



## **Family Handbook | 2009–10**

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## Contents

<b>Directory</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Daily Operations</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Daily Schedule</i>	4
<i>Before- and After-School Care</i>	4
<i>Attendance Policies</i>	4
<b>Packing for School</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>What to Bring to School</i>	5
<i>What to Leave at Home</i>	5
<b>Getting Here</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Parking at School</i>	6
<i>Taking the Bus</i>	6
<i>Student Behavior on the Bus</i>	6
<b>Storing Your Stuff</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Lost &amp; Found: Label What You Love!</i>	7
<b>Packing or Buying Lunch</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Lost Lunches and Lunch Money</i>	7
<b>Getting Along with Each Other</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>Adult Code of Conduct</i>	8
<i>Student Code of Conduct</i>	8
<i>Student Rights and Responsibilities</i>	8
<b>Playing Well Together</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>Playground Expectations/Guidelines</i>	9
<i>Playground Volunteers</i>	9
<i>Recess Behavior Expectations</i>	10
<b>Resolving Conflicts and Developing Positive Behavior</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Staying Safe and Healthy</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>School Nurse Schedule</i>	12
<i>Dispensing Medication</i>	12
<i>Treating Health Conditions</i>	12
<i>Chicken Pox Immunization</i>	12
<i>Injuries/Medical Emergencies</i>	12
<i>Car Safety Regulations</i>	12
<b>Exploring the World</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>Permission Slips</i>	13
<b>Supporting Student Work at Home</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Tracking Student Progress</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>Student Assessment</i>	13
<i>Classroom Structure</i>	14
<i>Student Placement</i>	14
<i>School Records</i>	14
<b>Understanding Our Community Roles</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Staying in Touch and Informed</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2008–09 School Calendar</b>	<b>16</b>

## Welcome to Thornton Creek

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My sincerest welcome to you and your child(ren) as you join our school family. The children of Thornton Creek are our primary focus, the reason that we come together as a learning community. Each and every child who comes to our school is important. Staff at Thornton Creek strives to meet the needs of each student by providing a comprehensive, project-focused curriculum, excellence in student-centered instruction and assessment, fieldwork and service outreach in the community, and continuous communication among parents, staff and our students.

Feedback we receive about our graduates from receiving middle and high schools reminds us of our tradition of a quality education through excellent teaching. Working with dedicated support staff and supportive parents, teachers make each school day an act of significant creativity and learning.

Parents in the Thornton Creek community recognize the important role they play in the education of their child(ren). Staff supports the belief that education is a partnership. Your child's learning is a shared responsibility of each student, staff member and parent. We look forward to a partnership with school families—to the interaction and communication among the parents, students and staff of our school.

We enter this school year with a sense of pride in our accomplishments, as we continually look for ways to grow as a professional community. Your interest, involvement and ideas will help us meet the challenges ahead with success.

If you have any questions, please feel free to stop by the office. My door is always open to you. Working together, we will provide your child(ren) a wonderful learning environment. **If you prefer to contact me by phone, you can reach me at 252-5300, or you can e-mail me at [jminer@seattleschools.org](mailto:jminer@seattleschools.org).**

Sincerely,

John Miner  
Principal

### Scholarships Available

It is important that all students are able to participate equally in all aspects of school life. To be sure this is possible, the Site Council provides scholarships for all school-related activities. Please don't hesitate to ask your child's teacher if you need a full or partial scholarship for your child or for yourself as a chaperone.

## Important Phone Numbers

THORNTON CREEK*		
School Office		252-5300
Fax Line		252-5301
Lin Sullam (secretary)	lsullam@seattleschools.org	252-5300
Jenny Evans (assistant)	jevans@seattleschools.org	252-5304
John Miner (principal)	jminer@seattleschools.org	252-5305
School counselor		252-5306
School nurse	jmunderhill@seattleschools.org	252-5307
SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS		
SPS Transportation		252-0900
N.E. Enrollment Center		252-4765
SPS Information		252-0000
School Board		252-0040
Superintendent		252-0100
Waitlist Hotline		252-0212
Kids Time		729-9538

## Site Council

2009-10 SITE COUNCIL LEADERS		
Chair	Julie Bisson	jbisson@comcast.net
Finance	Donna Howard	donna@startupserv.com
Hospitality	Holly DeMaranville	hollyfft@comcast.net
	Deb Voss	deborahvoss@comcast.net
Curriculum	Judy Ruha	ruhbell@yahoo.com
	Kathleen Elsenboss	kmelsenboss@comcast.net
Fundraising	TBD	
Hiring & Diversity	Cosette LeCiel	leciel@comcast.net
District Relations	Michelle Brown	oshenagl@comcast.net
	Chris Stewart	stewcc@hotmail.com
Secretary	Cristina McGlynn	cristinamcglynn@hotmail.com
Communications	Joel Domingo	joeldomingo@gmail.com
	Kellie LaRue	klarue@mac.com
Ombudsman	Tamara Leonard	taraleona@gmail.com

