

T.O.P.S.

K-8 Alternative School

Student Expectations
2006-2007



Core Values:
Knowledge, Responsibility and Caring

We all belong!

Clara Scott, Principal
Gerrit Kischner, Assistant Principal
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Dear TOPS Students:

This booklet provides an overview of the TOPS K-8 School expectations for students. We revise and update this document annually, so please take the time to review the information again. We want to make sure that everybody at TOPS has the same information and common understandings. Let us know what is helpful or missing so we can continue to improve our communication with you.

There are other related materials - playground, lunchroom, bathroom rules, etc. - that will be taught to you by your classroom teachers and reinforced by all school staff and parent volunteers throughout the year. These rules are quite standard and based on safety, courtesy and common sense. Please help us reinforce safe and respectful behaviors at TOPS.

We are a caring learning community that needs each person to take an active role in establishing and maintaining a positive school climate. As you can tell from our Mission and Vision, we truly value the richness and diversity that comes from honoring the different perspective each individual brings to TOPS. We honor each person's unique experiences and gifts, and, as a learning community, we recognize that every individual has areas in which to grow, develop and contribute. We are in so many ways alike, and at TOPS we also celebrate and treasure our differences.

This year at TOPS, we'll continue to give special attention to Coaching All to Respect Everyone, our bullying prevention program (CARE). We need your ongoing help and commitment to work together to build respectful relationships throughout the school that ensure that everyone has a sense of belonging to our community. As part of our efforts, we expect everyone to abide by four simple rules: 1) We will not bully; 2) We will help students who are bullied; 3) We will include students who are easily left out; 4) When we know someone is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school AND an adult at home.

Thank you for taking the time to read and discuss these expectations with your families. It's going to be a GREAT year as we celebrate life and learning together!

Respectfully,

Clara Scott,
Principal

Gerrit Kischner,
Assistant Principal

Seattle Public Schools and TOPS do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, pregnancy, marital status, or disability.

Expectations for Students

1. Come to class on time

- Unless you are ill, you should be at school everyday.
- Arrive before the first bell rings to give yourself time to get organized and take care of personal business. Do not be late.
- Middle School -- Passing time between classes is only five minutes. Getting prepared for your next class must be your first priority.

2. Be prepared for school

- Think ahead to be sure you bring to class the items you will need throughout the year.
- Inform your parents if you do not have the materials you need, or if you need help getting them, talk to your teacher.
- Get enough rest.
- Eat a good breakfast and make arrangements for lunch.

3. Do the assigned work

- Plan ahead so you have sufficient time to complete work thoughtfully.
- Establish a routine time and quiet place for completing assignments.
- Make good use of every moment while in class and doing homework.
- Work hard to learn to focus and concentrate on your work. The amount of effort you put forth will directly impact your learning, grades, confidence and future! Work hard, get smart!!

4. Respect yourself and others

- Treat others the same as you would want them to treat you.
- Work hard to understand how your actions affect the feelings of others.
- Be sure to tell the school staff and your parents if someone is making you feel uncomfortable, unsafe or upset.
- TOPS has NO TOLERANCE for bully behavior, harassment, threats or violence.

5. Stewardship: respect property and the environment

- None of us have the right to take, touch or damage other people's property without permission from the owner.
- We will not litter, mark up, mess up or break property or living things, as it is disrespectful to all of us who care about this school and our earth.
- We will be responsible stewards of our building, the playgrounds and fields we use, our community, our earth and its resources.

Dress Code

While we respect an individual's right to express him or herself through fashion, it is important we have a dress code that will minimize disruption of the educational, social and cultural environment at TOPS. With the exception of religious dress, the following dress code applies to all students and staff at TOPS.

- Hats and other head coverings will be worn outdoors only, except on Friday, which is Hat Day. On hat day, hats or other head coverings that interfere with learning may need to be removed at a staff member's request. Knocking off others' hats or taking hats from others will result in the loss of hat day privileges.
- Coats must not be worn in class.
- Pants must be worn at the waist.
- Undergarments are not to be worn exposed, and pants must not "sag."
- Shirts must not expose sides or midriffs.
- Students must not wear clothing with messages that violate our harassment or inappropriate language policies.
- Hems of shorts and skirts must extend at least to the end of the fingertips when arms are held straight down at one's side.

