
TOPS NEWS

October 2005 ♦ Volume 9, Issue 2

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

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

We've had an exciting opening of school. The year is off to a great start in spite of the challenging traffic revisions. Thanks to all of you for your patience and cooperation during the Eastlake Noise Wall construction. The Department of Transportation hopes to have it completed by mid-October. We will resume our regular bus zones for pick up and drop off when the work is completed.

We welcomed our new families to TOPS with an orientation in August, hosted by the Coalition of Social Justice and our Associated Student Body. The students received general information about TOPS, toured the building, and dined on pizza. Parents met in the library, and were greeted by our site council president, volunteer coordinator, teachers, counselor, CSJ members, lunchroom manager, nurse, and office manager. They received general information followed by a question and answer period. Thanks to all of the parents who attended. A special thanks to the CSJ, who called all of the parents and extended a personal invitation, and to the ASB students for preparing a wonderful program for new students. We have approximately 50 new students this year in grades 1-8.

We tearfully say goodbye to former TOPS students who left us during the summer. Approximately two-thirds of them either moved to other districts or out of the state. We will miss them and wish them well.

We are thrilled to have three new staff members who have joined us since school started. Caryl Keasler is our new middle school resource teacher, and Catrice Dennis and Sarah Causey are AmeriCorps service learning program members. Additionally, we have two teacher interns, both from Antioch, Monica Wood with Mary Chao, and Matthew Brewer with Darin Durand.

2005-2006 TRANSFORMATION PLAN OVERVIEW

During the 2004-05 school year, the TOPS community worked hard to develop its curricular focus on math and writing, and has laid deliberate groundwork for new program initiatives to address bullying prevention and support our social justice mission. Our 2005-06 Transformation Plan reflects our intent to maintain this focus and strengthen school-wide systems, projects, curriculum continuums, and professional practice that enhance our K-8 program.

Action Plan 1: Math

Strategy: Finalize adoption of a K-8 math continuum and provide second year math coaching to facilitate consistent use of TERC Investigations.

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TOPS IS A WONDERFUL SCHOOL

By Georgia Jamieson, 8th grader

From the day I started kindergarten I have always felt very welcomed into the TOPS community. I have gained a good education but I have definitely gained much more than that. I have gained friends, mentors, and role models. When I look back on all the teachers I've had they have all taught me a great lesson. Like Mr. Bloedel, he taught me to never give up on anything. No matter how hard the problem. Mr. Bloedel never gave up on anyone. Even when we were bursting with frustration he kept going and when we figured it out he made us feel like geniuses. He taught me that it's always worth the time

and the work in the end. When I succeeded in his class I always felt so satisfied. I have learned much more from my teachers than just what was in the textbook. I learned how to be in a community and TOPS has made me a better person.

Nine years is a big chunk of your life, and even though I am excited to move on to high school, I will always remember and miss these nine years at TOPS.

I am so thankful to TOPS for everything. My advice to everyone is, never take this for granted. You go to a wonderful school and belong to a great community.

NOVEMBER TOPS NEWS DEADLINE

Tuesday, October 11. Submissions to topsnewsletter@gmail.com

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:
Marlies van Bergeijk

NEWSLETTER ONLINE

The TOPS newsletters are available online in PDF format 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.



SEATTLE
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WHO'S WHO IN THE OFFICE

You've probably talked to Helen, Joann, Colette, and Tiffany on the phone, but who are they and what do they do. The office staff play a critical role in ensuring that school functions well.

ABOUT THE OUTRAGEOUS PUBLISHING SERVICE

Welcome to the second newsletter of the 2005-06 school year. Jamie Flaxman and Ann Simonson edit, Cindy Suzumura handles photos, design, and layout, and Toby Harris gets it mailed off to you. Don Zemke provides many of our photos. G & H Printing prints the newsletter.

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 by email to topsnewsletter@gmail.com or to the newsletter box in the main office.

Please send photos to csuzumura@mindspring.com. Deadlines are the 2nd Tuesday of the month. The deadline for the November issue is October 11. Would you like to edit or otherwise help with our newsletter? Newcomers welcome. Please contact Jamie and Ann at topsnewsletter@gmail.com.



HELEN HUNDLEY is the Administrative Secretary. Helen has been with the Seattle School District for 20 years, having worked at West Seattle High School, Whitworth Elementary, Olympic View Elementary, and TOPS for the past eight years.

Helen does middle school scheduling and has many office responsibilities. Helen likes working in the schools because she loves the kids, staff, and parents. She really loves having a block of time off in the summer to spend with her children and grandchildren.



JOANN SPARKS is beginning her 8th year at TOPS. She handles the school budget for TOPS with its many parts! She spent many years administering the middle school grant and making arrangements for our middle schoolers to enjoy perks from that grant. Joann has been on the playground with the

students every lunch hour for all her years at TOPS, and really loves getting to know the students.



