



Pathfinder K-8 Compass

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Pathfinder K-8

*Building
community
by honoring
all traditions*

- Link Up to 6-7-8 ... 1
- 6-7-8 Teachers 2
- Dr. Goodloe-Johnson. 4
- Facility News 5
- Science Fair 6
- Auction 8
- PTSA..... 10
- Facilities News 11
- Dental Care 13
- Math Night 14
- Fundraising 15
- Editor’s Blurb 15
- Calendar 16

Pathfinder K-8 educates students to become passionate, lifelong learners, respecting themselves, others and the environment.

Link Up to 6-7-8

by Audrey Kaplan

High school readiness? But my child is only in....

And just how do you know your child will be prepared? It seems like it would be hard to gauge, but lucky for us Pathfinder makes it easy.

Our 8th grade teachers, Ami and Shelly, put their heads together three years ago and created an extensive rubric to affirm that our students had all the skills needed for success in high school. Only through proving readiness to their teachers and themselves are students able to participate in Pathfinder graduation ceremonies.

Looking to the balance wheel – yep, the same one used throughout the school – for a whole child approach, it was important to our 8th grade team to incorporate social-emotional, spiritual, physical, as well as the standard intellectual component in our school’s exit requirements. Yes, every middle school has a required exit project, but you’ll be hard pressed to top the rigorous year of challenges and expectations our students face. And face it they do! When our students walk in graduation, their heads are held high for a reason. And that reason is shared with all in Rite of Passage portfolios on display around the graduation venue.

So what exactly am I talking about?

Academic and intellectual expectations are the most straightforward, as this is what you would, and should, expect of any school. The students must put their best work forward – and make it better. “Edit, edit and edit” for that final, portfolio-ready piece. Completed writing from Washington State History, World Geography, Language Arts/Writers Workshop (narrative, essay, poetry and fiction) and a 10 page research paper are expected. Mastery of grade level expectations in math are shown through WASL–type worksheets, and in science through Science Fair projects, written work, and Power Point presentations.

But that wasn’t enough for Pathfinder. Sure our kids could get the grades, but our teachers wanted to know that the journey and adventures in learning were real to our students. They wanted to know that the students had the confidence and grounding to more forward into the larger world knowing that they could stand firm in what mattered to them. But how do they know what matters?

continued on page 7



6-7-8 Grade Teachers at Pathfinder K-8

The previous issue of *The Compass* included profiles of the Water Hall staff members. This issue begins to introduce the 6-8 grade teachers.

Ami Pendley—8th Grade Humanities, Snake Clan Teacher



I started teaching right after I graduated from the University of Chicago in 1994. I spent 3 years as a special education teacher at the Garyville/Mt. Airy Math and Science Magnet School in rural Louisiana before I moved to Seattle in 1997. I got my Masters in Teaching from Seattle University with an emphasis on middle school literacy.

Over the past 14 years, I have taught nearly every subject and grade. This is my fourth year at Pathfinder. I feel really lucky to teach my favorite subjects to my favorite grade. (8th grade Language Arts and History). It is so much fun to bring my own passions into the classroom. The snake I always wanted as a child but could never have, now lives in P2. I get to host poetry slams, be a DJ, and write every day. At Pathfinder, I can teach ninja skills, creative writing, hip-hop dance, film studies, and music. My partner teacher is amazing. Our students are extraordinary. I love everything about teaching at Pathfinder.

The first book I read on my own was *Green Eggs and Ham* so it will always have a special place in my heart. As a young reader, my favorite books by far were the Nancy Drew mysteries. I loved Nancy Drew. She was always perfectly put together, flashlight in hand, creeping into dark scary basements and searching for clues. Nothing frightened or fazed her. Her boyfriend adored her and never complained about all the time she spent sleuthing. She used her considerable charm and wit to elude the authorities and escape every dangerous situation. She was courageous, smart, well read, and she drove a purple convertible! Nancy was my first role model. I read every single book. I spent so many afternoons walking around my neighborhood searching for errant footprints, abandoned gloves, or anything remotely mysterious. Then I would go home and try to write a mystery involving a flattened soccer ball, a dead robin and the ice cream truck. All these years later, I still love adventures, mysteries, and fast cars.