## Thornton Creek Instructional Staff \*

K	Rm 4	Debbie Kosman	dakosman@seattleschools.org	252-5313
K	Rm 9	Julie Clayton	jkclayton@seattleschools.org	252-5318
		Crystal Okada	ccsison@seattleschools.org	252-5313
K / 1	Rm 3	Katie Zisserman	klzissermann@seattleschools.org	252-5255
1	Rm 5	Mari Brockhaus	mbbrockhaus@seattleschools.org	252-5314
1	Rm 1	Todd Bohannon	tmbhannon@seattleschools.org	252-5310
2	Rm 2	Lori Fujimoto	lkfujimoto@seattleschools.org	252-5311
2	Rm 13	Rebecca Rutzick	rerutzick@seattleschools.com	252-5264
2 / 3	Rm 10	Teresa Swanson	taswanson@seattleschools.org	252-5294
3	Rm 8	Liz McCormack	emmccormack@seattleschools.org	252-5317
3	Rm 14	Nora Scully	nlscully@seattleschools.org	252-5253
4	Cabin	Sandra Brettler	scbrettler@seattleschools.org	
4	Rm 17	Rick Lemberg	eplemberg@seattleschools.org	252-5257
4 / 5	Rm 7	Laura Reed	lareed@seattleschools.org	252-5316
5	Rm 11	Steve Chavez	jschavez@seattleschools.org	252-5250
5	Rm 6	Liz Neuman	jhvoss@seattleschools.org	252-5315
P.E.	Gym	Sue Doty	lsdoty@seattleschools.org	252-5260
Visual Arts	Rm 19	Maria Callahan	mcallahan@seattleschools.org	252-5312
Library	Library	Ginny Allemann	vaallemann@seattleschools.org	252-5261
		Katharine Donnelly		
Resource	Rm 12	Marsha Schoene	mbschoene@seattleschools.org	252-5251
		Cherie Bradshaw	cjbradshaw@seattleschools.org	252-5251
OT/PT	Rm 18	Sharon Groves	spgroves@seattleschools.org	252-5319
		Allie Fee	ajfee@seattleschools.org	252-5319
Tutors		Cindy Deshler	cmdeshler@seattleschools.org	252-5256
		Anne Van Loen	avanloen@gmail.com	351-3224
Speech/Language		Tina Nef	cnef@seattleschools.org	252-5259
		Angie Johnson	ejjohnson@seattleschools.org	252-1591

\* **All phone lines have the main office number as the Caller ID. When returning a call, please be advised that the office may not be aware or advised of the original call. If your child needs to call you during the school day, advise him or her to leave a voice mail message if unable to reach you in person.**

# Daily Operations

## Daily Schedule

2009–10 DAILY SCHEDULE	
8:45 A.M.	Students may enter the school and play on the playground
8:45–9:05 A.M.	Breakfast is available for students
9:05 A.M.	First bell
9:10 A.M.	School begins
10:40–10:55 A.M.	Morning recess
Noon–12:45 P.M.	Two lunch periods and recesses 3–5: LUNCH 12–12:15; RECESS 12:15–12:45 K–2: RECESS 12–12:30; LUNCH 12:30–12:45
1:50–2:05 P.M.	Afternoon recess
3:15 P.M.	End-of-day dismissal

\* **Thornton Creek staff will not be on hand to supervise children before 8:40 A.M. or after 3:15 P.M.**

## Before- and After-School Care

Kids Time, a Seattle Parks and Recreation program sponsored by Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center, offers on-site extended daycare designed specifically to meet the needs of the children and families of Thornton Creek. Call 206-729-9538 for information and to check on space availability.

### Change of Address, Contact Information

It is very important that parents/guardians provide the school office staff emergency telephone numbers in case of an accident or illness involving your child(ren). Please call Jenny Evans in the office at 206-252-5304 or e-mail her at [jevans@seattleschools.org](mailto:jevans@seattleschools.org) any time there is a change in a student's address or a parent's or emergency contact's information.

Please also make sure you provide an updated e-mail address to the school, to ensure that you receive the occasional, time-sensitive e-mail announcements sent by the office and Site Council committees.

## Attendance Policies

### Student Absence or Late Arrival

Parents are required to notify the school about late or absent students. Please call Jenny Evans in the office at 206-252-5304 or e-mail her at [jevans@seattleschools.org](mailto:jevans@seattleschools.org). (E-mail is particularly helpful when alerting her in advance to scheduled absences, such as a family trip.) **We will make every effort to reach you to check on your child if we do not hear from you.**

### Standard Departure

Please be sure that your child knows how he or she is to get home from school before he or she leaves to come to school in the morning. In an emergency, we will do our best to get changes in after-school plans to students. If such an emergency should arise, please let us know immediately.

### Early or Unusual Departure from School

For safety reasons and so parents and the school office are fully aware of children's whereabouts, parents must contact the office whenever a student is:

- Leaving school before dismissal time.
- Not going home by her/his regular transportation and is being picked up by someone the parent has made arrangements with (neighbor, relative...).
- Going home with a friend on that friend's bus.
- Being picked up by another student's parent for a play date, sports, theater, etc.

The student's parent must contact the office in advance and give his or her permission for the child to be picked up by another adult or to go home with a friend on that student's bus. The adult picking up the student must come to the office and sign the student out on the student sign-out sheet.

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## Packing for School

### What to Bring to School

Do not worry about sending classroom supplies (pencils, crayons, etc.) with your child on the first day of school. Many supplies will be provided; if anything special is needed, teachers will send home a list once school starts.

#### Children commonly need the following items each day:

- A **backpack** large enough to hold a standard-size folder.
- A **standard-size folder with pockets**. (In some cases, teachers provide folders for student use.)
- **Lunch** in a lunch box or lunch bag (if your child is bringing lunch from home).
- A **sweater or coat** if the weather is cool.
- An **extra change of clothes** that can be stored at school. If children get wet or muddy on the playground, it's very helpful to have clean clothes on hand.