COLETTE HUBBARD has worked for the district for many years. She was at Cleveland before coming to TOPS three years ago. Colette is our ASB secretary and handles all the arrangements for buses for field trips and all the related paperwork so that our kids can enjoy their many field trips and camping experiences. Colette does playground duty as well, and spends most of her time with the kindergarten students in the lunchroom and at their lunch recess.



TIFFANY OGAMI is beginning her third year at TOPS. She is our attendance secretary and calls families to make sure their children are safe at home when they are not at school. Tiffany also does playground duty at lunch time, and works hard at keeping our middle schoolers occupied with

basketball and other activities.

HURRAH FOR VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to everyone who turned in the Back-to-School packets. And an extra BIG thank you for returning the parent involvement forms indicating how you want to volunteer. We are very lucky to have such a committed group of parents willing to make the effort and take the time to support our many programs and assist where necessary. If you haven't heard from me about specific jobs yet, I'll be in touch. We couldn't do it without you. One more thing - the TOPS Directory will be coming out very soon because of your speedy response.

Many thanks to you all.

~Randi Niemer, Volunteer Coordinator

BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM MOVES INTO SECOND MONTH

By Gerrit Kischner, Assistant Principal

At our September 20th opening assembly, our focus this year on bullying prevention was cheered by chants of "We all belong at TOPS!" The weekly class meetings have begun, designed to teach students important skills in bullying prevention and to gauge their own feelings about the work we are engaged in as a community. Our program is now in full swing with our two AmeriCorps members, Sarah Causey and Catrice Dennis, on board (be sure to welcome them and introduce yourself when you see them around school) and classrooms are working to develop a creative name for the program that captures the sense of citizenship, community, responsibility, and civility that we hope to foster.

One focus we have had in laying the groundwork for our program has been in understanding the data we gleaned from the all-school surveys conducted in May. The survey

we used with grades 3-8 is the one Dan Olweus developed and made famous in his work in Norway and Sweden. In Kindergarten through second grades we used a version adapted for simplicity and easy readability. Here are some challenging results for us to consider from last year's grades 3-8:

- ◆ 13% of students report being bullied "2-3 times a month" or more (about equal for boys and girls);
- ◆ 29% of students report being bullied "2-3 times a month" or more when the results of questions that asked about

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Photo provided by Don Zemke

2005-06 TOPS CALENDAR

Send your events and dates to our webmaster, Jack Lee, at Lee@Oz.net. Please check Wednesday Go-Homes and the web site for updates.

SEPTEMBER

27 (T)Curriculum night – 1st-2nd grades, DHH, 6-7 p.m.
 28 (W)6th-8th grade individual pictures
 28 (W)Professional development block time; 2-hour early dismissal
 29 (Th)K-5 individual pictures
 29 (Th)Curriculum night
 5th-6th grades, 6-7 p.m.
 7th-8th grades, 7:15-8:15 p.m.

OCTOBER

6 (Th)Curriculum night - 3rd-4th grades/ Intermediate special ed., 6-7 p.m.
 6 (Th)CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.
 11 (Th)Newsletter deadline
 12 (W)1st-3rd grade, DHH to Seattle Children's Theater (SCT)
 12 (W)Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.
 14 (F)Professional development day; no school
 20 (Th)State of the School, 7-9 p.m., lunchroom
 24-28 (M-F)Spirit Week
 26 (W)Professional development block time; 2-hour early dismissal

NOVEMBER

3 (Th) 6th-8th grade, Middle school SE to SCT
 3 (Th) CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.
 10 (Th) 4th-5th grades, Elem. SE to SCT
 8 (T) Newsletter deadline

9 (W) Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.
 10 (Th) End of first quarter
 11 (F) Veterans Day; no school
 14-18 (M-F) .. Parent Conferences, 2 hour early dismissal
 21-22 (M-T) .. Parent Conferences
 23 (W) 1-hour early dismissal
 24-25 (Th-F) .. Thanksgiving holiday; no school

DECEMBER

1 (Th) CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.
 8 (Th) Winter Concert
 9 (F) Middle School play
 14 (W) Young Author's Conference
 16 (F) 1-hour early dismissal
 19-30 (M-F) ... Winter break; no school

JANUARY

2 (M) Winter break; no school
 3 (T) Classes resume
 5 (Th) CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.
 10 (T) Newsletter deadline
 11 (W) 2nd grade, Elem. SE, DHH to SCT
 11 (W) Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.
 16 (M) Martin Luther King Jr. Day; no school

FEBRUARY

2 (Th) End of semester
 2 (Th) CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.
 3 (F) Day between semesters; no school
 7 (T) Newsletter deadline
 8 (W) Professional development block time; 2-hour early dismissal
 8 (W) Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.