Both of my parents are from Louisiana. One of my favorite traditions is our family gathering on Mardi Gras morning. Everyone converges at my Auntie Nora's place on Napoleon Avenue to watch the Rex parade. We eat king cake, muffalettas, shrimp po-boys, fried chicken, gumbo, and jambalaya. When Rex, the king of carnival passes, we toast him with mimosas. My cousins run around in light up bunny ears and jester hats screaming "throw me something mister". At the end of the day, they seem to have lost their necks under all the beads. My Uncle Richard falls asleep in his chair oblivious to the beads flying all around him. My Auntie Camelia and



The Pathfinder staff want to hear from you with ideas, concerns or suggestions.

To reach staff by phone call 206-252-9710.

To reach any Pathfinder K-8 staff member by e-mail, go to the web site.

her friend Sister Susie dance the Mardi Gras Mambo. The neighbors all drop by to say hello. Sometimes there are crawfish boils. It is always hard to say goodbye at noon when I ride off on my sparkling bicycle to march with the Krewe of Cosmic Debris.



Tim Hayes-McQueen—7th Grade Humanities, Coyote Clan Teacher



I graduated University of Michigan in 1986, and have been teaching middle school ever since. This is my 20th year.

I enjoy the entire planet and mythology that Anne McCaffrey created for her many books about Pern and dragons. But I must admit a great love for all of the Harry Potter books as well. Both Rowling and McCaffrey are able to weave tales with multiple plot lines, characters and lessons within made-up universes. Both tell stories that are fun to read and meaningful at several levels.

The snow seemed much deeper when I was little... I remember it began to fall about Thanksgiving, and didn't melt into the gray brown slush that soaked my socks until early April. We walked to school on somewhat shoveled sidewalks between the drifts from the plows and the icy chunks that fell from the bumpers in the driveways. I don't think we ever had less than three inches on the ground, and it sure seems to me now that every year there was a storm of one to three feet. Sometimes the ice came in and encased a foot of new fallen snow in a silvery wrap, hanging low from every wire and branch, and pruning many a tree and shrub. Other times the wind would barrel down for a night and we would awake to drifts that came up to the roof over our porch. Tunneling and carving with mittens crusted with tiny snowballs that stuck to every loose bit of yarn was a bit of a challenge, but the work kept us warm.

My wife and I just welcomed our newest to the family this December, 10 month old Buckminster (Min) Phinneas Rex Hayes-McQueen from Seoul, South Korea. He is adjusting quite well to his new life, and his twin sisters Rhiannon and Cassidy are excited to have a baby brother.



Look for the profiles of these 6-7-8 grade teachers in next month's issue of *The Compass*.



Marco Behar

6th Grade Math/Science,
Falcon Clan Teacher



Terry Sapp

7th Grade Math/Science
Osprey Clan Teacher



Denise LaRoque

6th Grade Humanities
Hawk Clan Teacher



Shelly Sibert

8th Grade Math/Science
Crow Clan Teacher

A Conversation with Dr. Maria Goodloe-Johnson



The Superintendent graciously agreed to be interviewed for Pathfinder K-8's *Compass*. Below are excerpts from that interview.

Big Picture / Vision

One of the strengths of a large district like Seattle is the ability to provide a wide variety of schools to better meet the needs of individual students. How will you encourage that variety while, at the same time, ensuring we are providing high quality education to all students at all schools?

First of all, I think there's a high standard for all kids. And then within that standard, you have to look at what does the research base say about teaching and learning, and what are the best practices... Students that come to us, we need to serve them where they are, but our ultimate goal has to be taking them where they are and moving them forward, making sure they have access and opportunity, and making sure that we challenge our students so that we are preparing them to be successful...