### What to Leave at Home

#### Electronic Games, Weapons, Etc.

Weapons (knives, real or play guns, personal protection spray, chains), electronic games or music players, hardballs, skateboards, batons, squirt guns, golf balls, hard rubber balls and flammable materials are not allowed at school. Personal toys for "show and tell" should only be brought with permission of the teacher and left with that teacher.

#### Money and Valuables

Because of the danger of loss, students should not bring precious items or extra money or toys to school unless prior arrangements have been made with the child's teacher.

#### Pets

Pets should only be brought to school with prior permission of a student's teacher.

### Change of Clothes

We are asking that all children bring a change of clothes to keep at school in case it is needed. It is surprising how often a change of clothes is necessary, even by our fifth graders.

### "NO-TOLERANCE" WEAPONS POLICY

In our effort to emphasize safety procedures, we ask you to review this Seattle District policy with your child. Weapons of any kind, including toy weapons of any kind, are strictly prohibited in schools. Possession of any such object, will result in suspension and may result in expulsion. Students who become aware that another student has a weapon of any kind (even a toy weapon) must report this to an adult immediately.

As a new school year begins, it is time to stress once again the Seattle Public Schools' commitment to providing a safe and orderly educational environment. It is appropriate, therefore, to remind all in the broader school community that the Seattle Public Schools has a no-tolerance policy with regard to weapons of all kinds. Student possession or use of guns (loaded or not, operable or not, "real" or not), knives of any length (including pocket knives), pepper spray and other weapons and objects capable of causing bodily harm will, in almost all cases, result in expulsion from school. Items not normally regarded as weapons, but capable of causing harm and used in a threatening or harmful way, are considered weapons under this policy.

Serious assaults, threats of physical harm, harassment based on factors such as race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion and disability, and other serious offenses will also be treated severely.

We recognize, of course, the difficulties encountered by students who are expelled, or otherwise excluded long-term from school, for serious misbehavior. However, our primary obligation is to provide a healthy learning environment to the vast majority of students. We cannot afford to send the message to students that serious offenses are sometimes treated lightly—that would only lead to an increase in the incidence of problem situations. For the safety of all students and staff, those few students who engage in weapons violations or other very serious misbehavior must expect to be expelled and not readmitted to another regular school until successful completion of appropriate behavior management training. Having a weapon "for protection" or "by accident" or "because someone handed it to me" (and it wasn't turned in immediately to the office or school staff) is not the sort of mitigating circumstance that will avoid expulsion.

## Getting Here

### Be on Time: Start the Day off Right!

Class meeting is an important start to each day. During these meetings, children are actively involved in sharing experiences, planning activities, discussing conflicts, issues and ideas, enacting plays and solving problems in a caring and respectful way.

## Parking at School

Parent parking is available in the north and south parking lots, as well as along NE 77th and NE 80th streets. Long-term parking on 43rd Avenue NE between NE 77th and NE 80th streets is limited to the east side of the street.

**Parents should not park on the west side of 43rd Avenue NE between NE 77th and NE 80th streets during bus drop-off time, 8:30–9:30 A.M., or bus pick-up time, 2:30–3:30 P.M. If you are crossing 43rd Avenue, please cross only at the corners at NE 77th and NE 80th.**

## Taking the Bus

If your child is taking the bus to and/or from school, please be patient during the first several weeks. Buses can be late as drivers become familiar with their routes. Principal John is there to help children on and off the buses in front of school. Both the teacher and the Kindergarten Buddies (older students assigned to help younger ones) will escort your kindergarten students to the bus for the first few weeks. The bus may be tardy but you can be confident your student will be on the correct bus. **The Transportation Office phone number, 252-0900, is answered by the Operational Control room and is staffed with Dispatchers, Route Planners and Intervention Associates. Please call them directly with any concerns.**

**BUS POLICIES AND RULES:** Safety is our highest priority for students riding the SPS buses. It is imperative that all students abide by and comply with bus policies and rules. Students unwilling to follow bus rules may be denied SPS bus transportation for one or more days depending upon their behavior. Parents will be notified of any decisions affecting their child's transportation on a SPS bus.

## Student Behavior on the Bus

### Students:

- Respect the bus driver and follow her/his directions while riding on the bus.
- Remain seated while riding on the bus, unless the driver asks you to do otherwise.
- Talk quietly and respectfully while riding on the bus.
- While riding, remain completely inside open bus windows.
- Store your backpacks, coats and other belongings on or under your seat.
- Take any litter with you when you leave the bus.

**Any damage to a bus done by a student will be paid for by the parent/guardian of that student.**

### Problem Solving on the Bus

- Students may attempt to thoughtfully solve their own problem while on the bus.
- Students may ask the bus driver for help with a problem.
- Problems on the morning bus will be dealt with at school that same day.
- Problems on the afternoon bus will be dealt with at school the following day.
- Students may seek help from their teacher or the principal.
- A class meeting or a meeting with the principal will seek to solve the student's problem.

### Ongoing Inappropriate/Unsafe Bus Behavior

If a student receives a "write up" for inappropriate and/or unsafe behavior on the school bus:

- The principal will talk with the student about behavior, reminding her/him of her/his responsibilities.
- Parents will receive a copy of the bus incident report.

**If a student continues to behave inappropriately or unsafely, he/she would likely lose bus-riding privileges for a period of time. First time, 1–3 days; second time, 1 week; third time, more than one week and until a conference with the parents can occur.**

**TEMPORARY BUS CARDS:** A child who plans to ride a bus he or she doesn't normally ride to a friend's house or to get off the regular bus at a stop other than the assigned stop must get a Seattle Public School (SPS) temporary bus card from the school office. For a student to get a bus card, parents/guardians send in written permission to the school office in advance. Please write a note for your child and ask her/him to bring the note to the office as soon as he or she arrives at school so that a bus pass can be written. Please limit arrangements made over the phone to emergencies only.