15 (W) DHH to SCT
 20 (M) Presidents Day; no school
 21-24 (T-F) ... Mid-winter break; no school

MARCH

1 (W) Professional development block time; 2-hour early dismissal
 2 (Th) CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.
 8 (W) Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.
 14 (T) Newsletter deadline
 17 (F) Professional development day; no school
 21 (T) 6th-8th grades, Middle school SE to SCT

APRIL

5 Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.
 6 (Th) 2nd-5th grades to SCT
 6 (Th) CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.
 10-14 (M-F) .. Spring break; no school
 21 (F) End of third quarter

MAY

4 (Th) CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.6
 6 (Sa) TOPS Auction at the Asian Resource Center
 9 (T) Newsletter deadline
 10 (W) Site Council meeting, 5-7 p.m.
 17 (W) Professional development block time; 2-hour early dismissal
 24 (W) K-3rd grades and Elem. SE, DHH to SCT
 29 (M) Memorial Day; no school

JUNE

1 (Th) CSJ meeting, 6:30-8 p.m.
 21 (W) Last student day

SITE COUNCIL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 14, 2005

By Louise Bush

Marlies van Bergeijk, Chair of the 2005-2006 TOPS site council, opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions.

BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAM (BLT)

Gerrit Kischner, TOPS assistant principal, gave the BLT report, announcing that BLT is off and running with regard to planning for this year with a special view toward the TOPS Transformation Plan, which is required by the State of Washington every Spring. The Transformation Plan lists seven action plans BLT will focus on this year: math; reading; writing; climate/safety; identity/mission; discipline/disproportionality; and differentiation/disproportionality. Although the current Transformation Plan is not on the TOPS website, it is a public document and is available to anyone who wishes to read it. A two-page overview of the Transformation Plan, also not currently on the website, is more digestible than the entire document, and is also available to anyone. Gerrit further stated that BLT has made the Transformation Plan overview the focus of all its discussions this year.

Maureen Germani stated that at the first BLT meeting members also spent at least ten minutes discussing last year's WASL scores.

OLWEUS PROGRAM

Gerrit announced that the inauguration of the Olweus (bullying prevention) program will be Tuesday morning, September 20, in the TOPS gymnasium, after which all students will have a homework assignment to help them reflect on the program. He stated that the Olweus program has an active and focused coordinating committee of staff and parents who met twice over the summer and read a great deal of literature on the subject. TOPS has two Americorps volunteers, Sara Causey and Catrice Dennis, who Gerrit stated will be very involved with the bullying program, as well as with citizenship and responsibility issues (which include the stewardship program). Further, Jody Newman, an educational psychology graduate student at the University of Washington, will also be working at TOPS to assist the school in implementing the program. Jody was present at the site council meeting, and introduced herself and discussed her interest in the subject.

Gerrit then showed us a video on bullying which Don Zemke, TOPS physical education teacher, put together for the Olweus assembly on September 20.

SITE COUNCIL MEETING FORMAT AND GOALS FOR 2005-2006

Maureen Germani reported that most of the Site Council members attended a retreat on Saturday, September 10. The primary focus was last year's report of the Alternative Education Committee, specifically if and how Site Council will use the definition of an alternative school contained in the report as a tool to help the TOPS community articulate its own alternative identity, and how that may inform or change the RFP (Request for Proposals, whereby programs funded by Friends of TOPS provide funding for such requests) process for Friends of TOPS.

Maureen reported that the Site Council decided it would lead discussions at the next five Site Council meetings on five topic areas, which were culled from the 12 defining characteristics of alternative schools as defined by the Alternative Education Committee. Those five discussion points are: 1. how does or can TOPS inform choice by clarifying and communicating TOPS' mission and objectives; 2. how does or can TOPS involve all members of the community in decision making; 3. how does or can TOPS create a deeply caring and respectful school culture; 4. how does or can TOPS individualize curriculum and differentiate instruction recognizing that there are many ways to learn; and 5. how does or can TOPS utilize alternative scheduling and attendance policies to create a small school feel?

The Site Council then undertook a lengthy discussion as to whether or not it should in fact dedicate one hour during each of the next five site council meeting to one of the five topics listed above. Members discussed the various goals they hope to achieve by doing so. The goals discussed included 1. getting a clear idea of what makes TOPS different from any other school; 2. getting all TOPS parents on the same page and enthusiastic about the things the TOPS community is doing; and 3. being able to answer the question so often posed - "what makes TOPS an alternative school?" Ultimately, the Site Council decided it would in fact focus its next five meetings around the topics listed above. Parents will receive a notice about these topics before each site council meeting, and will be very much encouraged to attend.

Marlies then adjourned the Site Council meeting.

WANTED: ANOTHER NEWSLETTER REPORTER FOR THE SITE COUNCIL

Haven't you always wondered what goes on at those Site Council meetings? This is your chance to find out! Louise Bush Rosen has been doing a superb job of reporting on the Site Council meetings, but she could use a little help. Become her partner and you'll only have to attend one meeting every other month. Usually the second Wednesday of the month from 5-7 p.m. Help keep our TOPS community informed. If you are able and interested, please contact Louise at mail@rosenfamilly.com.

