Dear TOPS Families,

This is my last article for the newsletter as the TOPS Principal. I want to thank you for sharing your valuable time serving our school in so many ways over the years; in the classroom, on Site Council, CSJ, No-Bake, drama, auction committee, camp assistants, dance chaperones, kitchen assistants, room reps, lunchroom assistants, art and music committee members, BLT, Operations Committee, tutors, library assistants, TOPICS, Taste of TOPS, and sport team volunteers. Your support is what makes TOPS the great school that it is.

We have accomplished a lot together and I know that you will continue to do great things. I am so pleased that Jeanne Kuban will continue as Assistant Principal, bringing continuity and maintaining momentum for the TOPS academic programs. I look forward to working with the new Principal and getting him/her acclimated to the rhythms and dynamics of TOPS. Thanks again for all of your support and for sharing your sons and daughters with me. I love them all. As always…

Cheers!

Clara

Cheers to You, Clara!

By Ann Simonson

When I sat down to talk with Clara about her retirement and her time here at TOPS, I had received her letter announcing her retirement as all of you had. I found it interesting to learn about her career and how she had spent her time before TOPS. She told me she had actually started out as a reading teacher, but in her teaching realized she was just as concerned about her students’ emotional and social development as she was about their academic development. So this led her back to school to obtain her masters degree in counseling education. I wanted to know more about the move from head of the counseling department at Nathan Hale to Assistant Principal of TOPS – how did that happen?

Continued on page 2
Clara reflected on her career and the ways in which unexpected doors opened for her. She never planned to become a principal, and she wasn’t seeking that out while at Nathan Hale. But enough people encouraged her in that direction, most importantly her principal at that school. Enough people saw the qualities in her that would serve her well as a principal, and she left herself open to the possibilities, and eventually followed that path. She had her reservations at first, mainly because she so enjoyed her students and didn’t want to lose that relationship. But eventually she realized she could become a principal who would work with the students and parents as a team, and still have those relationships. It was interesting to talk about the ways in which her counseling background time and time again gave her a strong base for her work as the Principal of TOPS. I was impressed again during our conversation, as I have been in the past, that Clara is very positive, and a “people” person. She is so very warm and open, and welcoming to every family that walks in the door. She has embodied what we hope TOPS to be, a place where every child and family is welcome and valued.

I wondered what Clara was most proud of from her time at TOPS. She talked about TOPS losing the BOC (Bilingual Orientation Center), and the fear of losing the diversity as a result. Clara and Gary Tubbs managed to get a certain number of kindergarten seats set aside for ESL students, and this practice has continued since then. Clara also has worked hard to encourage the diversity at TOPS by attending Kindergarten Fairs and bringing along a diverse staff to talk to parents. We talked about the fear of many families, that TOPS will slowly become a neighborhood school and lose the diversity. But Clara has a positive outlook and believes our diversity is something we can maintain. Clara is also very proud of establishing the reading blocks, which enable our teachers to work with smaller groups and more ably address the needs of all students.

I asked Clara what was the most difficult thing about being the Principal of TOPS, and she talked about having to make the hard decisions when you know someone will be unhappy with you. She was accustomed to always being loved as a counselor, and of course that’s not always the case when you become a principal. So many different aspects of the school have to be taken into consideration when making decisions as a principal. But Clara decided the most important thing to consider was whether or not the decision was in the best interest of the kids, and if it was, she was at peace with her decision.

And what advice does Clara have for us as she sails off into retirement? Clara talked about two things she has been very grateful for – our wonderful and professional teachers, and the families at TOPS who are always willing to help in so many ways. Clara and Assistant Principal Jeanne Kuban have felt the arm of our support, and she hopes that will continue. Support for: our excellent teaching staff, both in and out of the classroom; for our office staff, who play an important role at TOPS; and of course for our new Principal, Ms. Jo Lute-Ervin, and our Assistant Principal, Jeanne Kuban. Clara encouraged us to come into the school and get to know them! She also believes we should keep our partnerships alive - with local businesses, and with universities, bringing interns to the schools and helping to produce good teachers and administrators.

