

# TOPS NEWS

September 2004 ♦ Volume 8, Issue 1

The monthly newsletter of TOPS, a Seattle Public K-8 alternative school

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome Back To An Exciting New School Year!!!

We have had some of the most beautiful sunny weather and I hope that you and your family were able to spend lots of time outdoors enjoying it.

Please join me in welcoming Gerrit Kischner, our new assistant principal. Gerrit was our administrative intern in the fall of 2003 and it is great having him back as a member of the staff. Gerrit and I have been busy preparing for the new school year. Saream and Joe have the floors shining like glass and the building looking very clean. The staff will be here soon to get their classrooms ready for the students to arrive. We have several new staff members, who have been involved in staff development workshops this summer and are ready to start the New Year. We're excited about the caliber of staff we were able to hire this year. Please welcome them to TOPS when you see them in the building. We are also happy that Lana is able to return to TOPS. [See list of new staff on p. 3.]

Our staff has been very busy this summer taking classes. We had several taking elementary and middle school math classes. A group of us took the Positive Discipline training. We continue to work on civility in the building. Jennifer Murray and members of the Coalition for Social

Justice will be working on a bullying program this year. The state requires each school to have a focus on bullying.

Emily Lauderback, our math coach, will continue coaching the teachers on math this school year. We are excited to have her back! She will be holding parent math nights periodically to give parents an opportunity to experience mathematics instructions within each strand. In addition, she will offer parents specific strategies to use with students for home support. Each parent math night will take place from 7 to 9 p.m.

### PARENT MATH NIGHTS

October 19 ..... Math facts and arrays  
November 30... Computation and homework  
January 25..... Math vocabulary and WASL  
February 15 ..... Fractions, measurement, and geometry  
April 26 ..... Probability and statistics  
May 24 ..... Patterns and functions/algebraic thinking

Our language arts teacher, Lori Eick, will continue to lead us in refining our writing practices. Common scoring on student writing will also be an area of focus.

I am so excited about this year and look forward to hearing about every student's summer experiences. Please remember school starts on September 8. We look forward to seeing you then!

See you at the lunchroom door! Cheers!

Clara



TOPS at Seward  
2500 Franklin Avenue East  
Seattle, WA 98102

Phone: (206) 252-3510  
Fax: (206) 252-3511

*Principal:* Clara Scott

*Assistant Principal:*  
Gerrit Kischner

*Site Council Chair:*  
Kathy Cox-Czosnyka

### NEWSLETTER ONLINE

The TOPS newsletters are available online in PDF format, usually before the printed copy arrives in your mailbox! From the TOPS home page (<http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/tops>), click on *Latest Newsletter* in the *Quick Links* section.

## WANTED: NEWSLETTER REPORTERS

Achieve fame without the hassle of fortune!

Don't have a subject? We have plenty.  
Just contact Teresa at [zongora2@cs.com](mailto:zongora2@cs.com)  
or 325-8320.

Volunteer to write JUST ONE ARTICLE  
this year to keep the community  
up-to-date and make our  
editorial staff (of one) very happy.  
Thank you!



SEATTLE  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS

# INTRODUCING...GERRIT KISCHNER! *(Our new assistant principal)*

By Teresa Nemeth

## ABOUT THE OUTRAGEOUS PUBLISHING SERVICE

Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2004-05 school year. Teresa Nemeth edits, Cindy Suzumura handles photos, design, and layout, and Toby Harris and Peggy Riehle get it mailed off to you. Don Zemke provides many of our photos.

We need your submissions: calendar additions, classroom news and news from the larger community, faculty notes, committee reports, opinions, profiles, compliments, congratulations, children's art, photos, and anything else significant to the TOPS community.

Submit your contributions to the newsletter box in the main office or, preferably, by Word file or email to Teresa at [zongora2@cs.com](mailto:zongora2@cs.com). Please send photos to [csuzumura@mindspring.com](mailto:csuzumura@mindspring.com).

The deadline for the October issue is Friday, September 17.

Actually, this is a reintroduction. Many of you met Gerrit when he was a Danforth administrative intern at TOPS last year. Even in the midst of busy preparations for a new year and a new position, Gerrit took time to answer these email questions.

### *What led you to a career in education?*

I grew up in Seattle public schools well aware of, and involved in, many of the significant movements that shaped the system we have today. The Seattle Plan for desegregation, the court decision that established our current system for state school funding, and cataclysmic teacher layoffs all occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s as I was attending Stevens, Meany, and Garfield. This was the politically active environment in which TOPS was founded by the same Capitol Hill families with whom I grew up (legend has it that TOPS received its name change from GAOP at a parent meeting held in the house directly across the street from my parents' house), and it charged me with a deep belief in the central role of education in the development of democratic participation that works to build equity and justice. By the time I was in high school, I had become deeply involved in school district issues as one of two student representatives to the Seattle School Board. I graduated from Garfield in 1986 convinced that the issues facing urban public education were some of the most critical issues facing this country, and I'm still convinced that by addressing these issues and working to ensure a quality public education for all children I can best contribute to changing the world.