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## Storing Your Stuff

Thornton Creek students generally store their school supplies and personal items in two places: a chair pouch in the classroom and a locker in the hallway. (Room 1 also has a few cubbies.)

### THE CHAIR POUCH—A SCHOOL TRADITION!

Children at Thornton Creek use chair pouches made by parents to hold their supplies in the classroom. Chair pouches will not be needed on the first day of school. Your child's teacher will give you a pattern and tell you when chair pouches should be brought to school. You will have plenty of time for the project. If you do not have access to a sewing machine, cannot sew or do not have time to make a chair pouch, you can request that a chair pouch be made for your child.

## Lost & Found: Label What You Love!

Personal items have a peculiar way of making it to the lost-and-found. This includes coats, mittens, boots, backpacks, folders, etc. Articles of clothing and other lost items are stored in a cabinet in the hallway near the main office. (Three times a year, we will donate unclaimed clothing items.) Small items of value are kept in the office until claimed. Lost lunch boxes can be found on a cart in the courtyard outside of the janitor's office. **If these items are important to you, please label them with your student's name and room number. This will greatly increase the odds of getting the items returned to you.**

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## Packing or Buying Lunch

**YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN YOUR CHILD FOR LUNCH any day during the school year. Kindergarten parents are particularly encouraged to come to lunch during the first few weeks of school. It is a lot of fun, and the extra help is greatly appreciated!**

All grades at Thornton Creek eat lunch in the cafeteria. Lunch is divided into two groups, K–2 and 3–5. Children sit at assigned tables with their classmates. Teachers accompany students to the lunchroom and stay long enough to ensure children are settled. There will be help available for children who need assistance opening their milk, plastic containers, etc., but some children can be shy about asking for help during the first few weeks of school. If you are packing lunch for your child, please consider easy-to-open packaging.

Children are welcome to bring a lunch from home or to purchase lunch in the cafeteria. Drinks (milk, juice) are purchased separately. Parents may set up lunch accounts for their children, so that children will not have to bring money to school. On the first day of school, visit the cafeteria with your checkbook to open an account. You may also open an account online at [www.seattleschools.org/area/nutrition-svc/about\\_us/paypams\\_index.html](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/nutrition-svc/about_us/paypams_index.html). Lunch menus are also available online at [www.seattleschools.org/area/nutrition-svc/menus\\_prices.html](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/nutrition-svc/menus_prices.html).

Reduced-price or free meals are available for families who qualify. To apply, please complete and return the federal form sent home at the beginning of the school year.

## Lost Lunches and Lunch Money

If money or the student's lunch is lost, limited funds are available in the office for students to borrow. Families will be expected to repay borrowed lunch money before they are loaned money a third time.

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## Getting Along with Each Other

### Adult Code of Conduct

In order for our school community to work together in an open, healthy and positive way, we have arrived at this code of conduct to guide our interactions.

**Our goal is clarity and honest, complete communication.**

- Speak directly to the person with whom you have a concern, not to someone else about that person.
- Honor and support group decisions.

### Student Rights and Responsibilities

- **I have the right** to be treated with respect and understanding for who I am; **I have the responsibility** to treat others with respect and understanding.
- **I have the right** to be safe in this school; **I have the responsibility** to act safely and encourage others to do the same.
- **I have the right** to respectfully express my opinions and ideas; **I have the responsibility** to respect other's opinions and ideas.
- **I have the right** to learn and work in this school; **I have the responsibility** to help others with their work while I do my best work.
- **I have the right** to teacher attention and help with my work; **I have the responsibility** to help my teacher help others with their work.
- **I have the right** to use school resources and materials; **I have the responsibility** to respect school property as well as the property of other students.

- Model good communications.
- Use "I" messages... "I think... I feel. I am concerned about... " as opposed to "You always..."
- Respect the opinions of others even if you disagree. Be willing to agree to disagree without labeling the other point of view.
- Allow others to change their opinions without being labeled or prevented from growing or developing a different point of view.
- Seek to understand first. Listen to the feelings behind the words as well as the words themselves. Ask questions to clarify what is being said.
- Forgiveness... Remember that we are not perfect. We can anticipate that sometimes we may make mistakes. Be willing to forgive someone who makes a mistake.

It is our goal to work in the spirit of this code.

### Student Code of Conduct

In order for our school community to work, play and grow together in an open, healthy and positive way, this code of conduct will guide student relationships.

- I will help make our school a great place to learn and play.
- I will learn and play cooperatively with others.
- I will act thoughtfully to help my teachers teach.
- I will help other students to work and learn.
- I will show respect for myself, others, their possessions and school property.
- I will use respectful language and respect other's opinions.
- I will solve problems in a helpful way.
- I will act safely in school and on the playground.

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## Playing Well Together

### Playground Expectations/Guidelines

Time on the playground is meant to be fun for each student. Every student has an important part to play in making the playground and recess safe and fun for everyone. The goal for all students at Thornton Creek is for everyone to play together fairly and respectfully solve any differences. Adults and student conflict managers will also be available at recess to help supervise and resolve difficulties. Every student needs to know:

1. We eat in the cafeteria and snack in the classroom.
2. We play and run outside on the playground.
3. We climb on the play structure.
4. We slide feet first down the slides.
5. We throw balls and Frisbees.
6. We speak kindly to each other and respect each other's needs.
7. We stay within the fenced playground. If a ball goes over the fence, an adult must get it.
8. Everyone is welcome to join in playground games.