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND BEYOND

By Steve Haines, Librarian

*"The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."*

~Dr. Seuss

This school year has brought a huge contingent of new students to our school from all over Seattle. As they get acclimated to their new surroundings, we wish them great success here at TOPS.

Our library is open from 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After school the library is reserved for those wishing to do homework, research, or to read. When I am available I'm more than happy to help with homework or in finding that special book. The library is not intended for use as a daycare. That responsibility falls to Kids Company here at TOPS. Adults are always welcome in the library to help or to just "hang out."

We received many new books over the summer including many Spanish books that will support Maestra Rabbitt's Spanish language program. The new libros include titles on culture, traditional crafts, dictionaries, dual language stories, and even a copy of *Huevos Verdes con Jamon* por



Photo provided by Don Zemke

Dr. Seuss. They will be ready for checkout when the program starts.

Speaking of Dr. Seuss, I had the opportunity to see a teacher's preview of the play "Seussical" that is being staged by Seattle Children's Theatre. The performance brings all of Theodore Geisel's visual and rhyming language techniques into play through 26 songs, multiple dance numbers, and fanciful rhyming phrases. The plot follows several of Dr. Seuss's stories with Horton the elephant being the main character. Several of our classes are going to this play. Hopefully others can attend a performance. It is well worth it.

With the start of school comes the seemingly endless nights in front of the computer completing homework. Last spring I wrote about the resources that the Seattle Public Schools offers its students. Accessed through the web at www.seattleschools.org/area/library/stuindex.xml, these resources, including the World Book Encyclopedia, CultureGrams, and eLibrary, can be accessed by using W001CSEATL as the username and WELCOME as the password. Note: these passwords are case sensitive and must be entered in uppercase. While you're on the site check out the reference desk at the bottom of the page. You can even access the Seattle Public Library and the King Country Library from the page.



Photo provided by Steve Haines

Bullying Prevention Program Moves Into Second Month continued from page 3

specific types of bullying behavior (teasing, exclusion, physical aggression, spreading rumors, threats, etc.) are combined;

- ◆ 28% of students report feeling afraid of being bullied by other students in school;
- ◆ 16% of girls and 53% of boys have not reported the bullying they have experienced (but 53% of the girls and 21% of boys have told somebody at school, 47% of girls and 37% of boys have told a parent/guardian, and 79% of girls and 37% of boys have told a sibling or friend).

We will share more results from these surveys and our on-going program evaluation at the State of the School on October 20th.

As our class meetings start, teachers are working first to make sure students understand the roles played by people engaged in bullying, the targets, and the

bystanders. They are looking to give students practice with methods for avoiding being a target, for counteracting the behavior, and for empowering the bystanders to act effectively to intervene. Over the course of the year, we will revisit these themes in different ways. Please check the Go-Home regularly to see the themes and skills we're focusing on so that these can become topics of discussion at home as well.



Photo provided by Don Zemke

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

By Bonnie Cech

The Committee for Social Justice (CSJ) kicked off the school year with its annual retreat, held Wednesday, August 17. Parents and staff members met to evaluate last year's calendar of events and to plan activities, presentations, and discussion groups to be sponsored by the CSJ during this school year.

The purpose of CSJ is to support the TOPS mission and vision. All CSJ meetings and sponsored events are open to all interested parents and staff. CSJ seeks to understand and honor cultural diversity and social justice within our school and broader community. CSJ sponsored activities are funded through a combination of monies received by Friends of TOPS, and grants obtained from outside sources, such as the King County Work Training Program (designed to increase student, staff, parent and community member's awareness of social justice issues).

To continue building on the groundwork laid last year, the CSJ will again focus its parent/staff educational activities around three primary themes:

1. Bullying Prevention
2. Family Differences
3. Learning Differences

These themes were chosen by the committee to help support school programs (e.g., Olweus Framework bullying prevention program), and to broaden the community's understanding and acceptance of the ways in which individuals, families, and cultures may differ. The TOPS community is comprised of a wonderfully diverse group of families, and through CSJ activities and discussions, we have a unique opportunity to share our experiences and learn from one another. This year we also hope to enhance our understanding of differences in learning that exist in our communities/classrooms. We will begin this journey by reading and discussing *A Mind at a Time* by Dr. Mel Levine, co-founder of the All Kinds of Minds Institute.

The calendar of CSJ-sponsored events and activities is

listed below. You can find additional information about CSJ and upcoming meetings/events at class curriculum nights, TOPS State of the School, and throughout the year in the school newsletters, Wednesday Go-Homes, posted flyers, on the website, and in communication from your Room Reps. We welcome all parents and staff to attend and participate in any of these meetings and activities:

Thursday, October 6, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., CSJ Meeting / Kick off: *A Mind at a Time*, pages 13-49 and Chapter 13, facilitated by TOPS counselor Jennifer Murray, and TOPS parent Lis Soldano. (See CSJ Corner on page 7 for more details.)