Note: Middle school students are to keep their backpacks in their lockers.

A student not abiding by the dress code will be offered clothes to change into or be sent home to change. When in doubt, students will be referred to Mrs. Scott or Mr. Kischner.

Expectations for Parents

In order for TOPS to run smoothly and be a center for learning, all persons involved must share in the responsibility for maintaining the best possible school environment. Please see the TOPS Family Handbook for more information.

To ensure safety and success at school, we ask parents make sure:

- To reinforce the expectations for TOPS students (see the previous section).
- Your child arrives at school on time (not before 8:30 am).
- Your child departs school on time (not after 3:45 pm unless participating in supervised activities).
- Your child arrives at school having eaten a healthy breakfast.
- Your child has a routine time and quiet place for doing homework.

Finally, it is important for parents to provide the school with **current** home, work, cellular and emergency phone numbers.

Homework

Homework is an extension of the learning that takes place in school and provides opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. It also helps students to develop routines and responsibility and provides an opportunity to involve the family in the education of their children. We encourage parents/guardians to provide a place for their child to work and to help their child make a plan for when the homework should be done. If you are having problems with homework, contact your teacher or have your parent/guardian notify the teacher.

Remember that students at all grade levels need to spend time reading on a regular basis. Incorporate reading into your family schedule.

Staff Expectations

TOPS staff understand the importance of working in partnership with families on behalf of the children. It is our responsibility to communicate important matters to parents, as well as listen and respond to input within the contractual hours. Therefore, at report card times, there should be **"no surprises."** Only as a team can we ensure academic, social and emotional growth for each child.

TOPS staff know that in each child – just as in each of us – there is something wonderful to discover and build upon. We promise to work hard everyday to help children self-discover their strengths, talents, interests and passions. Although time and resources are often limited, we also strive to meet the ever-changing individual needs and challenges students experience throughout their developmental year.

*"When the child is excited by the first fallen snow,
let us, too, be moved by the beauty of the moment.*

*Let the spirit of the child touch each of us
so that we might appreciate the magic...again and again.*

Even as we teach them, let them teach us."

Zero-Tolerance @ TOPS:

“The Big Six”

1. Fighting

Fighting is not allowed at TOPS. Should you be involved in any fight or act of aggression, you will be suspended from class for a minimum of one to three days. In all cases, a parent conference is required. Students who watch a fight without notifying staff will also face consequences. Furthermore, play fighting and roughhousing are unacceptable; students who choose to play in this way may also be suspended. This includes aggressive, super-competitive athletic play such as basketball and football (no “street ball”).

2. Threats, Harassment, and Bullying

Threats, harassment, sexual harassment and bullying are never tolerated at TOPS. Bullying is intentional, repeated physical or emotional harm-doing toward an individual in a relationship in which there exists an imbalance of power. It's very important that you report incidents directly to a teacher and your parents. Students should never be expected to solve these problems on their own. If the problem continues, students must tell other adults such Mrs. Scott or Mr. Kischner.

If you choose to threaten, harass or bully others, you will receive consequences. The severity of the consequences will depend on the situation but might include lunch detention, after school detention, Saturday school, time out, in-school suspension and/or out-of-school suspension. In all cases, parents will be notified and a parent conference may be required. Children who bully are often in need of counseling services. Our staff will work with parents to arrange such services.

3. Disrespect for Authority

At TOPS, the respect we demonstrate for each other every day makes it possible for us all to do and be our best. It is NOT acceptable to be disrespectful at any time. For example, it is disrespectful to argue, “talk back” in a rude tone of voice, or act as if the rules should not apply to you. If a staff member or a Parent Volunteer (wearing a TOPS badge) asks your name or asks you to do something, you are expected to comply. If you don't think the staff member is being fair, you should talk about it later with adults you feel comfortable with.