#### As you go out to recess, please remember:

- If you are not certain that you are playing safely, ask yourself this question: Will my play hurt me or others?
- Play carefully with equipment.
- Take balls, bats and Frisbees back to your classroom or the gym when recess is finished.
- Get balls, jump ropes and other equipment from your classroom or the gym before recess.

### Playground Volunteers

Playground volunteers are always needed for recess and lunch (see schedule on page 4). If you can volunteer to help with playground supervision, please call the school office at 252-5300.

#### If you help as a playground volunteer:

- Remind students of playground guidelines when necessary.
- Acknowledge and reinforce good problem-solving.
- Help students to work out their differences if they are not able to do it for themselves.
- Inform teachers of any conflicts or other matters that they should follow up on either by telling them at the end of recess or by leaving a note in their mailbox.
- Keep an eye out for unauthorized people or activity on or around the playground.

#### Each time you volunteer:

Sign in on the "Volunteer/Visitor" clipboard in the office. Also sign in on a volunteer hours sheet. These are posted outside most classrooms and in the office. Please try to follow up on any playground conflicts with a discussion note to the teacher that same day. If that isn't possible, contact John Miner.

### Outdoor Activities

Physical education and outside activities at recess are an important part of the school day. We request that children come to school dressed for Seattle's unpredictable weather. If your child cannot participate in outdoor or other athletic activities, please send a note to school. Keeping an extra set of clothes and rain boots in the locker is helpful.

## Recess Behavior Expectations

These expectations guide our students' behavior and play. Every student at Thornton Creek is expected to do her/his best to support each of these expectations.

- I will play thoughtfully with others.
- I will play cooperatively with others.
- I will respect others during recess.
- I will use respectful language and respect other's opinions.
- I will stop what I am doing when I am asked.
- I will play safely on the playground.

When a student is not supporting these behaviors during recess, she or he will take time out of recess. The amount of time away from recess will be decided upon by the child's teacher, the school counselor and the principal.

In order for a student to return to recess, she or he must be willing to abide by our behavior expectations.

The child's parents will be notified about any recess behavior problems in which their child is involved. The parent will be asked to support the recess behavior expectations at home. The parent will also be notified about any decision to have their child spend time out of recess.

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## Resolving Conflicts and Developing Positive Behavior

Because teaching and modeling positive behavior are the primary approaches to "discipline" at Thornton Creek, extremely negative behavior occurs infrequently. In the context of common, all-school culture and values, classrooms collaboratively develop their own sets of expectations about behavior, keeping in mind that each child's needs and development are crucial to the success of our program.

This section of the Handbook is included because conflicts arise within any community, and it is helpful to restate our basic values and methods. Children and adult members of our community will usually attempt to identify the cause of conflict and resolve it at the source—for example, a change in schedule, improved communication or recognition of differing expectations will resolve many conflicts.

Aggressive or disruptive behavior may happen for a variety of reasons in a variety of schools settings and, in the context of our educational philosophy, is handled in a variety of ways, which include the active participation of those involved whenever possible. Our goals are to protect each person's rights and to help each person learn to make wise choices caring for the self and others.

The basic strategies in use in classrooms and throughout the school to achieve these goals are to:

1. **Use regular daily classroom meetings as forums for discussion and problem-solving**, both addressing particular problems and modeling appropriate ways of resolving conflict.
2. **View negative behavior in the context of the student's life** within the school, the particular classroom's expectations and the program's collaborative, respectful methods. Seeing ourselves as part of a school community requires that we get to better know and understand the children and adults in Thornton Creek as we are called upon to help resolve conflicts.
3. **Stop violent or hurtful behavior immediately**, intervening verbally if possible, physically if necessary. Physical interventions might include temporarily isolating children, restraining violent acts by holding onto a raised hand, or placing yourself between angry children. Children must never be treated roughly or violently by adults.

4. **Be certain any “injured” person’s rights and needs are addressed** and reinforced.
5. **Encourage students involved to see the result of their behavior** and/or come up with an alternative, which will:

- Resolve the immediate problem
- Discover the real problem (“My parents are getting divorced, and I didn’t have any breakfast.”)
- Comfort and redirect a child who just doesn’t know what the problem is
- Deal effectively with excited emotions (“It’s my birthday, and I have A LOT OF ENERGY.”).

Common strategies for clarifying the results of negative behavior through logical consequences include:

- Discussion at class meeting (agenda)
- Suggesting and/or asking those involved to suggest alternatives
- Cooling-off time within the classroom or in the principal’s or counselor’s office
- Having students repair or replace items damaged
- Loss of classroom privilege or activity (e.g., if a student repeatedly disrupts an activity, he or she may not participate in that activity; if a student wanders off during class meeting to work on an individual project, that student’s individual project time might be shortened)
- Staff and/or family may determine whether ongoing counseling or other intervention is appropriate.

6. **Reincorporate children into whatever is happening** as soon as possible, stressing what has been learned from this occasion and that positive choices be made in the future.
7. **Go to the principal or other staff** when a student’s behavior is beyond the resources/situation of the moment for the parent or staff member involved.

Repeated conflict means something is wrong, and it’s our job to find out what it is. It may be a mismatch of the child to the school, classroom or task; it may be family problems; it may be physical illness; it may be something else. As a collaborative, respectful program, our responsibility as parents, teachers and administrators is to seek advice from one another, from the parents of the child concerned and from any other professional necessary (e.g., nurse, counselor, etc.).