Can you talk more about your vision for instruction, and how standardized curriculum, or what you recently called "a coherent and clear curriculum," fits into that?

To me, coherent and clear is synonymous with standardized... Standardized just means that the expectations about the content and the level at which students should perform should be the same... So if we're all 3rd grade teachers, we all have a different perspective about what 3rd grade social studies is and what should be taught. But the bottom line is there are 1st grade standards being taught in 2nd grade, 5th grade, 3rd grade. That's not okay. ...If you have a 3rd grade student, clearly we should know what that content is, and what the level of expectation is for performance. That doesn't take away creativity, it doesn't take away alternatives, it doesn't take away interventions, it doesn't take away pedagogy, it doesn't take away teacher preference, but it clearly says you have to teach the content.

Our diplomas right now have lots of different meanings because they're all over the board. There's no consistent expectations about what content are. Standardizing the curriculum really benefits our children so that we have a... curriculum that's on grade level. There are national standards about what students at each grade level should know and be able to do. That's what the whole standards movement is about. So that's really the direction, along with an assessment system that aligns to that... that gives teachers information about student performance, about how well they're performing, about where their deficits might be, and areas that they need more attention... And then the third component... is having strong professional development to support teachers in the implementation...

Assessment

When you spoke at Denny Middle School, you said that "The WASL is just one way to measure student success, and it's not the best way." You then referenced a performance-based assessment system in Charleston, and talked about building a similar system in Seattle since there is nothing equivalent here. Can you talk more about that system and what you hope it will accomplish?

...Our assessment strategy is looking at what is currently in place, looking at what the state and federal guidelines are... for assessment here in Washington, looking at what are all the assessments that are in place all across the system. One of the things that is unique about Seattle is that everybody has



“The bottom line about teaching and learning is that if you do it well, if you teach the content well, you can give whatever test you want to. Kids will perform.

...We don't have a choice.

Accountability is here to stay. It's not going away.”

done their own thing, so we have lots of different assessments out there... looking at them and asking the question about quality, effectiveness, and ... is it giving us the kind of results that we want.

The next piece is looking at what the tools are that are out there in the market. I'm familiar with MAP, Measures of Academic Progress... looking at what other districts are using for assessment systems, finding the best product that meets our needs for the school system... it's formative, it gives good information to teachers, it helps us with our growth model, and it helps us with student achievement... So there are those phases of our assessment system... and that will be part of our strategic planning process.

...The bottom line about teaching and learning is that if you do it well, if you teach the content well, you can give whatever test you want to. Kids will perform... We don't have a choice. Accountability is here to stay. It's not going away.

Do you believe measurements of success at alternative schools could (or should) differ from those used at traditional schools?

I think that alternative schools should be preparing our kids to be successful, and that's still focused around what are the content areas that kids need to know and be able to do.... For me, an alternative school historically has been a school where kids go when they haven't been successful... What Seattle calls alternative schools is what I have called schools of choice or niche schools or sometimes even magnet schools.

All kids need to excel. That's my bottom line. No matter what school you go to or what options or alternatives or different ways you want to approach teaching and learning, the bottom line is I want to see student achievement.

...The key is, what's the growth? what's the improvement? what skills are they taught? what skills are they learning? are we preparing our kids to be successful when we graduate? If we're just hanging out and we're just having fun, that's not okay if kids can't go out and function.

Future

Pathfinder's building is widely regarded as one of the most inadequate in the district. Do you have any plans for improvements to the physical plant at Pathfinder and/or moving the Pathfinder program to another building?

I think David [*David Tucker, Media Relations, Public Affairs*] probably has some specifics, but the bottom line is that Pathfinder is with that whole list of schools that are unresolved facilities issues...