Thursday, November 3, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., CSJ Meeting: Discussion of the bullying prevention program facilitated by the parent/staff members of the in-house coordinating committee

Thursday, December 1, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., CSJ Meeting: Class "spotlight" – How the TOPS mission is carried out in the classroom, TOPS staff TBA. Continued discussion of *A Mind at a Time*.

Thursday, January 5, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., CSJ Meeting: Viewing of the movie "Color of Fear" with discussion led by parents Karen Stuhldreher and Galen Goff.

Thursday, February 2, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., CSJ Meeting: Continued discussion of learning differences, outside speaker TBA.

Thursday, March 2, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., CSJ Meeting: Class "spotlight" – How the TOPS mission is carried out in the classroom, TOPS staff TBA.

Thursday, April 6, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., CSJ Meeting: Viewing of "Just Black?"

Thursday, May 4, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., CSJ Meeting: Class "spotlight" – How the TOPS mission is carried out in the classroom, TOPS staff TBA.

Thursday, June 1, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., CSJ Meeting: End of the year social.

PICTURES, PICTURES!

We need your pictures! Do you often take pictures of school events? Feel free to send us your pictures (even if they're all of your kid). We want more pictures for the newsletter, and welcome submissions from everyone. Email your pictures to topsnewsletter@gmail.com, or to csuzumura@mindspring.com.

Thanks from the co-editors.

OCTOBER IS CHILDREN'S HEALTH MONTH

Each October, the Environmental Protection Agency celebrates Children's Health Month by participating in events and activities that highlight the importance of protecting children from environmental risks. The theme for 2005 is "Promoting Healthy School Environments." Visit www.epa.gov/schools for information and links to school-related environmental health issues like mold and indoor air quality, diesel school bus exhaust, chemical management, pesticides exposure, lead, asbestos, and PCB's in schools, and drinking water contaminants.

CSJ CORNER

Welcome to the CSJ corner where you can look each month to find out what the Coalition for Social Justice has planned for its monthly meeting, the first Thursday of each month from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the TOPS library. Childcare is provided.

CSJ is a group of parents, staff, and administrators who work together in support of the stated mission and vision of TOPS. You can learn more about CSJ and the coalition's focus for the coming year in the article on page 6.

OCTOBER 6TH MEETING:

Welcome to new and returning families – review and discuss the CSJ calendar of events for the school year.

Discussion of a book on learning differences titled *A Mind at a Time* by Mel Levine. Copies of the book are available for parents to borrow from the library. The hope is that people will read pages 13-49 and chapter 13 (or as much as they can) and come with some thoughts and questions. TOPS' counselor Jennifer Murray and parent Lis Soldano will facilitate the discussion.

From Publisher, Simon and Schuster: "*Different minds learn differently,*" writes leading pediatrician and education expert, Mel Levine. In *A Mind at a Time*, Dr. Levine shows parents and others who care for children how to identify these individual learning patterns. He explains how parents and teachers can encourage a child's strengths and bypass the child's weaknesses. This type of teaching produces satisfaction and achievement, instead of frustration and failure.

For more information go to: <http://www.allkindsofminds.org>.

Join us for a discussion of this useful and groundbreaking book.

NOVEMBER 3RD MEETING:

Overview and discussion of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program at TOPS beginning this year. Assistant Principal Gerrit Kischner and a panel of parents and staff from the committee leading the bullying program will discuss the program and how we can all work to ensure its success at TOPS.

A Message from the Principal continued from page 1

Action Plan 2: Reading

Strategy: Strengthen Literacy Block program in 1st and 2nd grades and extend reading group structure through upper grades.

Action Plan 3: Writing

Strategy: Maintain building-wide use of K-8 writing continuum using writers' workshops and building-wide fall and spring writing samples.

Action Plan 4: Climate/Safety

Strategy: Implement the Olweus Bullying Prevention Framework building-wide.

Action Plan 5: Identity/Mission

Strategy: Develop school-wide projects that involve the whole community on a regular basis and in an authentic way, in understanding of, and participation in, the alternative, social justice-oriented mission of the school.

Action Plan 6: Discipline/Disproportionality

Strategy: Develop a clear, progressive discipline plan that ties closely to our bullying prevention program and that addresses institutional causes for disproportionality in student referrals.

Action Plan 7: Differentiation/Disproportionality

Strategy: Strengthen differentiated instruction in the classroom and develop methods for improving students' metacognitive reflection on their own progress and learning.

Addendum: Develop clear handwriting expectations for students K-8.