8. **Extremely dangerous or aggressive behavior** (e.g., striking a teacher, bringing a weapon to school, intentionally hitting someone with a rock, etc.) will always result in immediately isolating the child until the most appropriate next step is determined. District policy on “exceptional misconduct” permits suspension for the first offense. However, “disciplinarians and hearing officers may grant exceptions in cases involving extenuating or exceptional circumstances, or after considering the background of the individual student.” (Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, revised 8/01). While suspension and expulsion are extremely unusual at Thornton Creek, these interventions will be considered for exceptional misconduct based on discussion among the student’s teacher, the counselor and the principal. The option of sending children home from school without official suspension can also be considered and should be discussed, as with official suspension. Records of any official suspension will be kept in the principal’s office for the remainder of the academic year and will then be destroyed. Records of suspension will not remain in students’ permanent files.

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## Staying Safe and Healthy

### School Nurse Schedule

We will have nursing services at Thornton Creek on Thursdays. You can contact the nurse by phone at 252-5307 or by e-mail at [jmunderhill@seattleschools.org](mailto:jmunderhill@seattleschools.org).

### Dispensing Medication

In order for any type of medication to be given to a student while at school, parents/guardians and the child's physician are required to complete the appropriate sections of the "Medications at School Authorization Form."

Completed forms may be faxed to school at 252-5301.

All medication kept at school must have the student's name, dosage, contents and directions for administration clearly typed on the prescription container's label. The medication must be in its original bottle.

### Treating Health Conditions

**The school nurse or the school office must have a completed care plan before the start of school if your child has an emergency health condition, including:**

1. an allergy that requires administering an epi pen
2. a seizure disorder
3. diabetes.

Please call the school office at 252-5300 to set up an appointment with the school nurse to create the care plan.

### Chicken Pox Immunization

**Please be aware: Immunization for chicken pox is now required for entrance into a Seattle Public School.**

### Injuries/Medical Emergencies

Occasionally, students are injured during recess or gym. School staff will attend to the child's injuries as well as they can, and parents may be notified, depending on the seriousness of the injury.

**In case of earthquake:** We request that you not phone the school or attempt to enter the building should a serious earthquake occur. In the event that we must evacuate the school building, parents can come to school, meet school staff and then pick up their child(ren) on the playground. We will ask that you sign your child out before leaving the school.

## Car Safety Regulations

**There have been changes in the state law regarding child safety while riding in cars on school-sponsored activities.**

Based on a national study of car accidents and children's safety, the state legislature recognized that 71% of children's serious injuries and deaths resulting from car accidents could be eliminated if every child under the age of 16 used an appropriate seat belt, booster seat or child safety seat. As a result, the legislature changed the Revised Code of Washington Section 46.61.687 to require that family cars used to transport children on school-sponsored activities are required to comply with this new regulation.

The changes focus on either the student's age or weight.

### The main points of the changes in the law are:

1. If a child is 1 to 4 years old or weighs less than 40 pounds, that child must ride in a forward-facing child safety seat restraint system.
2. If a child is 4 to 6 years old or weighs between 40 and 60 pounds, that child must be restrained in a child booster seat. (Child booster seat means a restraint system that meets the Federal Motor Vehicles Safety Standard that is designed to elevate a child to properly sit in a federally approved lap/shoulder belt system.)
3. If a child is under the age of 6 or weighs less than 60 pounds, that child must ride in the back seat if the vehicle is equipped with a passenger-side impact air bag.
4. If a child is over the age of 6 or weighs more than 60 pounds, that child must be restrained with the vehicle's safety belt system.

### Therefore,

- A child who is 5 years old but weighs 65 pounds, according to the second and third criteria above, can legally ride with only a seat belt.
- A child who is 7 years old but weighs only 55 pounds, according to the fourth criteria above, can legally ride with only a seat belt.

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## Exploring the World

Going out into the world is a core value of our program. All classes take many trips out into the community for expedition-related work and to visit local establishments like Seattle Children's Theater and the Northwest Puppet Theater. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of all class field trips. Additionally, all general education classes attend an overnight camp in June during the school week. Each classroom sets up a budget to support these trips. Your teacher will provide you with the financial details during the first few weeks of school. As always, scholarships are available.

### Permission Slips

During the first week of school, you are asked to return a signed field trip permission form, allowing your child to participate in all field trips during the school year. Unfortunately, a child cannot participate in a field trip without the signed permission form on file at school.

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## Supporting Student Work at Home

### Make a special place at home for school items.

At school, all student items have an assigned place. It is much easier for kids to transfer their backpacks and folders to and from school if there is a designated place both at home and at school.

### Create quiet time and study time.

Solitude and reflection time is a core value of the Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) program and, as such, there is quiet time built into the daily schedule. However, this may not be enough quiet transition time for some kids. Plan minimal after-school activities for the first few weeks of school and, if possible, plan on spending some after-school time transitioning on the playground. The most important early preparation for children learning to read is "lap time" with their parents. This nightly ritual of sharing a book is the best predictor of a child's lifelong love of reading. Thornton Creek teachers ask that all families create a nightly routine of reading aloud for 20 to 30 minutes. Individual teachers will be sending home class expectations for routine additional homework. Parents

can discuss homework expectations with each child's teacher at the back-to-school meetings in September.

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## Tracking Student Progress

### Student Progress

Reporting of student progress takes place through student portfolios, written reports, parent conferences and district progress reports covering the student's growth in the areas of intellectual, personal and social development. These conferences occur during scheduled periods and on an informal, as-needed basis.