Clara’s husband retired last year, so now it’s her turn to make the adjustment, and she is looking forward to some traveling with him in her first year of retirement. Then she’ll see what she feels like doing next! Congratulations Clara, thank you for the years you’ve devoted to nurturing all of us at TOPS, and we wish you well!
The Coalition for Social Justice
‘08-‘09 Year in Review and CSJ Needs You in ‘09-‘10
By Karen Stuhldreher

Look at All We Do – Please Join Us Next Year and Volunteer to Help Plan CSJ Activities

As many of you were busy buying school supplies and getting ready for the first day of school last August, the Coalition for Social Justice members were busying themselves with phone calls to new TOPS families welcoming them to the community and creating mentorships so that each new family would have an already established TOPS family to call on if they had a need or question. Then on the Tuesday before school began, CSJ hosted a New Family Orientation. Middle School students (and some in Elementary as well), gave new TOPS students a tour of the school and hosted a pizza lunch, as adults drank coffee in the Library and learned about the P.E. Program, the Anti-Bullying—CARE—Program, buses and parking, CSJ, Site Council, our counselor, and volunteer opportunities for the coming year. This welcoming orientation is something that Lynne Goodrich has spearheaded for the last few years and that CSJ has sponsored and hosted. Lynne is a middle school parent and so we are looking for elementary school families to join us in learning how to help organize this important event. Please contact Lynne if you are interested in phoning and mentoring new families next year.

Then in October the Coalition for Social Justice kicked off the school year with a wonderfully successful new event—The TOPS Ice Cream Social! This was CSJ's effort to bring back the earlier days of the TOPS Fall Carnival as a way of welcoming new families to TOPS and bringing the community together on a Sunday afternoon for fun and music. Lots of children and their families came to the TOPS gym to play games, do crafts, hear and play some great music, and enjoy an ice cream cone. It was also an opportunity to learn about the work of the Coalition for Social Justice and Site Council, and to kick off the No-Bake Sale! Families met one another as Hugh Sutton and our new TOPS band instructor Ed Littlefield led the kids in percussion, music, and movement. And our PEAK teacher and TOPS parent Michael Adams led kids and adults alike in a musical jam under blue skies in the courtyard. It was a great start to the school year.

Also this year the Coalition for Social Justice hosted the third annual series of TOPS Movie Nights. There were three Movie Nights, in October, January, and February. All were well attended. Adults gathered in the Library leaving their children at Kids Co. to have pizza and watch an age appropriate movie on a similar theme. Upstairs we enjoyed dinner from a buffet of great food of Vietnamese sandwiches and snacks put out by Lynne Goodrich, and watched excellent, award-winning documentaries that most of us would likely have not gotten to see otherwise. The first film this year, Including Samuel, sparked an ongoing dialogue about inclusion at TOPS. With this film, the CSJ and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing classrooms at TOPS also helped to bring attention to Disability Awareness Month. You might have noticed the glass cases in the front hall or the bulletin boards outside the lunch room with information and pictures about the achievements of differently-abled adults and children. There is currently a subcommittee of the Site Council headed by Dan Hurley that is discussing and researching questions and possibilities for increasing inclusion at TOPS. You can contact CSJ or Dan or Susan Welch if you want to know more.

In January, the TOPS Movie Night presented two short films on homelessness as our 8th graders prepared to hit the streets as part of the new Planting the Seeds program. Many middle school families were in attendance to watch Kids on the Ave and Homelessness in America and learn about the conditions of homeless people who their children were about to work with.

The TOPS Movie Night series ended with a beautifully made film Sentenced Home about the plight of Cambodian refugees in the Seattle area, many of whom are facing deportation. TOPS middle school parents Jay Stansell and Dori Cahn, who know some of these families and the filmmakers, hosted this film and facilitated the discussion.

If you came to all three movies, you learned a lot about a number of social justice topics, hopefully got to meet some new people in the TOPS community, and had some good food too.

The Coalition for Social Justice also organized Social Justice TOPICS that were taught to kids in January just before the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. Many parents stepped up to organize a TOPIC on some great themes and issues including international human rights, propaganda and branding, poverty here and in Brazil, consumerism, Heifer International, and the uplifting Songs of Freedom. One group of
students walked to the University District with parents and Librarian Steve Haines to help prepare a meal for homeless kids. This has become a great tradition as part of TOPICS. It makes for a great afternoon of learning that brings parents into the classroom and gives teachers the chance as well to educate about social justice in ways that might not otherwise happen. We hope this program can continue next year.