STATE OF THE SCHOOL

Save the date: Thursday, October 20, 7-9 p.m. in the lunchroom. Please plan to attend the State of the School

to hear more about academic programs, state test results, and the bullying prevention program.

ATTENDANCE

Please remember to call by 9:30 a.m. when your child will be absent. Also, one of the things we will be working on this year is punctuality so that there are fewer interruptions to our academic program. We are working with transportation to get our buses here on time as well.

NO BAKE SALE

We are getting ready for our No Bake Sale. Support from our parents is what enables us to continue to provide good programs for our students and many extracurricular activities as well.

THANKS TO RANDI NIEMER

Randi Niemer is our Volunteer Coordinator. She did an outstanding job of preparing the packets for the first day of school. If you have any questions about volunteer opportunities, please contact Randi at 252-3541.

CURRICULUM NIGHTS

Tuesday, September 27th.....6-7 p.m.....1st/2nd/DHH
Thursday, September 29th...6-7 p.m.....K/5th/6th
Thursday, September 29th...7:15-8:15 p.m.7th/8th
Thursday, October 6th.....6-7 p.m.....3rd/4th/Judy

I'm hoping everyone has managed to attend or is planning to attend this year's Curriculum Nights. Last year we had 98% attendance. Let's try for 100% attendance this year! I will see you there. Cheers!

~Clara

TUTORING AND HOMEWORK ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN THE COMMUNITY

Compiled by Jamie Flaxman

This is a partial list of tutoring and homework assistance programs in Seattle. Inclusion on this list is not endorsement of any specific program; families should check out programs for more information and to see if it is the right fit for their child. Costs, if any, will vary by program.

Organization/Program	Phone	Website
Atlantic Street Center		www.atlanticstreet.org
Rainier Beach Family Center	723-1301	
Boys & Girls Clubs of King County	461-3890	www.positiveplace.org
Ballard	783-5775	
I-WA-SIL	325-3942	
North Seattle	784-5396	
Rainier Vista	725-4197	
Rotary (central area)	324-7317	
Wallingford	547-7261	
Catholic Community Services		
Lao Communities Center	328-2644	
Youth Tutoring Program	328-5650	www.ytpseattle.org
Chinese Information & Service Center	624-5633	www.cisc-seattle.org
El Centro de la Raza	329-9442	www.elcentrodelaraza.org
Emerald City Outreach Ministries	722-2052	www.ecomseattle.org
Eritrean Community in Seattle & Vicinity	323-1154	
Ethiopian Community Mutual Association	325-0304	www.ecmaseattle.org
Family Works	694-6729	www.familyworksseattle.org
Gondar Mutual Association of Seattle	762-0774	
Helping Link	781-4246	www.cityofseattle.net/helpinglink
Khmer Community of Seattle	762-3922	
Kids Company at TOPS	709-8487	www.kidscompany.org
Lutheran Community Services-Cascade Peoples Center	587-0320	www.lcsnw.org
Neighborhood House		www.nhwa.org
Rainier Vista	461-4568	
Yesler Terrace	461-4522	
North Seattle Family Center		www.chs-wa.org
Northwest Urban Ministries	323-9870	www.nwum.org
Seattle Parks & Recreation (community centers throughout the city)		www.seattle.gov/parks/centers
Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle	461-3792	www.urbanleague.org

Child and Adolescent Adjustment Project University of Washington, Department of Psychology

ARE YOU THE PARENT OF A 12-15 YEAR OLD BOY?

We are currently conducting a research study at the University of Washington that may be right for you.

If you are the parent of a 12-15 year old boy we may be interested in inviting you and your son to participate in a new research study on information processing in adolescent boys. If you and your son decide to participate, you will receive up to \$100 for your participation in two different sessions. Your son can receive between \$40-\$50. For more information, please contact the lab of Dr. Theodore Beauchaine at (206) 543-8844.

TOPS PUZZLE

How well do you know TOPS? Try out this word search. Want to submit your own puzzle to the *TOPS News*? Just email it to topsnewsletter@gmail.com or put it in the newsletter mailbox in the office.

N	8	A	T	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	R
J	-	L	C	T	T	O	C	S	P	E	O
U	K	K	I	D	S	C	O	E	V	A	G
S	R	Z	T	E	L	D	D	I	M	P	E
T	O	S	Y	I	Q	L	T	O	P	S	R
I	W	C	W	S	T	A	S	B	L	T	S
C	E	I	I	V	N	O	B	A	K	E	D
E	M	P	D	R	Q	Y	-	K	W	X	R
F	O	O	E	A	S	T	L	A	K	E	A
U	H	T	E	A	C	H	E	R	S	U	W
X	L	S	T	U	D	E	N	T	S	Z	E
A	P	I	H	S	D	R	A	W	E	T	S