### *Tell us about your background.*

By the time I graduated from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, I had decided that my energies would be best spent working in the trenches at the classroom level. I became deeply interested in the work of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator world famous for his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, in which he laid out the educational theory for his literacy projects. My father was born and raised in Brazil, and I had cousins in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo with whom I wanted to connect. Freire himself had just returned from over twenty years' exile by the military dictatorships and had been appointed the superintendent of São Paulo schools, by some measures the largest school system in the world at the time. Funded by a grant from Swarthmore, I spent six months working in Brazil with community education projects in the cities of Recife, Salvador, and São Paulo.

I returned to the United States to complete my student teaching at a middle school in Philadelphia that quickly pulled me back into the realities of American public education. I moved then to Boston where I spent three years teaching eighth grade social studies in the suburban towns of Newton and later Acton. In 1994, my wife and I set out abroad, teaching at the International School Manila. While there, we fell in love with Southeast Asia as we traveled all around the region. We returned in 1996 to Seattle, and since

then I have been teaching ninth grade Pacific Rim Studies (an integrated social studies and language arts block) at Kamiakin Junior High in Kirkland. Last year, I completed the Danforth Educational Leadership Program at the UW, with internships here at TOPS and at Mountlake Terrace High School, a flagship of the small schools movement.

### *How did your experience in Brazil shape your views?*

The six months I spent researching and working in the community school movement in Brazil has deeply influenced my work as a public educator in the United States. In 1990, when I was there, Brazil was in the throes of a complex and ultimately successful democratic transition from military rule. I worked mostly with African-Brazilian educators who were creating community schools to provide basic literacy to the children of slum neighborhoods called *favelas*. These were communities for which public education was not provided – no schools were close enough or structured in such a way that accommodated the economic needs of these very poor families. But with the democratic transition, the residents of these communities had come to view literacy as a right and as a fundamental political tool. They had founded their own schools with volunteer teachers. They wrote their own books for teaching reading which often told the stories of their own community or of Xumbi, the hero of nineteenth-century slave revolts. And they had created a network among them which provided ongoing professional development for their teachers, who mostly had no college education. At the time I worked with them, this network had been successful in gaining some international funding that allowed them to pay a minimum wage to their teachers and they were petitioning the state government to officially designate their schools as public schools with state funding, but they were emphatic that their communities must retain the right to determine their own curriculum and hire their own teachers. The experience of working with these committed educators at such a fundamental level of democratic participation makes me appreciate the importance of participation at TOPS and hopefully guides my sense of what is truly important.

### *What is your vision of an excellent school?*

I decided to become a school administrator because I'm challenged by the importance of creating a coherent learning community that actively links every student, every teacher, and every classroom. As a teacher, my greatest success came when my students were authentically engaged in developing and applying the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary for solving real world problems. When schools are able to involve the entire school community in this way, we educators and parents can be actively involved in nurturing the kinds of relationships with each other and with children that can model and motivate the learning process.

*What drew you to TOPS? What is unique about our school, and how do you see the role of alternative public schools in Seattle?*

*Continued on page 3*

# NEW STAFF AT TOPS

By Gerrit Kischner

## **PEAK KINDERGARTEN: LANA FULLER**

Lana is returning to the TOPS staff! She taught 6th grade math and science at TOPS for five years before taking a leave last year.

## **FIRST GRADE: LESLIE NILAN**

Leslie fills the same position she took over as a long-term substitute for second semester last school year. She received her B.A. from the University of Northern Colorado in elementary education/early childhood education. After substitute teaching in the Denver area for three years, she moved to Arizona to teach on the Navajo Reservation for seven years. She moved to Seattle in 1992 and began substitute teaching for Seattle Public Schools, including several long-term assignments. During that time, she also worked as a tutor for a nonprofit organization for high-risk children for five years.

## **SECOND GRADE: JULIE GILLET**

Julie is a former TOPS parent who has worked in Seattle Public Schools for 14 years, at Broadview-Thomson, Lafayette, and Dunlap Elementaries. She has a strong background in science education and has worked as a district trainer on the use of inquiry-based science.

## **FIFTH GRADE: REBECCA MOSLO**

Rebecca taught 6th grade math and science last year at TOPS. She moves to 5th grade to match her previous experience, most recently at an international school in Singapore.

## **FIFTH GRADE: JASON KERBER**

Jason was born in New Hampshire and raised in Des Moines, Iowa. He attended the University of Iowa, receiving

a B.A. and M.A. in comparative religion. He has also lived in Scotland, Chicago, and California and moved to Seattle eight years ago. He completed his teaching credentials at Pacific Oaks College in Seattle and has taught the past four years at Leschi Elementary.

## **SIXTH GRADE MATH/SCIENCE: DARIN DURAND**

In his three years of teaching, Darin has had the opportunity to work with students from 1st through 8th grades, and from suburban to urban settings, most recently in Minnesota.

## **SEVENTH/EIGHTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES: TOM O'CONNOR**

Tom taught most recently at Nathan Hale High School and tutored with the Rainier Scholars program. Before moving to Seattle, he was a professional dancer in New York City.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION: DAVID BREESE**

David has taught special education in New York City and Seattle for the past five years. He received his B.S. and M.Ed. from the University of Pittsburgh.