Finally of course, the Coalition for Social Justice sponsored and organized another successful Taste of TOPS! This year the focus was China and Chinese cultures, and many families came out to share food from their own cultures, learn about Chinese cultures through crafts, calligraphy, music, and dance, and also enjoy the annual TOPS talent showcase. This year, thanks to Nina Binder’s interest in bringing more of a social justice purpose to the Taste of TOPS, we included an opportunity for the TOPS community to support an organization in China that helps orphaned children. Half the Sky is an organization that some of our own TOPS families like Ann Simonson’s have visited and worked with. At the Taste of TOPS we provided information about this remarkable organization and accepted donations. If you didn’t get a chance to stop by that night and learn about it or donate, there are still brochures and donation envelopes in the front office. Stop by and pick one up.

The Coalition for Social Justice hopes to continue these events next year. But we need your participation and volunteer energy to make it happen. Next year CSJ will resume monthly or bi-monthly meetings in the TOPS library so that people who are interested in helping with these events and/or talking about social justice issues affecting TOPS will be able to come together and share their concerns and ideas. The purpose of the Coalition for Social Justice is to support the stated mission and vision of TOPS. CSJ organizes these events as a way to promote dialogue and educate ourselves and the school community about issues of academic equity, cultural diversity, and social justice as they affect our school and the broader community. This is important work at TOPS and we hope that you will want to be a part of it. Please look in the newsletter and the Go-Homes for information about the times and dates of CSJ meetings in the 2009-10 school year and come! Contact 5th grade parent Karen Stuhldreher at kstuhldr@scsd.ctc.edu or 325-9134 or 7th grade parent Lynne Goodrich at goodrich_yas@msn.com for more information about CSJ and to provide input for next year. WE NEED YOU! Have a great summer!

**TOPS News**

**Looking for a New Co-Editor**

Like to write and edit? Enjoy this newsletter? Then we have the volunteer job for you. The TOPS News is looking to bring on a 3rd Co-Editor for the next school year. One of the current co-editors, Jamie Flaxman, is becoming Auction Co-Chair, which means that we will need another newsletter co-editor to help during the spring months. You’ll have plenty of support and time to learn the job, you get an early peek at every going on at TOPS, it’s a job you can do from home at night and on the weekends, and it’s a great way to put in your volunteer hours. For more information, contact Jamie or Ann at topsnewsletter@gmail.com.

**Photos by Don Zemke**
The Penny Harvest Service Learning Event has concluded for the 2008-09 school year. Thanks again to all of the students at TOPS who supported the event by collecting and donating over a thousand pounds of coins. This year students from 54 schools raised a total of $64,354.02!

Katie Waters' class and students from Nina Binder's class were given the honor and responsibility as Philanthropy Roundtable Group Leaders to learn about their community and decide how TOPS could give back to others. During March I met weekly with Katie's class and students from Nina's class; my job was to help guide the students as they surveyed and researched their community and not-for-profit organizations to determine how $1000 in grants would be awarded. Students took a lot of time discussing, brainstorming, debating, charting, and voting on the needs of the community, the environment, and the world as a whole.

Katie Water's class voted to address homelessness and youth needs so they awarded $250 to the Downtown Emergency Service Center and $250 to the Hamomi Children's Center. The Downtown Emergency Service Center serves disabled and vulnerable homeless adults, and is one of the largest multiservice centers for homeless adults in the Pacific Northwest. The programs of permanent supportive housing, clinical services, emergency services, and overnight shelter provide a continuum of care that helps people to survive and to break the cycle of homelessness. The Hamomi Children's Center is a primary school whose mission is to improve the lives of orphaned and vulnerable children in the slums of Nairobi. They develop adults with the skills necessary to improve their social and economic condition, by providing education and access to basic needs in a safe and nurturing environment.

Students from Nina Binder's class voted to address youth needs and animal care so they awarded $250 to TeenHope WA and $250 to the Seattle Humane Society. TeenHope in Shoreline, WA has been serving at-risk and homeless teens and their families since 1996. They provide wrap-around services in the form of safe shelter, meals, weekly outings, medical and psychiatric referrals, educational planning, assistance with overcoming addictions, and other opportunities for teens to explore options for leading a healthier, more productive life. The Seattle Humane Society serves the people and animals of King County with a variety of programs including adoptions, veterinary services, dog-training classes, a pet food bank, and humane education for children of all ages.