WORD LIST

ALTERNATIVE	NOBAKE
BLT	PE
(Building Leadership Team)	ROGERS (Playfield)
CITYWIDE	SCOTT (Clara)
EASTLAKE	SEWARD
FRIENDS	STEWARDSHIP
HOMEWORK	STUDENTS
JUSTICE	TEACHERS
(Coalition for Social)	TOPICS
K-8	TOPS
KIDSCO	WASL
MIDDLE (School)	

TEACHING PARENTING THE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE WAY

A workshop for parent educators, counselors, and parents

October 6 (7-9 p.m.), October 7 and 8 (8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Co-sponsored by the Positive Discipline Association, www.posdis.org, and the Puget Sound Adlerian Society, www.psasadler.org, 206-527-2566, psas@att.net

PARTICIPANTS WILL:

- ◆ Learn research-based, effective tools and techniques for teaching parents how to use discipline that is kind and firm at the same time, neither punitive nor permissive.
- ◆ Learn how to facilitate a parenting class as a non-expert.
- ◆ Learn how to work with and teach parents who love their children but have few tools and resources to parent effectively for today's world.
- ◆ Gain practice with experiential exercises that help parents go beyond intellectual understanding to be able to respond in empowering ways with their children.

- ◆ How to use materials in group settings (parenting classes) and in individual work with families.
- ◆ Have a set of resource materials for future reference.

Cost: \$275 – includes \$93 for materials.

Location: Shoreline, WA

Facilitators: Jody McVittie, M.D., and Sahara Pirie, Certified Positive Discipline Associates

Questions: Call or e-mail Jody, 425-335-4460 or jmcvittie@att.net, or call or e-mail Sahara, 206-546-4142, smpirie@comcast.net.

To register: Call Positive Discipline Association, 1-866-POS-DISC (1-866-767-3472), or sign up online at www.posdis.org.

TOPS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By Toby Harris, TOPS parent since 1993, tojji@earthlink.net

Each month, I hope to offer some TOPS historical perspective by highlighting excerpts from past newsletters and other documents selected from the TOPS Archives. TOPS archival materials and photographs are mainly from former teacher files and are housed in the TOPS library loft. If you have an interest in looking through these materials, using something for TOPICS, or want to help, please let me know. I would welcome ideas and support.

TOPS started out as GAOP (Garfield Area Option Program) at Stevens Elementary in the 1976-77 school year. These selections are from newsletters to parents written by one of the founding teachers, Harper Welch, and give you a glimpse of activities and issues during the 1980-81 school year.

OCTOBER 3, 1980

[notes from recent parent meeting]

Topics covered included the support that our principal has offered – some aide time and about \$600 of instructional materials! ...Our estimate for a total '80-'81 budget for GAOP is about \$1400. That translates into about \$20 per family. (It was decided that families would prefer to use a straight donation rather than struggle through a number of fundraisers.)

Other discussions centered on camp, the new report card, possible social activities...and we closed by doing a "Magic Circle" session – an example of an activity we do daily with students.

Camp will be Oct. 16-17 at Warm Beach Camp, a new site, one less day, a bit more costly, but far from potential volcano activity. [Note: camp was previously held at Cispus Environmental Center, just south of Mt. Rainier.]

OCTOBER 10, 1980

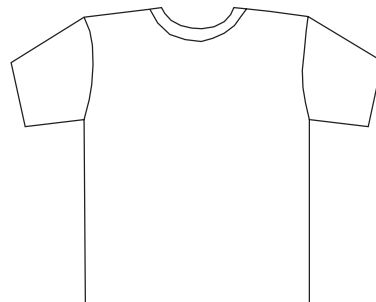
Nov. 6, Thursday – POSSIBLE CURRICULUM NIGHT

Promise: No fundraising talk. No GAOP business. No call to political action. As important as these are to our continued existence, many of us feel the need to talk, exclusively, with one another about what is being taught, how it is taught, with what materials, what plans for the future and in general what the expectations of parents are for their children's learning experiences – in short, to address this issue: "I would like my child to _____."

Some 1979-80 TOPICS:

- ◆ Dissecting flowers
- ◆ Painting big imaginary flowers
- ◆ Stitchery
- ◆ Weaving
- ◆ Volcanoes
- ◆ Writing books
- ◆ Vegetable printmaking
- ◆ Storytelling
- ◆ Sound effects for stories
- ◆ Secret codes
- ◆ Magic tricks
- ◆ Body movement
- ◆ The human body (nutrition, skeleton, major organs)
- ◆ Drawing mazes
- ◆ Alexander the Great
- ◆ Jamestown
- ◆ Tadpoles
- ◆ Ethnic cooking
- ◆ Evolution of the horse
- ◆ Math enrichment (tangrams, patterns)
- ◆ Opera study
- ◆ Earth Day
- ◆ Passover
- ◆ Cinco de Mayo
- ◆ Animated films
- ◆ Lightning and thunder
- ◆ Detective skills
- ◆ Greek alphabet coding
- ◆ Daytime Astronomy
- ◆ Architecture

CALLING ALL TOPS TEE SHIRTS



Do you have a TOPS tee shirt that no longer fits? Do you have friends whose children attended TOPS preceding yours who may have old TOPS tee shirts?

