of time to play ball, run around, or get some more games of chess in between rounds. It is a chess tournament and a play date at the same time!

The state tournament draws at least 600 kids representing 100 schools around Washington. The TOPS chess players went to the state tournament and made a great showing.

Awards are given for the top 25 rankings at the tournament. The results were:

K-3rd grade category:
- 2nd grade: Benji Oh, 15th place (3.5 points)
- Jackson White, 1st place (4 points)
- 3rd grade: Eli Davis, 3rd place (4 points)

K-6th grade category:
- 5th grade: Marcus Morales, 16th place (3.5 points)
- 6th grade: Andrew Wolf, 18th place (3 points)
- Top Overall: Eric Nelson, 21st place (4 points)

Team awards:
- TOPS, 7th place

Anyone who won three points during the tournament received a medal. All the kids worked hard all year to earn such high honors while competing against public, private and home-schooled competitors. What’s next? Nationals! This year the national tournament is in Portland, OR, so many of our players will go there April 25-28 to go against the top national players. Good luck players!

If you are interested in enrolling your child in the chess club and classes next year, contact Mark Morales.
**SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES**

**KUNG FU KIDS SUMMER CAMP**
Ages 6-9 July 22-26 8:30am-12:30pm
Kung Fu basics, tumbling and self defense skills through lots of games and exercises. Our emphasis is on the development of respect, self-discipline and self-confidence through creative and joyful movement. Open to all levels from the absolute beginner to experienced color belts.

Ages 10-15 August 5-9th 8:30am-12:30pm
Kung Fu forms and basics, fundamental acrobatic and tumbling skills, self defense and conflict management skills, as well as training in leadership skills for advanced students. We hope to have breakdancing as an added part of our program. Fun and games will not be neglected! Open to all levels.

Location: 1408 22nd Ave. (22nd and Union) Seattle
For more information, call 329-5719.

Cost: $125 for the first child of a family, $100 for each additional sibling. Income-based sliding scale is available as well as some scholarship positions.

**SUMMER LANGUAGE CAMP**
Who: Students age 6-10 years old
When: July 1- July 15 (July 4 off) 9:00a.m. -Noon
Where: John Muir Elementary School, 3301 S. Horton St.
Cost $65.00

For more information or to register, call Powerful Schools at 722-5543

**SPU ART CAMPS**
Seattle Pacific University offers three sessions of art camp. The theme is Oceans Alive, and each session will include hands-on experience with a variety of art mediums. In addition, students will develop their knowledge of art concepts in fun and creative ways.

July 22-July 26: Parent-Child art camp- children attend camp with a parent, grandparent, or other special adult. $125/person

July 29-August 2: Child art camp for 6-12 year olds. $125/person

August 5-August 16: Expanded Child art camp which includes an in-depth exploration of projects. $250/person.

Teacher: Alyce Olsen
Location: SPU Art Center
Time: 10 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.
For more information or to register, call the SPU art center at 281-2079 or email the instructor alyceolsen@juno.com

**PHONICS and READING**
North Seattle Community College provides small classes in phonics comprehension and speed reading study skills. The classes are geared toward helping children build vocabulary and fluency, and a lifelong love of learning. Classes meet weekly for a month and are offered for children of all ages. They are taught by instructors from the Institute of Reading Development.

For more information call (800) 978-3532.

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**LEARN TO SWIM!**
The Seattle Parks and Recreation program is offering free swim lessons and swimsuits (if needed) to all Seattle school district 3rd and 4th graders. The Learn to Swim program is part of the year 2000 ProParks Levy.

TOPS 3rd and 4th graders listened to a presentation and were given registration forms for the program. If you did not receive one or would like further information, please call Don at 252-3516.

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CAPOEIRA IN P.E.

By Hannah Repass and Erica Hall (5th graders)

The TOPS fifth, third, and second graders recently completed a three-day workshop by Eric Johnson and TOPS parent Zana Faulkner on the Afro-Brazilian traditional art form called capoeira.

Through our introduction to capoeira, we learned some facts about Brazil’s geography, history, vocabulary, music, and how Brazil’s proximity to Africa influenced its culture.

The many elements and skills involved in capoeira make it difficult to describe. Some aspects of Capoeira Angola include:

- A unique and well-rounded perspective on interpreting and using movement skills along with physical, mental, and emotional resources.
- Personal defense and safety awareness that were originally developed from ancient African cultural and warrior traditions.
- A complete philosophical and tactical system of education reflecting a purposeful development toward centeredness and personal liberation. This developed out of generations of refinement in both rural and inner city Brazil. A tradition of musical percussion and singing all its own.

We liked capoeira because it is an art form that challenges you to somewhat tangle your opponent.

It’s a good exercise and a fun game.

Eric Johnson was a cool guy and did a good job presenting the art of capoeira. Zana, one of our classmate’s mothers, also explained the art to us.

For further information about capoeira, contact Capoeira for Kids at 206-325-1730 or on the web at www.geocities.com/palmares-seattle.

STAFF AND STUDENTS SHOOT HOOPS

By Elgin Hall, 8th grade

The TOPS student-staff basketball game was a great time. I felt like scoring every time I touched the ball, so I shot every time I touched the ball.

The staff had a collection of wannabe ballers. Helen from the office looked like she knew what she was doing by taking it to the hole. Eric hooped it up with her. Jersey was actually calling plays such as “Pass the ball to Eric,” and “Give it to Eric,” and “Eric, shoot!” and my favorite, “Eric, don’t pass it to him.”

It was nice to see Mr. Tubbs come back and actually try to score (he didn’t.) I was afraid to score on Mr. Denton because I wasn’t sure if I’d get Saturday school. Joe, the night custodian, was afraid to play this year because of me, Zach and Taylor. He decided to save his game for next year’s group. Don said something about aching knees, but he would have gotten broken ankles if he’d played.

If we had played longer quarters, the students would’ve won because old folks can’t run as long as us young folks. Also, it’s hard to want to beat people who determine your grade. You could say we let them win.
April 4, 2002

This year’s Taste of TOPS was an unqualified success. Hundreds of dishes contributed by TOPS parents, staff and teachers graced the tables of the cafeteria. We had everything from Aunt Minnie’s carrot salad to sushi to fried chicken from KFC. Afterwards, those of us not too full to move headed to the gym, where we were treated to music, dance and martial arts performances and an art exhibit by TOPS kids and friends.
Mmmmm, sushi

Hey mom where’s mine?

Mmmmm, sushi

Slurp.
ELEMENTARY PLAY ON ITS WAY

By Julie Jamieson

Mark your calendars for May 31st and June 1st! In conjunction with the ArtWalk, TOPS elementary students are proud to present the annual elementary play “The Merchant of Cheat Street,” a hilarious story about a poetry contest. It is based on a Japanese Noh fable. This original musical is being written by David Crandall, the same talented man who wrote last year’s “Johnny the King.” Come see your friends sing, dance, frolic and make merry! Performances are Friday, May 31st at 7:00 and Saturday, June 2nd at 2:00 and 7:00. Ticket prices are $3 for students and seniors and $5 for adults. Treat yourself to a day of art and theatre!

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