These students did an awesome job of making educated decisions, developing a sense of caring and social justice, and further developing their leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. Penny Harvest is an outstanding program/curriculum that teaches students to collect money for a good cause and have the students themselves decide which community problems to tackle and how to get the job done. Bravo!
This year’s TOPS auction was an amazing success. Thanks to everyone who made it such a great event:

292 lively guests.

118 fabulous volunteers including 8th graders, teenage alumni, grown-ups, and countless kindergarten and 5th grade families that helped set up and take down.

31 generous underwriters and sponsors:
- ABC Towing (John & Gail Chase)
- Allied Ice
- Apartment Sales Corporation
- Frank & Bonnie Cech
- Columbia Distributing
- Michael Courtney & Christine O'Leary
- Lisa Fitzhugh & John Hoyt
- Tim & Charlene Forslund
- Fred Meyer
- G & H Printing
- Jorge Garcia & Barbara Schinzinger
- Georgetown Brewing
- Mark Harmann
- Hasegawa Family Cosmetic Dentistry (Pam Stokes & Paul Hasegawa)
- Olga Klezovitch & Valeri Vasioukhin
- Liesl & Troy Langley
- Barb Lui & Kip Tokuda
- John & Ellen Markman
- William Morrison
- Essex & Cindy Porter
- Yinghong Pu
- QFC
- Cam Sata & Jon Nishida
- Seattle Grip & Lighting
- Starbucks

25 Team Auction members and our fearless, retiring leader Janet Morrison – thanks for all the years of hard work.

One proud owner of a new iPod Touch – Larry Cook.

One lucky Golden Raffle winner – Roseanne Lorenzana who chose Sailing with Don and Eric.

As a result of our community’s efforts and contributions, the auction raised (as of May 5th) $123,000 with $45,750 going to our Fund an Item – Bridge the Gap.

It was a great night and a tremendous success for funding the programs we would never want our kids to do without!
As we approach the end of another successful school year at TOPS, I would like to thank all of you that have supported your school library by donating time, money (Friends of TOPS), and books. It is a huge undertaking and you are all much appreciated.

And speaking of the imminent end of school, one must be reminded that all the TOPS’ library books be returned to their places on the shelves where they will be inventoried by me. It is time to look under beds, sofas, and car seats for our library books. Remember almost every book that we can’t find or that is damaged should be replaced. A case in point occurred just the other day while I was out at afternoon bus duty. I happened to look over the railing of the window well on Boylston to spot a fairly new library book that was sprawled out on the ground. Upon retrieving the weather battered book on gorillas by Seymour Simon, I wondered how the book got there in the first place. I soon discovered that the book had not been checked out, but I was able to use it as a good lesson on “Stewardship,” which was our May C.A.R.E theme. The replacement cost of the book would mean that we might have one less new title for our library. Message: take care of all of our “stuff.”

I was very fortunate to leave the friendly confines of TOPS for the last TOPICS of the school year and travel to King County’s West Point Water Treatment plant located in Discovery Park. Organized by two wonderful parents, Julie Wroble, (Lucy 5th, Rachel 3rd), and Karen Johnson, (Wesley 3rd), eight students and ourselves were led on a tour of the facility by two expert guides who knew how to anticipate our every ‘eww. Of course there was some apprehension as we were sitting in the classroom learning more about this important water treatment plant. We learned about the four “P’s” as the only things that should be flushed down the toilet. I’ll let you work on that one. We came away from the experience more respectful of how we should treat our environment and the importance of this water treatment plant in our lives. It made Wes think about how many times a toilet is flushed, and how grease and hair clogs pipes. Brandon never thought that solid waste ends up like it does. He always thought that much of the waste ends up in the lake.

Does anyone remember Lake Washington in the 1970’s? What struck me is that this activity took me back a number of years to when TOPS was much smaller, when we had TOPICS three days a week, every week, and when we had something called “City School,” where for a week in the spring we would all go on class field trips to “discover our urban environment.” I see it happening now on a much smaller scale as individual classes use the city as a classroom. Look at the 8th grade’s “Planting the Seeds” as a case in point. It is a valuable way to educate us, while making learning a bit less of a race and more of a journey.