## **ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL: GERRIT KISCHNER**

Gerrit is a product of Seattle Public Schools (Stevens, Meany, and Garfield). He received his B.A. from Swarthmore College and his M.Ed. from the University of Washington. His 12-year teaching career, teaching social studies and English, took him from the favelas of Brazil to middle schools in Philadelphia and suburban Boston, the International School Manila, and, most recently, Kamiakin Junior High School in Kirkland. Last school year, he served administrative internships at TOPS and at Mountlake Terrace High School.

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*Introducing...Gerrit Kischner! continued from page 2*

I'm very excited about the opportunity I have at TOPS to work with a tight community of educators, parents, and students committed to a mission of academic excellence and social change. As an educator, I am particularly challenged by the advantage that we have in our stable population that sticks with us for nine years; this requires that we look closely at our attention to the development of the "whole child," that we invest in individual relationships, and that we articulate a curriculum that develops meaningfully from grade to grade. The role of alternative schools in Seattle is to maximize the advantages we enjoy so that we can pay proper attention to these things and demonstrate their importance to educating kids. We should all set a high standard for ourselves here at TOPS, and I am very impressed by the cutting edge work TOPS has been doing for years.

*Tell us something about your family or other interests.*

My family and I live in Ravenna, where I coax twelve different fruit crops off our meager little yard space. My wife, Nancy Bacon, worked until recently as the director of educational programs for the World Affairs Council and now is the program director for Bahia Street, an amazing nonprofit organization working for the education of girls in Salvador, Brazil. Our older daughter, Caetana (5), named for the Brazilian musician Caetano Veloso, is starting kindergarten this fall, and our younger daughter is Aria (2-1/2). We're a pretty food-oriented family, living in the summer from farmers market to farmers market, picking lots of fruit, and baking bread every week (my grain grinder is my new toy).

I'm looking forward to a great school year. Please be in touch. Email is the best way to get in touch with me: [gakischner@seattleschools.org](mailto:gakischner@seattleschools.org).

# TOPS SITE COUNCIL

The Site Council is the parent, faculty, and student governing body for TOPS. It meets each month during the school year. All are welcome to attend.

## **SITE COUNCIL MEMBERS REPRESENTING STAFF**

TOPS principal ..... Clara Scott ..... cscott@seattleschools.org  
TOPS assistant principal ..... Gerrit Kischner ..... gakischner@seattleschools.org

### **Site Council faculty reps:**

Kids Co. .... Vanessa Hunter ..... tops@kidscompany.org  
K-2 ..... TBA  
K-2 ..... TBA  
3-5 ..... Katie Waters ..... kmwaters@seattleschools.org  
3-5 ..... TBA  
3-5 ..... Judy Holben ..... jmhoblen@seattleschools.org  
6-8 ..... Lori Eickelberg ..... eick@qwest.net  
6-8 ..... Marianne Trangen ..... marianne.trangen@stanfordalumni.org  
Other certified ..... Steve Haines ..... shaines@seattleschools.org

## **SITE COUNCIL MEMBERS REPRESENTING PARENTS AND COMMUNITY**

Site Council chair, parent rep.: 6-8 ..... Kathy Cox-Czosnyka ..... Kcoxczos@ch2m.com  
Site Council assistant chair,  
parent rep.: K-2 ..... Maureen Germani ..... maureen@germani.org  
Site Council treasurer, parent rep.: K-2 ..... Steve Havas ..... shavas@starbucks.com  
Site Council secretary, parent rep.: 6-8 ..... Lianne Sheppard ..... sheppard@u.washington.edu  
Parent representative: K-2 ..... Sheri Toussaint ..... Sheritoussaint@hotmail.com  
Parent representative: K-2 ..... Judith Lee ..... Lee.Judith@epamail.epa.gov  
Parent representative: 3-5 ..... Linda Korbus ..... L.korbus@comcast.net  
Parent representative: 3-5 ..... Marlies van Bergeijk ..... paul-marlies@worldnet.att.net  
Parent representative: 6-8 ..... Shirley Bossier ..... Sbossier@speakeasy.net  
Eastlake community representatives: ..... Susan Kaufman ..... Skserafina@attbi.com  
Bob Geballe ..... Bobg@oneacreplus.net  
Coalition for Social Justice rep.: ..... Galen Motin Goff ..... ggoff@fhrc.org  
Middle school student council rep. (ASB) ...TBA

## **COORDINATORS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Volunteer coordinator, communications  
committee Chair ..... Stacie Bonnelle ..... Topsvlntr@aol.com or Hayden3rd@aol.com  
School board reporter ..... Kathy Wickward ..... wickward@raincity.com  
Webmaster ..... Jack Lee ..... lee@oz.net  
Drama committee chair ..... Linda Korbus ..... l.korbus@comcast.net  
Fund development committee chair ..... Jennifer Shaw ..... Jennifer@aoki-sakamoto.com  
No-Bake financial coordinator ..... Kirsten James ..... kirstenjames@hotmail.com  
Newsletter reporter for site council ..... Ellen Markman ..... ellenmark@hotmail.com  
Newsletter editor ..... Teresa Nemeth ..... zongora2@cs.com or zongora2@hotmail.com  
Music committee representative ..... Laurie Roth ..... boroth@comcast.net  
Art committee representative ..... Gloria Albetta ..... galbetta@evergreentreatment.org

# A MESSAGE FROM THE SITE COUNCIL CHAIR

For those of you new to TOPS, welcome. For all others, welcome back. I hope that your summer has been wonderful, and you are ready for a great school year.