The TOPS Historical Society is collecting TOPS tee shirts. Please consider donating yours and asking your friends. Archivist will give away years/images not needed. Someday we'll have a TOPS tee shirt exhibit. Questions? Ask Toby, tojji@earthlink.net

Please wash first and deliver to the TOPS Library. Thanks!

WHAT TOPS FAMILIES ARE CELEBRATING

Compiled by Lynne Goodrich (CSJ Member)

OCTOBER 2005 HOLIDAYS

October 2: Birth of Mohandas “Mahatma” Gandhi (India) Born October 2, 1869. One of India’s greatest spiritual and political leaders, he led a campaign of peaceful civil disobedience which led to India’s independence from Great Britain. Assassinated January 30, 1948.

October 3: Rosh Hashanah (Jewish) Jewish New Year 5766. Begins at sunset on October 3 and concludes sunset October 5. This major holiday begins the most holy period of the Jewish calendar, the High Holy Days. On the first night special foods are eaten, including honey, which symbolizes the desire for a sweet year.

October 4: Navaratri (Hindu) Celebrated from October 4 – 12. It means “white nights.” Starting on the new moon, this festival is dedicated to the goddess Durga, who had nine incarnations.

October 4: Ramadan (Muslim) Most sacred holiday of the Muslim Year. Fasting from sunrise to sunset begins when the new moon has been sighted. It is a month of concentrated worship, atonement and giving thanks to Allah, which concludes November 2 with the Festival of Fast-Breaking. There are approximately one billion Muslims worldwide with between 6 to 7 million in the U.S.

October 10: Columbus Day (U.S.) Traditionally celebrates Christopher Columbus’ arrival in the Americas in 1492. In some areas it is celebrated as Native American Day instead, due to the view by some that Columbus Day celebrates conquest and genocide.

October 11: National Coming Out Day (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender) International event with theme this year of “Talk About It.” Sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s Coming Out Project, it is an ongoing campaign to empower gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and allied Americans to live openly and honestly.

October 12: Yom Kippur (Jewish) The Day of Atonement starts at sundown. The most important and holiest day of the year for Jews, it is devoted to prayer, fasting, and asking and granting forgiveness for one’s transgressions.

October 12: Dia de la Raza (Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Uruguay, Venezuela) Columbus Day is celebrated as a fiesta to celebrate the common interests and Spanish heritage of the Latin American peoples.

October 12: Dussehra (Hindu) One of the most important Hindu festivals, this three-day event celebrates the triumph of Good over Evil in the victory of the Lord Rama over Ravana. Special recipes are prepared and sweets and gifts exchanged. Celebrants also burn an effigy of the monster Ravan.

October 17: Sukkot (Jewish) Begins at sunset and lasts for eight days. The word sukkot means “booth” and recalls the time that Israelites wandered in the desert during their journey to the Promised Land and lived in the sukkots. Temporary dwellings can be erected at home and decorated with fruits of the harvest.

October 29: U.S. Supreme Court orders an end to all school segregation in 1969.

October 30: Reformation Sunday (Christian) Many Protestant churches commemorate Reformation Day on the Sunday preceding October 31.

October 30: Daylight Savings Time ends In an effort to conserve resources for the efforts of WWI, Congress approved a law that altered each U.S. time zone’s standard time by moving clocks ahead one hour. The plan was not popular and ended after seven months. DST was utilized again during WWII. Following the war, states were allowed to observe DST at their discretion. Currently, Arizona, Hawaii, part of Indiana, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands do not observe DST.

October 31: Halloween In ancient times, the Celtic New Year on November 1 was preceded the night before by Samhain Eve, in which they believed the spirits of the dead returned to earth. Later, Christians adapted Celtic customs and celebration of the dead was changed to a celebration of saints and martyrs of the Catholic Church. Immigrants from Scotland and Ireland brought customs such as carving jack-o’-lanterns to the United States. Halloween celebrations were common in the U.S. by the 1870’s.



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TOPS No-Bake 2005
ANNUAL FUND DRIVE TO SUPPORT TOPS SCHOOL

OUR GOAL IS \$72,000
October 1st - December 31st, 2005
DON'T BAKE - DONATE!

Your good old fashioned donation to Friends of TOPS will help to sustain our outstanding programs. Each and every family is called upon to help!!

Mail your donations to TOPS School No-Bake Fund Drive - 2500 Franklin Ave East - Seattle, WA 98102

Be on the lookout for your NO-BAKE KICK-OFF PACKET COMING IN THE MAIL THIS WEEK.

THANKS TO G & H PRINTING, 2370 EASTLAKE E. 329-9888

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