The Seattle Public Library sponsored “Global Reading Challenge” is headed our way. After being on the waiting list for over five years, TOPS will now be able to send teams of 4th and 5th grade readers to the challenge. The challenge was started in the 1930’s by two Chicago school librarians to test young readers’ knowledge of good literature. It turned into a weekly radio quiz program known as “Battle of the Books.” The current Global Reading Challenge, designed by Terry Lason of Kalamazoo, MI, uses the Battle of the Books format and promotes the reading of fiction that celebrates the world’s diverse community. The Global Reading Challenge is limited to 4th and 5th grade classes within the Seattle Public School district. Ten books are selected each year by Seattle children’s librarians, specially suited to the reading interests of their young readers. A wide range of reading levels is represented by selected books so all students can participate in the Challenge. Questions are based on specific factual and content information found within the ten selected books. The librarian conducts school Challenges in each school building. Semi-Final Challenges are held at the downtown Central Library. Winning Semi-Final teams compete in the City Challenge. Seattle’s winners compete via video conference with winning teams from British Columbia. I’m sure that this competitive event will stimulate some of our young readers out there, and we will probably need some adult coaches so be on the lookout for more information next school year.

Please don’t forget that the Seattle Public Library has a wonderful summer reading program for all people young and old to take advantage of. This is a great way for everyone to spend the summer, READING.

“Libraries will get you through times of no money better than money will get you through times of no libraries.”

~ Unknown

Photos by Steve Haines
On April 24, 2009, 48 international students from the University of Washington led topics about their countries and cultures for students in grades 1-5. The students came as a part of the FIUTS (Foundation for International Understanding Through Students) educational outreach program.

Do you know?
A. How do you say "Hello" in Uzbekistan?
B. What are candies called in Australia?
C. What do they do in Thailand in April?
D. How many different kinds of cheese are there in France?

What the kids had to say...
“I got to play marbles in my topic (on Libya). It was awesome!”
“The Colombian chocolate was great.”
“In Saudi Arabia and Oman, it is always over 100 degrees F in spring and summer.”
“I liked the Uzbekistan dance.”
“My favorite part about the Korea TOPICS was when we played the game Duc-chi.”
“I went to France and ate Ratatouille.”
“There are two different ways to say hello in Thailand... Sawadee Kah (for girls) and Sawadee Krup (for boys).”

Answers
A. Salaam aleikhem
B. Lollies
C. Have one big water fight to celebrate Thai New Year during the Songkran Festival
D. 106

Don’t let your kids have all the fun...
FIUTS matches UW international students with local families for short term home stays. Home stay families provide hospitality and cultural connections for about a week between the time when students arrive and when housing becomes available. Open your home to the world this fall and give your children the opportunity for friendship across cultures. For more information, email homestay@fiuts.org or visit www.fiuts.org.
Legends Within
A Collection of Aesop's Fables

Written and Directed by
Shanna Palmer
Musical Direction by
Camila Recchi
May 15 and 16, 2009

Photos by Michael Drew and Peter Simonson
June Math Puzzle

Submitted by Debbie Bermet, Math Specialist

LOOKING FOR ONE-DOLLAR WORDS:

Imagine that each letter in a word has a value: a is 1 cent, b is 2 cents, etc. The word “cage” would be worth 3 (for c) + 1 (for a) + 7 (for g) + 5 (for e) = 16 cents. Look for as many words as you can find this summer that have a value of EXACTLY one dollar. Students entering 1st-4th grade, use a calculator to help you. Older kids, I challenge you to do the addition on your own!

Email me the words you find and I will compile and share the list with everyone in the fall. Have a fabulous summer everyone!!

~ Debbie
dsbermet@seattleschools.org

Solution to May Math puzzles

How many squares?

1 x 1: 25
2 x 2 16
3 x 3 9
4 x 4 4
5 x 5 1

Total: 55 squares

Dance of the perfect squares:

Sally’s partner was #15.
Here are the rest of the partners:

1, 15 6, 10
2, 14 7, 18
3, 13 8, 17
4, 12 9, 16
5, 11
On May 8 the 5th graders held a Science Fair in the Library. We got to choose our experiments and have them approved by the 5th grade teacher. You had to choose an experiment that took a month or less. In the end, you had to have your research question, hypothesis, visuals, variables, data, result summary, conclusion, and bibliography. About two days before the Science Fair you got to put your whole experiment on a tri-fold. You could decorate your tri-fold any way you wanted and you had to have your tri-fold presentation ready by the Science Fair.