Since late last spring I have had opportunity to talk with parents new to me about the school and the Site Council. Something that really struck me was how little many know about the Site Council. What is it for? What do we do? Why isn't there a PTA? What is the difference between a Site Council and a PTSA? What is the Site Council supposed to accomplish? This lack of understanding or clarity is something we should try to change. It would be terrific if, sometime this year, each one of you could take the time to attend a meeting. There is a general belief that those who are not members don't have a voice at Site Council. That is not true, although it is true that only members have a vote. Anyone attending a meeting is welcome to comment on issues under discussion. The agenda always includes a "check-in" – a time for people to comment on issues/ events/ concerns not included on the agenda. We may not be able to address or resolve comments within the check-in time, but we will follow up on them. If you cannot come to a meeting but have concerns you feel the Site Council could address, contact your grade band representative (see list on opposite page) or contact me. We represent you, but to do so we need to hear from you!

My family has been involved with TOPS since 1996 (my older daughter will be in 8th grade this year). In 1996, as kindergarten parents, Phil and I came to the state of the school address – and were amazed to find we could not fit in the room. It was a standing-room-only event. The excitement and commitment from the community were inspiring. Much of that excitement and commitment are still in here, but (for instance) that standing-room-only crowd has not materialized in recent years. I hope to find ways, working with Site Council, to help re-engage the parent community. It would be very cool to have that standing-room-only crowd again. How? I don't know. We will start with the basics and see where that takes us. Basics such as finding ways to improve communication: setting expectations, providing value when meetings are held. Many have expressed frustration with the communication here at TOPS. Please, then, let us know what communication styles or forms work for you. Do you read the newsletter? Prefer email? Verbal? Content: each of us has different interests in the school and there is a lot to communicate.

The survey from last spring was the first step. It has given us some ideas about what is important to you, what works, what does not work. There is much more for all to do. We will be working on it, and I hope we have your support!

Kathy

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## SITE COUNCIL: THE SURVEYS

*By Kathy Cox-Czosnyka, Site Council Chair*

Forty-six Site Council surveys were returned at the end of last year and over the summer. These surveys have been reviewed and summarized; your input will provide a foundation for the Site Council's strategic planning for the coming school year.

So, what did we learn? This month you will get an overview of the comments received. On September 11, at the Site Council's fall retreat and strategic planning session, the entire Site Council will review and discuss your comments. We will begin planning to address your areas of concern and to strengthen and enhance what is great at TOPS. Next month we should be able to begin to share some of our planning.

So – why TOPS? Many of us are here because TOPS has a good reputation – as a good school with a strong academic focus, an open learning environment, good teachers, and a balanced curriculum that focuses on the "whole person." Our enriched curriculum, with a lot of art and music, a strong focus on community involvement, and use of the city as an extension of the classroom, is important to many. Many of us chose TOPS because it is a K-8 school. Diversity of the community (racial, economic, religious, cultural) is also important, as is the strong sense of community and the high level of parent and family participation. No, these are not the only things reported; just

as we are a very diverse community, there is a multiplicity of answers to all the questions. These scored the highest.

What works for you or is important to you? For many (to follow a common theme), strong academic performance and an open learning environment are very important – but there was concern that we have much less focus on experimental or project-based learning and experiential learning, something many believe once helped characterize TOPS as alternative. All of the enrichment programs (many funded with your support through Friends of TOPS) were ranked as quite important and/or working well. Many commented on the sense of community and the dedicated, caring teachers.

Areas cited as needing improvement include leadership, school climate, and communication at the top, with academics ranking highly. The comments regarding the academic program will be shared with the BLT (Building Leadership Team; see article p. 7), which is charged with curriculum and staff development. The concerns over school climate and bullying, leadership and communication need to be discussed in the Site Council ... your concerns were clearly heard; we don't have answers, but we'll work on them.

We asked you whether the Site Council should have a role in addressing your concerns and the answer, fairly

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# TOPS STAFF, 2004-05

## ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Principal.....	Clara Scott .....	office .....	cscott@seattleschools.org .....	252-3510
Assistant principal .....	Gerrit Kischner .....	office .....	gakischner@seattleschools.org .....	252-3510
Counselor .....	Jennifer Murray .....	B306 .....	jmurray@seattleschools.org .....	252-3534
Family support worker .....	Alesia Jessie.....	B305 .....	amjessie@seattleschools.org .....	252-3529

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Administrative secretary.....	Helen Hundley .....	office .....	hhundley@seattleschools.org .....	252-3510
Attendance secretary .....	Tiffany Ogami.....	office .....		252-3518
Office assistant / ASB.....	Colette Hubbard.....	office .....		252-3513
Office assistant /budget.....	Joann Spark.....	office .....		252-3512
Custodial engineer.....	Saream Dy.....	custodial office .....	sady@seattleschools.org.....	252-3525
Lunchroom manager .....	Ernese McQueen .....	lunchroom.....		252-3523
Nurse.....	Ann Uomoto .....	nurse's office.....	auomoto@aol.com .....	252-3521
Communication (CDS).....	Ann Lichtenstadter.....	C conf. rm .....	alichtenstadt@seattleschools.org.....	252-3554
Evening custodian .....	Joe Rivers.....	custodial office .....		252-3525
Psychologist .....	Shareen Eberle.....	C conf. rm .....		252-3528
Volunteer coordinator.....	Stacie Ford-Bonnelle.....	office .....	topsvlntr@aol.com .....	252-3510