The consequences for students who disrespect authority will depend on the situation. Consequences will increase in severity if the individual student continues disrespectful behaviors and is not making an effort to improve. These may include loss of privileges, lunch duty, after school detention, Saturday school or in-school suspension. Parents will be notified as appropriate, and a conference may be required.

4. Leaving Designated Areas or the School Campus

TOPS is a closed campus. Leaving the school campus is unsafe and is not allowed. Students are expected to come directly to school and go directly home after school. If you walk, you should take the most direct, safe route. You may not take an alternate route to stop at the store, for example. If you ride the bus, you may not leave the campus after you have been dropped off at school, and you may not leave campus before boarding your bus in the afternoon. Students waiting for rides after school must remain in a supervised area on campus. Supervision is not provided on a regular basis, however, after 3:40 pm, although the library is often open for student use until 4:30).

During lunchtime, students are not allowed in Building B (the MS building) or any hallways, except those students who have a signed permission slip from a teacher to do work in a classroom. These students must arrive in the teacher's classroom by 11:55 (MS) and remain in the classroom supervised by school staff for the rest of the lunch period. Students found in Building B without a pass or outside the classroom will be required to serve a Running Club and/or additional consequences for repeated offenses.

5. Stealing or Damaging Property

Stealing or damaging property, including school supplies, violates the rights of others and is never acceptable. Property taken or damaged must be replaced, repaired or paid for, in addition to appropriate consequences (e.g. cleaning the lunchroom).

6. Inappropriate Language

School is an educational environment. Profanity and vulgar language disrupt the ability of others to learn and to feel comfortable and are not tolerated at TOPS. Students who use inappropriate language will receive an appropriate consequence (that may include – but is not limited to – lunch detention, after school detention, Saturday School, or suspension from class).

Examples of Other Offenses and Consequences

Plagiarism, copying and cheating

Academic honesty is all about showing your own thinking and doing your own work. We consider academic honesty to be of paramount importance in school because there is no way we can expect to teach anything if teachers cannot be sure about what students know and can do. All academic violations will be reported to Ms. Scott or Mr. Kischner:

- Assignments or tests that are partially or fully copied from another source or student will receive a zero (or 'E' in the middle school) and may not be redone;
- *All* students involved in a cheating or copying incident will be penalized (this means that if Student A gives Student B a homework assignment to copy, Student A will receive a zero regardless of how well the assignment was done);
- Plagiarized material will receive a zero as well as additional academic consequences as recommended by the teacher; plagiarism is the use of unique phrases, data, designs or ideas without proper attribution. Plagiarism includes taking another person's ideas and "putting it in your own words."

Computer use

Computers are valuable educational resources that must be used appropriately in order to maintain their usefulness and accessibility for everyone. All students are expected to abide by the Seattle Public Schools Internet Use Agreement and maintain a signed copy with Steve in the library.

Inappropriate use of the computer includes but is not limited to the following:

- viewing pornographic, degrading or violent material
- bypassing security to access blocked sites
- using another's network account
- sharing a student account with another student.

Students who use the computers inappropriately will have their Internet or network access shutdown for a minimum of two weeks, and a repeat offense will result in computer privileges being suspended for the remainder of the semester or school year.

Unsafe Play

The consequences for **unsafe play** will generally be reminders, serious discussions and/or "time out". A social skills group led by the counselor will occur for individuals who continue to behave in an unsafe or inappropriate manner. Loss of recesses and parent notification will also occur for repeat offenders.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are not to be used anywhere on school grounds by students during school hours. Students who bring cell phones must keep them powered off and kept away from the time they enter the school building until the final bell at 3:20. Cell phones will

be confiscated until the end of the day if they are visible to a staff member during school hours. Cell phones will be held pending a parent conference in the event that a student violates this rule repeatedly.

Music, Toys and Gum

School is a place for learning. Toys, balls (basketball, football, etc.), trading cards (such as Pokemon), stereos, headphones, and other music devices are not permitted at school or school activities. These items interfere with learning and often cause greater disruptions if they are stolen or lost. If brought to school, these items will be taken by a teacher or administrator and kept for one week or until a parent comes to school to claim the item(s). Gum can interfere with school activities and damage school property. Gum is not allowed at school.