Some of the ideas that people came up with for the Science Fair: Nathan Merrill made a solar panel car and talked about how solar power worked. Maya DeGasperi did an experiment on which color would absorb the most light: black, white, or blue. Nicole Godbout did an experiment on the growth of plants with different types of water. Julia Robaidek did an experiment on what is the difference between cookies baked with eggs and cookies baked without eggs. Emma Simonson and Helen Maclay did an experiment on which liquid will freeze the fastest, oil, salt water, sugar water, or tap water. We found out that the water froze the fastest, then salt water, sugar water, and oil didn’t freeze at all. Oil can freeze at -6 degrees Celsius, but the oil just got thicker and more goopy than when we started. Jana Zisette and Pei Ming Tokuda did an experiment on what will have the fastest speed, balloons or zip lock bags with frozen water and non-frozen water falling with different amounts of water in each. We found out that the half cup water balloon non-frozen fell the fastest. The slowest was the zip lock bag with half cup water frozen.

We both enjoyed the Science Fair and it was fun to see the different experiments.
I have been in this school since I was in kindergarten. Every single day of every single year we would stop our bothersome school work and go to a place that we considered our little haven in six hours of boredom. This place was called P.E. and although in the many years I’ve been here it’s changed in tiny ways, its principals and teachings have always been the same.

Although, yes we’ve had to do things we didn’t want to, doing stretches, running laps, it’s been fun. You get to do everything in P.E., play soccer, football, Frisbee, or basketball, or if you just want to lay back you can play foosball or air hockey. You can do wave boards or unicycles, wall ball or baseball. Without P.E. I would be sneaking out of school every day, but I have something to look forward to now. Don and Eric you’re incredible P.E. teachers and I feel bad for the future kids who won’t have you as a teacher.

In other classes we learned education, we learned math, science, history, and reading, but P.E. completed us, it taught us about other people and how we’re all equal. P.E. taught us sportsmanship; they taught us how to help others, and how to better ourselves. P.E. has taught us so many things and even now as I go into my ninth year of P.E. I have not yet forgotten the lessons you have shown us, Thank you.

By Luis Setzer, Grade 8

Photos by Don Zentke
TOPS Track Team 2009

TOPS track season has sped by this season with very strong performances in both the relays and individual events from the 6th, 7th and 8th grade girls and boys.

Pictured above: Habeeb Rasheed-Pipkin, Demitrious Anderson, Gabe Barrett-Jackson and Zane McGee Lowdermilk make up the 7th Grade undefeated relay. Demitrious Anderson has only turned in first places in the 100 Meter Dash and Gabe Barrett-Jackson has yet to lose the 400 Meter Dash.

Pictured: Tessa LaPatra, Margot Maragheh, Layla Spurr and Sasha Vasioukhina make up TOPS Girls 6th grade relay. All 4 run individual sprints as well.

Undefeated Boy’s 8th grade relay: D’Marcus Coleman, Tere’ Calloway, Ben Robaidek, and Michael Ericson look forward to the Middle School Metro Championships in May. D’Marcus Coleman is also undefeated in the 100 Meter dash.

Top Left to Right: Coach Eric Herndon, Ben Robaidek, D’Marcus Coleman, Trevohnn James, Mia Wrey, Ryan Keo, Michael Ericson, Tere’ Calloway, Coach Annie Barrett

Next to Coach Eric: Demitrious Anderson

Next Row: Yohji Curry, Zane McGee-Lowdermilk, Asiyah Davis, Rosie Yasukochi, Gabe Barrett-Jackson, John Carter, Habeeb Rasheed-Pipkin

Next Row: Layla Spurr, Kiseri Tensaew, Gene Carpenter, Amira Jessie, Andy Johnson, Cole Robinson

Front Row: Bobbie Rasheed-Pipkin, Kevin Stanley, Acacia Sailsbury, Tessa LaPatra, Emanei Clack, Margot Maragheh, Sasha Vasioukhina, Curtis Delgado
REPORT ON PLANTING THE SEEDS: Eighth grade students attended the meeting to share their experiences with Planting the Seeds. All reported on an aspect of the experience that they liked, and they discussed how the experience as a whole affected them. Ms. Eick and Steve Haines also talked about the experience from the point of view of teachers participating. Many thanks were expressed to Elizabeth Dickinson and the other parent volunteers who worked hard planning the service activities and logistics and to those teachers and parents who led and chaperoned the Planting the Seeds groups. It was a big effort and a great success!