## TEACHING STAFF

Kindergarten.....	Joby Moore.....	C106 .....		252-3552
	Joan O'Connor.....	C105 .....	jeoconnor@seattleschools.org.....	252-3551
	Lana Fuller, PEAK .....	Breakout.....	lsfuller@seattleschools.org.....	252-3553
Grade 1.....	Leslie Nilan .....	C103 .....	lsnilan@seattleschools.org .....	252-3569
	Karen Wong .....	C104.....	kswong@seattleschools.org	
Grade 2.....	Carla Fetterley .....	C102.....	cafetterley@seattleschools.org.....	252-3570
	Eric Peterson.....	C201 .....		252-3544
Grade 3.....	Tracy Seefeld.....	C302.....	tseefeld@seattleschools.org.....	252-3546
	Katie Waters.....	C303 .....	kmwaters@seattleschools.org.....	252-3547
Grade 4.....	Mary Chao .....	C301.....	mtchao@seattleschools.org.....	252-3545
	Joe Drummond.....	C304.....	jcdrummond@seattleschools.org .....	252-3548
Grade 5.....	Jason Kerber.....	info NA		
	Rebecca Moslo .....	B204.....	ramoslo@seattleschools.org .....	252-3555
Intermediate special education .....	Judy Holben.....	B203.....	jmholben@seattleschools.org.....	252-3543
Intermediate special education instructional asst. ....	William Smith.....	B203.....		252-3543
Elementary artist-in-residence .....	Cynthia Livak			
Grade 6.....	Darin Durand, math/science ....	B302.....		252-3557
	Marianne Trangen, social studies/language arts ..	B301.....	marianne.trangen@stanfordalumni.org.....	252-3558
Grades 7-8 .....	Dan Bloedel, science .....	B303		
	Lori Eickelberg, language arts...	B403.....	leickelberg@seattleschools.org	
	Mark Ellis, math.....	B404.....	mellis@seattleschools.org.....	252-3565
	Tom O'Connor, social studies ..	B402.....		252-3563
Middle school special education....	David Breese .....	B202.....		252-3573
MS special education instructional asst. ....	Beth Engel .....	B202.....		252-3573
Art, Grades 6-8 .....	Luzita Roll.....	B401.....	lmroll@seattleschools.org.....	252-3562
MS math/ art student teacher .....	Matthew Pedersen .....	B404.....	matthew_pedersen@antiochsea.edu .....	252-3565
Compensatory Education .....	Mike Anderson.....	B305.....	mtanderson1@seattleschools.org .....	252-3574
ESL.....	Nicole Titus.....	B201.....	nititus@seattleschools.org .....	252-3542

# TOPS BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAM (BLT)

(excerpted from TOPS News November 2003 and updated)

Each Seattle public school has a Building Leadership Team (BLT), whose primary function is to promote and facilitate the collaborative decision-making process which affects academic achievement. Its more specific responsibilities are to oversee the facilitation and development of the transformation plan (including the configuration and structure of the school's classes and/or program offerings), professional development, and the school budget.

The BLT is the steward of the academic program of the school – the critical support and advisory team for the principal, who is responsible for the final decisions. The transformation plan lays out the academic focus the school has refined in order to boost student achievement (for TOPS the three areas of focus are 1. The impact of race on learning, 2. A quality writing program, and 3. A quality math program). The BLT plans professional development activities to meet the needs of teachers as they work to implement the transformation plan.

In terms of the budget, each school in the district has control over how it allocates the money it receives from the district. The BLT must determine the staffing needs for the program that meets the goals of the transformation plan, and budget accordingly. The money that Friends of TOPS raises (from such things as the “No-Bake” and auction) is not a part of the budget BLT works with, and is allocated through the site council RFP (Request For Proposal) process.

TOPS' Building Leadership team is composed of the two administrators, five staff members elected by the school staff, and three parents or guardians – one from the site council executive committee and two elected at-large from the TOPS community. The current members are:

- ◆ Clara Scott, principal
- ◆ Gerrit Kischner, assistant principal
- ◆ John Daugherty, middle school resource
- ◆ Lori Eickelberg, middle school language arts
- ◆ Mark Ellis, middle school math
- ◆ Joby Moore, kindergarten
- ◆ Luzita Roll, middle school and 5th grade art
- ◆ Joe Drummond, 4th grade
- ◆ TBA staff member, to replace Doug Frazier
- ◆ Maureen Germani, site council executive board
- ◆ Glen Tamura, parent
- ◆ Holly Morris Jacobson, parent

While the contract does not require parent representation on each school's leadership team, the TOPS staff believes such representation is critical component for our school community.