### Student Assessment

Thornton Creek has evolved from deeply held values that define its program identity. Staff and parents have been entrusted to care not only for the children in the school but also for the philosophy that binds the community together. Staff has created assessment practices that are sensitive to that identity, as well as to the detail and goals of day-to-day instruction. Staff focuses on creating diagnostic, embedded assessments that inform (drive) instruction and learning.

One choice that staff and parents have decided to focus instructional time and professional development on has been developing the perception within our students of themselves as partners in the assessment of their own academic progress, giving them resources that they can apply to their work every day. Staff has chosen to seek out training for modeling instruction and assessment processes that provide students ongoing opportunities to collaborate with peers to establish assessment criteria, to evaluate and provide feedback on one another's work, as well as to take ownership for identifying areas for personal growth. This type of student involvement in assessment promotes their metacognitive understanding of the learning process.

Staff has observed that students who participate in the thoughtful analysis of another's work learn to identify its key elements, internalize crucial elements of high-quality work, as well as areas for improvement in their own work. In this exchange process, students become self-reflective, taking responsibility for their own improvement.

Improving upon these practices we believe is a wise choice and in the overall best interests of our students'

academic progress. Staff believes that engaging students as partners in assessment will have the most significant impact on raising the quality of student work, reflecting positively in their performance when they participate in standardized testing. Our intent is to create an assessment environment in which:

- Students are key beneficiaries of assessment information.
- Assessment is a learning resource for every student.
- Students use assessment results to improve their work.
- Students and teachers use assessment to better understand the details of students' learning.

Present policy is to administer the state and district mandated tests. Alternative activities are available during testing for children whose parents choose not to have them tested. We ask that as many parents as possible come to the school office to pick up their child's test scores. Those scores not picked up will be mailed to the student's home.

## Classroom Structure

### Class Looping Model

Thornton Creek has adopted a looping model of classroom instruction, so that each teacher will stay with a class of students for two grades—e.g., kindergarten and first grade—and then loop back to pick up a new class. Students will remain, for the most part, with the same group of classmates, which strengthens cooperative learning. This model:

- Enables teachers to understand each student's learning styles and offer appropriate instruction
- Strengthens sense of community and familiarity within the classroom
- Encourages communication from student to teacher, teacher to student and student to student.

### Student Placement

A variety of factors are considered as staff makes student placement decisions. The placement process aims to create class groups that balance individual and group learning strengths, social needs, relationships within a class group, individual student learning challenges, ethnic diversity and gender balance. In addition, staff receives input from newly assigned families, which assists teachers in their placement decisions.

## School Records

Your rights as parents are assured under the family educational rights and privacy act of 1974. The permanent record file and District cards, which include identification information, emergency information, attendance records, health records, test scores and necessary reports, are kept in the main office at Thornton Creek. We also maintain your child's portfolio file, which contains samples of student work and teacher progress reports over time, in his or her classroom. Parents may see and make photocopies of file materials at any time, upon request. Parents may challenge information in the student's records and request a hearing if needed. Parents may be assured that we treat student records with strict confidentiality. Only the teachers, principal and other authorized school district personnel have access to student files. We do not give out students' names, addresses or phone numbers to unauthorized persons.

When students move to another school district, the new school sends a request for the permanent file to Thornton Creek before records are released. Thornton Creek sends the student's permanent record file to the requesting school unless alternate arrangements have been made by the parents. The parent is responsible for delivering the portfolio to the new school.

Sometimes student names are used as part of directory information such as newspaper articles, class pictures and lists, room parents' lists, displays of artwork, yearbook lists and the school newsletter. Parents have the right to request that their child's name be excluded from these kinds of school-related activities. If you wish the protection of your child's privacy be extended to eliminate some or all of the above uses, please indicate your wishes on the Consolidated Release Form.

If you have questions about any of the procedures described here, please give us a call. A copy of the school district's "School Records, Policies, Regulations, Guidelines," which gives a detailed explanation, is available in the school office for your examination if you wish to see it.

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## Understanding Our Community Roles

### Role of Students

Thornton Creek students are respected for their individual learning styles and pace as well as for their contributions to the learning environment and efforts to learn. Not only will students be encouraged to provide input for their own learning goals, but they will support others in the group to learn as well. They will be expected to care for the materials and facilities along with their personal space and any special resources their class may use. Mutual respect among Thornton Creek students, parents and staff, along with trust and friendship, are important elements that must be learned and communicated by the actions of everyone.

### Role of Parents/Guardians: Family Commitment

Parental involvement in Thornton Creek has always been crucial to the success of the program. Parents provide the connecting link between the community and the school, bringing experience, ideas and materials into the classrooms. Parents work cooperatively with staff and students, and they participate as equal partners in governance as members of the Thornton Creek Site Council. Our goal is to develop a strong, informal relationship between students, staff and parents, which will create a close-knit, cooperative learning environment that fosters the growth and development of each child.

**We ask for a time commitment of 40 hours per parent per year.** If there are two parents in the family, they may share their commitment however they wish—e.g., one may put in 70 hours and the other 10—so long as the total is 40 hours per parent per year. The time commitment may be met in an endless variety of ways, including working in the classroom, serving on the Thornton Creek Site Council or on council committees, working on fund-raising, driving on field trips, helping maintain the grounds or staying overnight at camp in the spring.

### Volunteer Screening Form

Current District policy is that parents and community members wishing to volunteer at school must fill out a volunteer information and screening form available from the Volunteer Coordinator or in the office. We appreciate your help and support!