ASB REPORT: Magnus Giaever reported on Spirit Week, culminating in a Middle School (blackout) dance on 3/13. In January there was an Elementary School door decorating contest. The ASL classroom won 1st place, Nina’s 5th grade class was 2nd, and the DHH classroom was 3rd. ASB will be setting up a board in the hallway with questions from kids in different grades. Students can research answers to the questions on their own and get a treat for having the correct answer.

SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCE ROOM: Jenny Gamache and James Burger attended the meeting to inform Site Council about Special Education Resource Room services at TOPS. Jenny is the K-3 teacher, and James works with older students. Their work with students combines “pull-out” and “push-in” services, depending on students’ needs. TOPS is currently funded for 1.4 FTE Resource Room, and that is based on number of students with IEPs (Individualized Educational Plan). One full time resource teacher is supposed to have 22 students. The needs of kids vary. Some kids need 100 minutes per week, some 500-600 minutes a week. Students’ classroom seats are in the general education program. The Resource Room is the base level of special education service. Students who qualify for Resource Room assistance generally have a discrepancy between their IQ, which is in the normal range, and their level of educational achievement. Some kids qualify only in one area, e.g., reading. The greatest challenge for Jenny and James is how to serve students without their missing out on what the rest of the class is experiencing. It is helpful to resource room teachers to spend time in the classrooms and see how other kids are doing who are not needing special education services. In general, TOPS kids seem accepting of the missing out on what the rest of the class is experiencing. It is helpful to resource room teachers to spend time in the classrooms and see how other kids are doing who are not needing special education services. In general, TOPS kids seem accepting of the

WORKGROUP ON SPECIAL EDUCATION INCLUSION: Dan Hurley reported on the January meeting of this workgroup. The group talked about action items that could be addressed. Most action items don’t need to be funded. They are:

- Including a program definition as an insert in TOPS brochure.
- Including special ed. continuum as part of TOPS tours. This was included in the most recent tour.
- Create a parent volunteer advocate as part of CSJ.
- Pilot program for part time teacher’s assistant in self-contained classroom (seems not feasible).
- Bringing a Youth Awareness and Disabilities Assembly (YADA) to TOPS. These assemblies give kids a chance to learn about different disabilities. They cost about $350. There was interest on Site Council in moving forward on this. Clara will talk to the assembly committee and Don and Eric (since the gym would be used).
- Special Auction item related to Special Education.

Susan brought up the importance of inclusion of a variety of populations at TOPS, including ESL, DHH and new students. Maureen will write up a request for the Go-Home for people interested in volunteering for an ongoing Inclusion Task Force.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT: Ms. Scott thanked Ms. Eick and all the staff and parent volunteers for all the work that went into Planting the Seeds. She reported on upcoming events: CSJ movie night, featuring “Sentenced Home,” an extra school tour, scheduled for families from the schools that were closed, and the Book Fair on the 18th and 19th of March. TOPS basketball teams went to playoffs, and the boys placed 5th, and the girls 7th. The Transportation Dept. came out with a proposal for start times for elementary and middle schools. Schools will start at 8:00 a.m. or 9:30. We still do not know how this will affect K-8 schools.

Ms. Eick reported that March 19-20 is ACT Theatre’s presentation of student plays. Rebecca Ehlers will have White Dove Over Afghanistan performed. Zoey Barker-Aderem who is at Garfield this year will also have her play performed.

BUILDING LEADERSHIP REPORT: – Jeanne Kuban reported that on the early dismissal day next week, staff will be focusing on the TOPS CSIP (Continuing School Improvement Plan). This outlines how to move kids forward in writing, math, and science, reflecting on how the school is doing and if we are following the plan. The meeting will inform the plan for next year. On April 15 at 6:00-7:00 p.m. the Safety Committee will present Joanne Jordan in a combined meeting between the TOPS community and Eastlake Community Council. Joanne will talk about emergency response plans for school and larger community.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Cliff Shettler reported that there is money in the bank. The building budget for next year has been delayed, making it difficult to know what gaps Friends of TOPS will need to fill. We need a treasurer for next year.

AUCTION COMMITTEE: Janet Morrison reported procurement has started rolling in, and they will try to reach out and encourage people to invite family members and community members to the auction.

PROPOSED 8:00 A.M. SCHOOL START TIME DISCUSSION: The assembled group of parents and Site Council members addressed the district’s proposal that TOPS, as a K-8 have a start time of 8:00

Continued on page 17
a.m. beginning next year to streamline transportation. A lengthy discussion ensued; the district has since voted to have K-8 schools start at the later time.