## ***A MESSAGE FROM GLEN TAMURA, PARENT AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVE:***

My time on the BLT has been both personally and professionally exciting. It has been a pleasure to be involved with educators who are deeply committed to continually improving TOPS. They are committed to both improving their own teaching skills in the classroom and aligning the curriculum at different grade levels so that our children's educational experience has a smooth and continuous trajectory. The faculty has identified differentiation (this is education-biz jargon for “teaching kids with different abilities and interests in one classroom”) as one of the areas where they would like to focus their efforts, and as a parent representative, I will work to with the faculty to insure that resources are made available and that the training is

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TOPS Staff, 2004-05 continued from page 6

### Instructional assistants

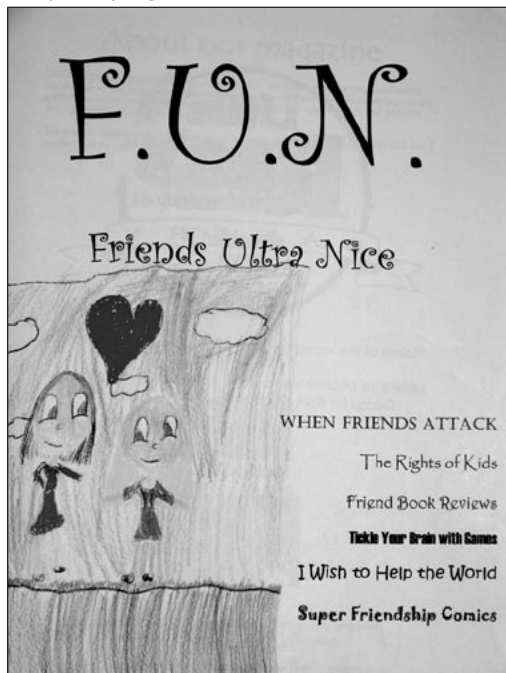
Spanish .....	Manuel Bermudez .....	B206.....	mhbermunez@seattleschools.org.....	252-3531
Special education .....	John Daugherty .....	B304.....	JTDabbler@comcast.net.....	252-3560
	Patty Maffit .....	B304.....		252-3510
ESL.....	Ngoc Hoang			
Instructional aide .....	Katy Rohr-Smith .....	C304 .....		252-3548
Librarian .....	Steve Haines .....	Library Resource Center ....	shaines@seattleschools.org .....	252-3530
Physical Education.....	Eric Herndon .....	gym .....	elherndon@seattleschools.org .....	252-3516
	Don Zemke .....	gym .....	dwzemke@seattleschools.org .....	252-3516
Deaf/Hard of Hearing .....	Adrienne Yoshihara .....	C101		
D/HH instructional aides.....	Jessica Morrissey, Matthew Shedlock			
Beginning instrumental music .....	Charles Holmes .....	B306.....	cehii1951@worldnet.att.net	
Fifth grade instrumental music, MS band, MS strings.....	Paul Gillespie			
Kids Company .....	Vanessa Hunter .....		tops@kidscompany.org.....	709-8487
Occupational/physical therapy .....	Janet Morton			
Spanish language and culture .....	Rebecca Rabbitt .....		rabbitthutch@hotmail.com	
Speech and language .....	Janet Thomson.....	C conf. rm.		

# LEARNING (AND GIVING) DOESN'T STOP DURING THE SUMMER

By Margie Butcher

A group of TOPS 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders spent two weeks together with me this summer...supposedly to play with reading and writing. But they did so much more. In these two short weeks they learned a lot about friendship, published their own magazine, and raised over \$350 for causes they believe in.

Photos provided by Margie Butcher



The first day the group was given the challenge to come up with a project we could work on together that would make a difference in the world (and at the same time use reading and writing). They talked about how so many kids struggle with issues of friendship...how to make friends, what to do when someone is mean to you, what to do if you are lonely. Their concept was to write their own magazine about friendship. They decided they would then sell this magazine to raise money for causes they believed in. Each picked his or her own cause (some picked the same cause), including Childhaven, Children's Hospital,

PAWS, TOPS, and homeless people.

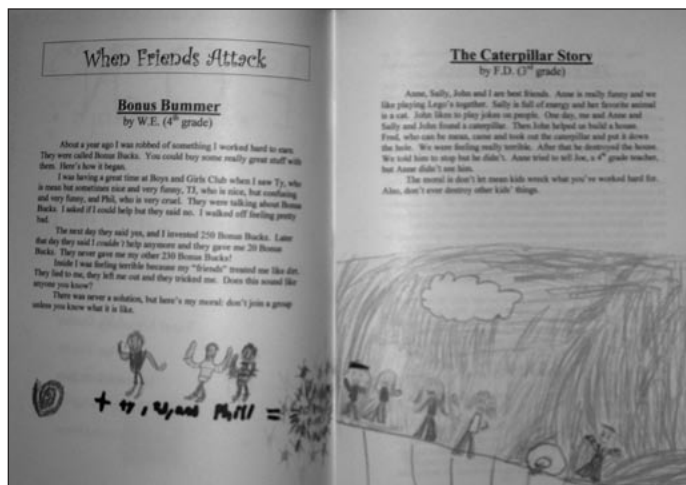
The result was a 40-page magazine that included their own personal stories, book reviews, comics, poetry, and even games, all about issues of friendship. They named the magazine F.U.N. (Friends Ultra Nice). Fifth grader Molly Tokuda said, "I loved writing stories that are in my imagination. I never got to do that before this camp." "It was fun and there was lots of

writing," agreed 4th grader Maya Dickson.