Wheels

Skateboards and skates, and other types of wheels are not allowed on school campus because they are considered unsafe and often lead to property damage. Consequence for the first offense: confiscation for one week or until parent comes to school to claim the skateboard or skates.

Disrespecting and endangering others

As individuals, we all must make sure that our actions do not threaten the physical safety and individual space of all the others who work and learn at TOPS.

- Students who bring flammable or other dangerous material to school will have the material confiscated and will face suspension (this includes possession of Axe, Tag and other aerosol deodorants).
- All students are expected to be aware and mindful of the allergies of other students.

Elevators

Students may only use the school's elevators when they have a permission note from a staff member in order to help move equipment or materials. Of course, students who are physically disabled will also be given permission to use the elevators. The consequence for using the elevator without permission is an After School Detention.

TOPS K-8 Discipline Process

Well-disciplined, respectful behavior plays a central role in maintaining a safe, supportive learning environment in which all students can learn. The TOPS discipline process is designed to be progressive (carrying heavier consequences for repeated behavior) and dedicated to improving behavior by focusing on the “Three R’s”:

Restitution: taking responsibility and fixing the damage;

Resolution: making sure we learn how to keep a similar incident from happening again;

Reconciliation: engaging in a process of healing with those affected by an incident by honoring the steps of restitution and resolution.

Students who engage in the following behaviors will face consequences according to the severity indicated in the chart below. As part of the process, all students will be expected to reflect and engage on the “Three R’s” as part of their learning.

Mild/Moderate <i>Initial offenses subject to warnings; repeated offenses will result in lunch detentions.</i>	Serious <i>Initial offenses subject to recess restrictions; repeated offenses will result in lunch detentions and/or in-school suspension.</i>	Severe <i>Initial offenses subject to in-school suspension (elementary) and out-of-school suspension (middle school) as per Seattle School District policy.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Arguing over a game; ➤ Littering; ➤ Misuse of playground equipment; ➤ Physical annoyance (mild); ➤ Playing in restrooms; ➤ Running inside the building; ➤ Teasing/name calling (mild); ➤ Bringing toys, candy, or balls from home; ➤ Purposeful exclusion of another student. <p>Rev. 8/06</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Playing or throwing/bouncing balls after the bell sounds; ➤ Talking or responding defiantly to an adult; ➤ Disobeying an instruction from a playground monitor; ➤ Hitting another person with a ball or other object; ➤ Inappropriate or threatening gestures; ➤ Invading privacy in bathroom; ➤ Malicious teasing, insults, put-downs, or gossip; ➤ Profanity/obscene language; ➤ Pushing, hitting, kicking (mild), playfighting; ➤ Rough play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Throwing rocks, sticks; ➤ Vandalism; ➤ Biting, choking; ➤ Discriminatory language or behavior; ➤ Exposing ones-self or others; ➤ Extortion; ➤ Fighting; ➤ Inappropriate touching or sexual harassment; ➤ Willful disobedience. <p><i>Exceptional Misconduct will be dealt with as per Seattle School District policy: these offenses include incidents involving controlled substances, violence, weapons, theft and vandalism, intimidation, harassment, trespass and arson.</i></p>

Being in Middle School @ TOPS . . .

(special section for sixth, seventh and eighth graders)

Middle School “Student in Good Standing”

Rising to the Middle School at TOPS brings with it great opportunities to explore the world around us and new freedom to express your view of it. With this opportunity and freedom, however, comes great responsibility for your own academic progress, behavior and actions towards others. With this in mind, the TOPS Middle School requires that you maintain status as a “Student in Good Standing” in order to participate in activities outside of the classroom throughout the school year.