**WASHINGTON STATE BASIC EDUCATION REVIEW**
– A report with handouts was offered by Heidi Bennett, Seattle Council PTSA Legislative Chair.

**PRINCIPAL’S REPORT:** Ms. Scott reported March 25 is the young authors’ conference. WASL preparation is happening. Volleyball, soccer, and track have started. Lakeside was here recruiting students for their summer program – 8th graders who are going into high school. May 15 is the Elementary play and Art Fest.

Ms. Scott just received the district’s budget projection. It represents a little gain in special education FTE and loss of some funding for basic education. On March 13 there will be a meeting with a budget analyst and human resource specialist. By March 17 a draft budget will go to the BLT to review. On March 18 staff will vote on possible staffing scenarios. On March 19 there will be a meeting with Site Council Executive Committee to discuss needs for additional funding through Friends of TOPS.

**BUILDING LEADERSHIP REPORT:** Jeanne Kuban reported on April 15 the Safety Committee will present Joanne Jordan on the topic of emergency planning for the joint TOPS community and Eastlake Community Council. There are several developments regarding safety: March 20 is First AID and CPR training for staff; TOPS is looking for funds to purchase a defibrillator; and TOPS has had several different kinds of drills. WASL window is April 13-May 1. The staff is working on the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP). Primary staff members will be going to Loyal Heights to work with a writing master staff developer from Columbia University in April.

**COALITION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE REPORT:** Karen Stuhlreher reported on the last movie night. The movie was *Sentenced Home*. Taste of TOPS is on March 19. There has been great staff support. The focus is China and Chinese culture. CSJ hopes to have half day or day long retreat in April to talk about leadership and direction for next year.

**AUCTION COMMITTEE:** Janet Morrison reported the Auction planning is going well. Underwriting to date is more than $2,000.00. Seventy-nine items have been donated so far and the auction website is up now. Invitations will be mailed March 19. The committee still needs teacher activities to auction off.

---

2008 - 2009 TOPS CALENDAR
Send your events and dates to our webmaster, Michael Drew, at webmaster@topsk8.org. Please check Go-Homes and the web site for updates.

**JUNE**
- 2-5 (T-F)......8th grade Camp, Deception Pass
- 2-5 (T-F)......ASB Elections
- 4-5 (Th-F).....3rd and 4th grades to Camp Arnold
- 9(T)............K, 1st & 2nd grades to Camp Long
- 12 (F)........Awards Assembly, 1:45 p.m.
- 12 (F)........8th grade Passage, 7 p.m.
- 16 (T)........2nd grade to Golden Gardens
- 18 (Th)........Elementary school Field Day
- 18 (Th)........Middle school to Wild Waves
- 18 (Th)........5th grade Moving Up Ceremony, 2 p.m.
- 19 (F)........Last student day, 2:20 p.m. dismissal

---

*Photo by Don Zemke*
Landscaping Party!

Come to Kids Co. here at TOPS over the summer. We have a really exciting summer lined up with themed weeks such as: Inventions, Magic, Cooking, and Superheroes! Our scheduling is very flexible: you can register for one week at a time or even reserve a couple of days per week! Our amazing staff will almost all return from the year, so don’t miss out! Contact Aaron Norikane at Kids Co. at 709-8487 for more info!!!

Photos by S. Wayne Duncan
HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!!!
See you next year!

Photo by Don Zemke

Thanks to G & H Printing, 2370 Eastlake E.  329-9888

The Seattle School District is an Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action employer and employs individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status, handicap/disability or sexual orientation. The Seattle School District provides Equal Education Opportunity without regard to race, creed color, national origin, sex, mental status, handicap/disability or sexual orientation. The District complies with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to Titles VI, VII, and IX of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), RCW 49.60, Law Against Discrimination, and RCW 28A.640 “Sex Equality,” and covers, but is not limited to, all District programs, courses activities (including) extracurricular activities, service, access to facilities, etc. The Title IX officer and 504 coordinator with overall responsibility for monitoring and ensuring compliance is: Rick Takeuchi, Manager, Affirmative Action Office, W/MBE, 815 4th Ave. N., Seattle 98109. Phone (206)298-7175. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in any of the District's employment or educational activities can file an internal discrimination complaint with the District's Affirmative Action Office.