But their learning went far beyond the writing. They spent the two weeks having to share and relive some very difficult friendship experiences of their own. It brought the group incredibly close. There were powerful lessons learned about compromise and teamwork. "It was good to work with others because we got a lot more done," said 4th grader Walker Evans.

The group sold advertising in their magazine, and sold copies of the magazine at Whole Foods. There were many times they had to battle with the moral dilemma of wanting to keep the money for themselves. "I felt good about raising the money because I can see it going to good people. Even though I wanted to keep it, I know they need it more," said Molly. The last day when they counted up their money and divided it to see how much each of them would take home to donate to their cause, they were reminded of the power of giving back. "I like giving the money to the cats at PAWS' cat adoption center," explained 3rd grader Frankie Dickson. "I liked working for the community because we helped people and animals," agreed Walker.

We made a difference in the world.



*TOPS Building Leadership Team continued from page 7*

practical. I will also work to help the faculty to develop resources to orient new faculty at TOPS, to help insure that the values and standards that have been established will continue to nourish the intellectual growth of our children.

## A MESSAGE FROM HOLLY MORRIS JACOBSON, PARENT AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVE:

Greetings from the BLT! (No, I am not stuck inside a sandwich!)

I would like to take a moment to introduce myself and provide contact information. I take my job as a parent rep quite literally and one of my goals this year is to provide

more open communication between the parent community and the Building Leadership Team. I will also be looking at other alternative schools in the district to review their BLT practices with hope of furthering a dialogue as we continue to define who we are as a school. For the most part the BLT at TOPS meets twice a month. I hope to use this space on a monthly basis to share the general focus of BLT activities with the community at large. Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me: 328-8965 or [holly@morrisjacobson.com](mailto:holly@morrisjacobson.com).

Best,

*Holly Jacobson, your Bacon Lettuce and Tomato representative*

# THE NO-BAKE BAKE SALE:

JOIN THE FUN AND SUPPORT OUR UNIQUE COMMUNITY

By Jennifer Shaw

Years ago, the parents and staff of the TOPS community decided to create the Friends of TOPS, a nonprofit organization. Friends of TOPS was designed for the purpose of raising and managing private funds to supplement the educational programs at TOPS.

To fund the Friends of TOPS, those wise founders decided to limit our fundraising efforts to two annual events. As a result, every fall we have the opportunity to participate in the No-Bake Bake Sale and every spring we get to celebrate at the spring auction.

Friends of TOPS is operated by the TOPS Site Council in its "Friends of TOPS" capacity. The Seattle School District has no control over these funds. Friends of TOPS raises the money and the Site Council decides each spring how the money should be spent. Friends of TOPS money is used exclusively to support the excellent programs for our TOPS community.

How do your children benefit from the Friends of TOPS fundraising efforts? Friends of TOPS helps fund many of the programs that we consider essential to the TOPS experience. For instance, the middle school and elementary drama programs, some of the wonderful artists and performers who come to TOPS for assemblies, extra classroom and art supplies, the music program, and the 8th grade passage would not be possible without Friends of TOPS funding.

The reality of public education in these days of budget cuts is that the District can only provide us with the basic necessities: teachers, administrators, a beautiful building, and basic supplies. To go beyond the basics takes parent and community support.

Imagine what TOPS would be like without the art programs, the drama, or the multicultural artists and performers. Imagine what your child's day would be like if we were limited to the barebones budget from the School District. Friends of TOPS funding is what keeps TOPS special.

As the fund development chair and a member of the No-Bake team, I want to personally invite every member of the TOPS community to give to the No-Bake Bake Sale. No amount is too small; every contribution helps.

Very soon you will receive a No-Bake Bake Sale donation form. We do not ask you to buy anything, or bake anything. We just ask you to consider the important programs that benefit you and your children at TOPS and send in whatever amount you can afford to keep these programs operating. If you have questions or would like to help, please contact the No-Bake chair, Sheri Toussaint, at 322-6374 or [shertoussaint@hotmail.com](mailto:shertoussaint@hotmail.com), the fund development chair, Jennifer Shaw, at 325-4079 or [Jennifer@aoki-sakamoto.com](mailto:Jennifer@aoki-sakamoto.com), Kirsten James, No-Bake financial coordinator, at 789-5623 or [KirstenJames@barigarmeier.com](mailto:KirstenJames@barigarmeier.com).

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## 2004-05 TOPS CALENDAR

Note to All: Please send Your Events and Dates to Our Webmaster, Jack Lee, at [Lee@Oz.net](mailto:Lee@Oz.net). Please check Wednesday Go-Homes and the web site for updates.