- All students begin the school year as a **Student in Good Standing** and most students easily maintain it all year long.
- Maintaining good standing requires that students earn a grade C or above in all classes, arrive to every class on-time and prepared, and avoid making bad decisions that lead to suspension or multiple detentions.
- Students whose grades fall below a C in any class will lose their status as a Student in Good Standing for a probationary period of two weeks. Also, students will lose Student in Good Standing status if they are tardy or arrive unprepared more than three times to a particular class in a quarter or earn three or more detentions in a quarter. In addition, students who have been suspended will remain on probationary status for a period of one week following their return to school.
- During their probationary period, students must attend four study halls during which they may make up their back work and get ahead on their current work. Students may also be required to submit daily or weekly progress reports. Students who have lost Good Standing status for disciplinary reasons will meet twice with the school counselor to discuss their behavior.
- At the end of the probationary period, students must demonstrate their progress to the Middle School Team.
- A student who is not in good standing will not have the privilege to participate in after-school activities and sports, camps, non-academic field trips, or dances during the time of his or her probation.

The Middle School Team will review students’ standing according to the following schedule:

1. Every Monday, all teachers will identify students who have not turned in work from the previous week, and they will notify these students by Tuesday that they need to turn in the missing work (students will be responsible for listing the missing work and confirming with the teacher that their list is accurate).
2. All late work must be submitted by the end of the day on Wednesday.
3. Every Thursday, middle school teachers will bring to their morning meeting the list of students from that week who have not turned in missing work.
4. Every Friday at 11:30, a staff member will meet with the students who have been identified for the second week in a row at the middle school meeting and require them to decide on a plan for getting back on track academically. The students will be required to schedule four study hall periods over the upcoming two-week period; study halls are offered during fifth period (for 6th grade) and sixth period (for 7th and 8th grade) and after-school on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. During this probationary period, a student who is not in good standing will not have the privilege to participate in after-school activities and sports, camps, non-academic field trips, ski bus or dances. Students who are members of athletic teams may continue to practice with their team but may not participate interscholastic games and matches.
5. Students who are not in good standing will be reviewed after two weeks; those who have not improved their academic standing to a C level in every class will be referred for a SIT meeting, study skills classes or other intervention.

Rev. 9/06

Attendance and Tardiness at the Middle School Level

Two unexcused tardies to school or to the same class in a quarter will result in a student being assigned an **After School Detention/Running Club**. Tardies to school are only excused when the school bus arrives late. Students who are repeatedly tardy will be expected to meet with an administrator to make an improvement plan. On-going problems will result in the assigning of Running Club.

A student who is assigned Running Club must serve the time the week it is assigned. Students who do not complete detention will be assigned Saturday School.

Students who cut a class or mandatory Study Table after school will be required to make up the time after school or in Saturday School and serve a Running Club. It is considered "cutting class" if a student is more than five minutes late to class, in which case the student will be sent to the Ms. Scott or Mr. Kischner.

Running Club & After-school Detention

Running Club meets after school on Tuesdays and Fridays and is a mandatory consequence for students who are repeatedly late for class or otherwise disrupt the learning environment for their peers. Students can be assigned Running Club by their teachers or administrators. These students are required to report to Mr. Bloedel's room by 3:25 on the Tuesday or Friday immediately following their incident. Students who fail to report on one of these two days (or who commit additional offenses within the week) will be required to report to Mr. Bloedel the next Tuesday for an alternative cleaning assignment in the building. Failure to fulfill this obligation will result in the assignment of Saturday School or suspension. Students who receive multiple Running Club assignments will meet with an administrator to review their status as Students in Good Standing.

Students will be finished with Running Club by about 4:00. It is the student's responsibility to arrange transportation at this time. Students are eligible for the 5:00 Activity Bus on Tuesdays, and students will need to have their parents contact Helen Hundley in the main office to arrange their Activity Bus stop if the student has not taken the Activity Bus before.

Leaving campus after school

Middle school students who are participating in an after-school activity may submit a parent permission form for a pass that allows them to leave campus between the end of school and the start of the activity. Permission forms are available in the office. Passes may only be used for returning for a specific TOPS activity, and the passes are good only one sports season or the duration of the activity. Should you choose to leave campus without permission, you will be assigned an after school detention or Running Club, at a minimum.