### Role of Staff and Teachers

Thornton Creek teachers are a unique group of educators with many responsibilities, including:

- planning and directing the instructional program
- guiding students according to individual needs and abilities
- making student/class placement decisions
- participating in meetings, fund-raisers and community activities
- coordinating parent volunteers in meaningful and helpful classroom activities
- helping our children learn conflict-resolution skills
- stimulating our children to be eager and excited learners
- coordinating field trips and field trip transportation
- modeling cooperative behavior for students and community
- participating as partners in governance on the Thornton Creek Site Council.

### Planning Team

Our principal, one staff member on a rotating basis, and the Site Council chair and vice chair work together as the Planning Team. They are a valuable resource and are available during school hours. An updated Site Council roster and staff roster is distributed each year.

## Staying in Touch and Informed

**Check your child's folder daily for "kid mail"—assorted announcements, forms and news from the school and your child's teacher.** The school also publishes a weekly newsletter delivered via e-mail, which can also be viewed online at the school Web site. Be sure to take a few minutes each week to stay informed about important school events and opportunities to get involved. **Be sure to provide an updated e-mail address to the school to ensure that you receive the newsletter and time-sensitive announcements sent by the office and Site Council committees.** This newsletter is available on paper by request.



**206-252-5300**

2009–10 DAILY SCHEDULE	
8:45 A.M.	Students may enter the school and play on the playground
8:45–9:05 A.M.	Breakfast is available for students
9:05 A.M.	First bell
9:10 A.M.	School begins
10:40–10:55 A.M.	Morning recess
Noon–12:45 P.M.	Two lunch periods and recesses 3–5: LUNCH 12–12:15; RECESS 12:15–12:45 K–2: RECESS 12–12:30; LUNCH 12:30–12:45
1:50–2:05 P.M.	Afternoon recess
3:15 P.M.	End-of-day dismissal

## 2009–10 School Calendar

SEPTEMBER	
9	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, 9:10 A.M.
13	ALL SCHOOL PICNIC
15	SITE COUNCIL MEETING, 7:00 P.M.
24	BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT, 6:45 P.M.
30	EARLY DISMISSAL, 1:15 P.M.
OCTOBER	
TBD	CURRICULUM NIGHT: RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM
2	PICTURE DAY
8	WALKATHON FUNDRAISER, 9 A.M.–3 P.M.
9	PROFESSIONAL DEV. DAY (NO SCHOOL)
13	SITE COUNCIL MEETING, 7 P.M.
28	EARLY DISMISSAL, 1:15 P.M.
30	HALLOWEEN CELEBRATION
NOVEMBER	
10	SITE COUNCIL MEETING, 7 P.M.
11	VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY (NO SCHOOL)
13	MAKE UP PICTURE DAY
20–23	FALL BOOK FAIR AT UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE
23–25	PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES (NO SCHOOL)
26–27	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (NO SCHOOL)
DECEMBER	
ANNUAL PLEDGE DRIVE	
8	SITE COUNCIL MEETING, 7 P.M.
11	WINTER BAZAAR
18	ONE HOUR EARLY DISMISSAL, 2:15 P.M.
DEC. 21– JAN. 1	WINTER BREAK (NO SCHOOL)
JANUARY	
SCHOOL TOURS: JANUARY 5, 14, 19 & 28	
TBD	CURRICULUM NIGHT
12	SITE COUNCIL MEETING
18	MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY (NO SCHOOL)
28	EVENING SCHOOL TOUR
29	DAY BETWEEN SEMESTERS (NO SCHOOL)

FEBRUARY	
SCHOOL TOURS: FEBRUARY 2, 11 & 25	
TBD	CLASSROOM PORTFOLIO NIGHT
TBD	TALENT'S NIGHT AT ECKSTEIN
3	EARLY DISMISSAL, 1:15 P.M.
9	SITE COUNCIL MEETING, 7 P.M.
15–19	MID-WINTER BREAK (NO SCHOOL)
MARCH	
TBD	CLASS PICTURE DAY
3	EARLY DISMISSAL, 1:15 P.M.
9	SITE COUNCIL MEETING, 7 P.M.
19	PROF. DEVELOPMENT DAY (NO SCHOOL)
29–APRIL 2	SPRING BREAK (NO SCHOOL)
APRIL	
13	SITE COUNCIL MEETING, 7 P.M.
12–MAY 3	WASL TESTING
15	FAMILY DANCE NIGHT
MAY	
TBD	CAMP SEYMOUR CAMPING TRIP
1	ANNUAL AUCTION
10–14	SPRING BOOK FAIR IN MARY COOPER LIBRARY
11	SITE COUNCIL MEETING, 7 P.M.
13	ART/ATHLETIC SKILLS NIGHT
19	EARLY DISMISSAL, 1:15 P.M.
20	EXPEDITION NIGHT
27	NEW FAMILY ORIENTATION
31	MEMORIAL DAY (NO SCHOOL)
JUNE	
TBD	CAMP CORNET BAY, SEALTH, AND ORKILA CAMPING TRIPS
TBD	CARNIVAL AND FIELD DAY/WACKY HAIR DAY
8	SITE COUNCIL MEETING, 7 P.M.
22	ONE-HOUR EARLY DISMISSAL, 2:15 P.M.

\* If necessary, the first three inclement weather make-up days will be added at year end. If a fourth make-up day is needed, it will be scheduled for Jan. 29, 2010 (the day between semesters); and a fifth make-up day would be scheduled for March 19, 2010.