### SEPTEMBER

8 (W)..... First day of school  
29 (W)..... Professional development block  
time; 2-hour early dismissal

### OCTOBER

2 (Sa)..... No-Bake kick-off carnival,  
gym, 12-4  
8 (F)..... Professional development day;  
no school  
27 (W)..... Professional development block  
time; 2-hour early dismissal

### NOVEMBER

5 (F)..... End of first quarter  
11 (Th) ..... Veterans Day; no school  
15-23 (M-T)... Elementary parent-teacher  
conferences  
25-26 (Th-F)... Thanksgiving holiday; no school

### DECEMBER

20-31 (M-F) ... Winter break; no school

### JANUARY

3 (M) ..... Classes resume  
17 (M) ..... Martin Luther King Jr. Day;  
no school  
28 (F)..... End of semester  
31 (M) ..... Day between semesters; no school

### FEBRUARY

9 (W)..... Professional development block  
time; 2-hour early dismissal  
21 (M) ..... Presidents Day; no school  
22-25 (T-F) ... Mid-winter break; no school

### MARCH

2 (W)..... Professional development block  
time; 2-hour early dismissal  
18 (F)..... Professional development day;  
no school

### APRIL

8 (F)..... End of third quarter  
11-15 (M-F) .. Spring break; no school

### MAY

18 (W)..... Professional development block  
time; 2-hour early dismissal  
30 (M) ..... Memorial Day; no school

### JUNE

21 (T) ..... Last student day

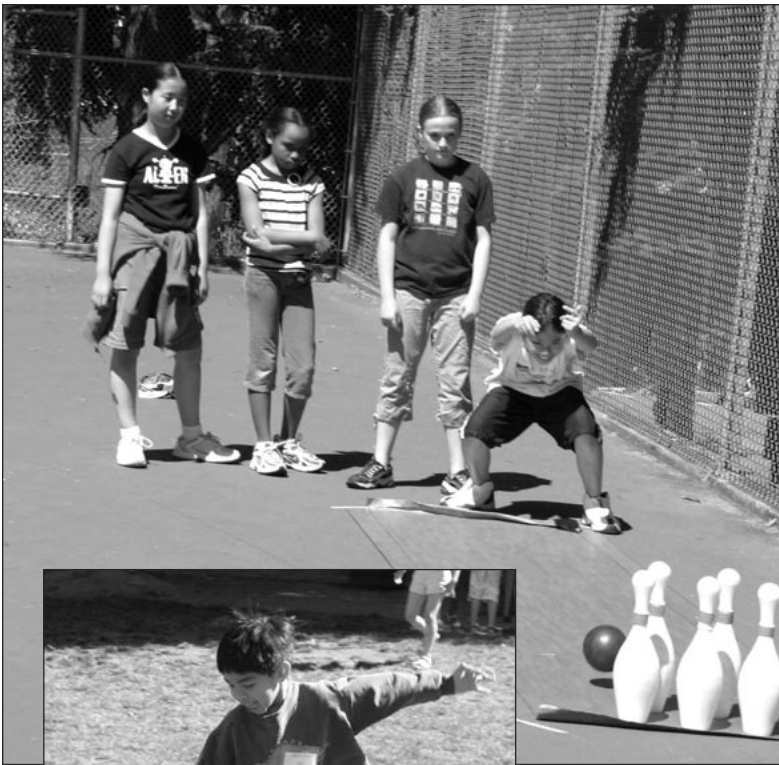
# FIELD DAY 2004

Thanks to everybody involved in planning and running our grade school field day last June. The students had a great time and your volunteer support was very much needed and appreciated.

*Don Zemke, PE teacher*



*Photos provided by Don Zemke*



*Site Council: the Surveys continued from page 5*

resoundingly, was “yes,” with much embellishment. Many expressed significant concern that the school has lost focus, and hope that the Site Council can help us regain it. It was interesting that many of you either do not see TOPS as alternative or see it as a program that used to be alternative. Others gave us examples of what make it still alternative. Perhaps we can gain a better understanding, from these comments, of what TOPS is striving to be.

More on that, I hope, in coming months.

There was one additional question, regarding school assignment. Most of you feel we should remain an all-city draw; some feel there should be no change at all in assignment policy, but many of you expressed the belief that reserving a certain percentage of seats as neighborhood seats would be the “right” thing to do. This is a controversial area of discussion for our community that we may need to pursue, depending on actions by the school board.

Where we go from here: discussion and distillation of consensus concerns and opinions from your very diverse comments. Focus on the areas that can be addressed by the Site Council. Communication of other comments and concerns to the people or groups (such as the BLT) that can address them. Communication back to you, to be sure you know what is happening or changing. More comments by you, I hope.

Many who addressed this survey also thanked the Site Council for initiating this request for information. We will try to work with you; I hope you will try to work with us, through effective communication, to make our school even better than it is today. If there is value in it, perhaps the survey can or should become an annual event.

Thank you for your input, and you will hear more as time progresses!



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# SAVE THE DATE

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 2, 2004**

**COME TO THE SECOND ANNUAL NO-BAKE "CARNIVAL" KICK-OFF**

12 p.m. – 4 p.m. in the TOPS GYM



**FREE FOR EVERYONE!!!**

Teacher dunk tank, games, prizes, face painting, treats to eat and much more!

We need volunteers to help at the carnival  
11:30-2 p.m. and 2-4:30 p.m.



Please contact: Sheri Toussaint, No-Bake chair, 322-6374 or [sheritoussaint@hotmail.com](mailto:sheritoussaint@hotmail.com)  
Kirsten James, No-Bake financial coordinator, 789-5623 or [KirstenJames@barigar.meier.com](mailto:KirstenJames@barigar.meier.com)  
Jennifer Shaw, fund development chair, 324-4079 or [jennifer@aoki-sakamoto.com](mailto:jennifer@aoki-sakamoto.com)

No-Bake fundraiser Oct. 2, 2004 - Jan. 14, 2005

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