David Tucker: (For Pathfinder specifically) 2009 BTA work is scheduled which will encompass exterior walls, brick work and finishes, replacement and renovation of doors and windows as well as all the mechanicals

Science Fair

by Eric Baer

The Third Annual Science Fair on Tuesday, February 11th was a tremendous success! We had about 80 projects displayed and well over 100 participants representing every grade. Everyone agreed that the projects were better than ever this year.

We had erupting volcanoes, dissolving rocks, flying balloons, colored celery and flowers, sailboat races, and so many other projects that covered every area of science you could imagine. The cafeteria was packed!

The Pathfinder Science Fair is one of 3 science fairs for elementary students in the Seattle Public Schools, according to their website, and the only one in the entire southern half of the District. It is terrific to see such a vibrant love for science from all the students. Many student projects were so good that they were given an opportunity to participate in the State Science Fair in April. Who knows... maybe a Pathfinder student will go all the way to the National Science Fair this year!

Thanks to the many volunteers that made it possible: **Emma Baer, Jennifer Kocir, Karen Wong, John Tschirhart, Lashanna Williams, Wendy Cornacchio, Wendy Nathan, Steve Tolzman, Lynette Martin, Maria Melendez, Jean Peneueta** and everyone else that helped put this on!

Special thanks also go to the teachers who strongly supported the Science Fair, including **Jennifer Niemann, Terry Sapp, Marco Behar, and Shelly Sibert**. Without them it would have been a dud. Jennifer Niemann, as the coordinator, was particularly instrumental in making this years science fair a success. Terry Sapp's 7th grade projects were a real highlight and showed the incredible creativity and effort of his 7th grade science students.

Finally, thank you to **Jenn Kocir** who volunteered to coordinate the science fair for next year.

And thanks to all students and their families who participated!

Dessert Race at the Auction

Got a fabulous or funny treat that you'd be willing to make for the auction? One year there was a twinkie tower! Or do you know someone that would donate a dessert?

We'll need about 20 desserts to end the "Pathfunder" auction evening on a sweet note. You don't even have to be attending the auction to participate. Proceeds benefit all our kids!

Please e-mail Joey Harvey (gagajoey@gmail.com) or Wendy Prowell (wbcprowell@comcast.net) for donations and details.



Mark your calendar for the next PTSA General Meeting.

Thursday, March 27th, from 6:45 pm to 8:30 pm

Link up to 6-7-8 (continued from page 1)

Again, guided by the balance wheel, the students are given challenges throughout the year to increase an awareness of self. (Now, I must proceed carefully here, as not all the challenges are public knowledge.) The students are always given the tools for success, but it is up to them to accept the challenge and believe in themselves in order to complete it. Knowing your personal environmental footprint, knowing your physical strengths and examining your ‘liabilities,’ examining the music that you choose to bring into your life, and a willingness to expand who you are through a seemingly routine middle school experience. These students are taking that ‘routine’ learning to another level through reflection. This also leads to opportunities for what Ami refers to as more ‘honest writing,’ and bringing the wheel back to rigorous, best-work, academics.

And then there is spirituality. You may ask, is that not best kept separate from school? Ami and Shelly feel it is vital for Pathfinder students to stay connected to themselves and their understanding of the world around them. As Ami conveyed during a recent discussion, “Spirituality is fundamentally what you believe, your values and how you make your decisions—knowing yourself.” The students are lead to “craft and carve and figure out what they believe.” Religion may or may not come into the picture. And if it does, that is welcome, as their learning from 6th grade allows for a respectful understanding and acceptance of others. So, how do Ami and Shelly bring this out? Silence. Not mediation, but silence. Students learn how to quiet other voices in order to hear their own.

So, why go to all this trouble? Why not give them grades for work done and send them on their way? Because our staff know that Pathfinder students are something different. Our students leave with the confidence and skills to conquer their fears and shape their world. And they come back and tell us. One recent graduate (now a high school sophomore), not only moved on to high school but moved to another state – and she came back to say she moved into both new worlds with confidence that she directly attributed to the Rite of Passage Portfolio she had completed in 8th grade. She knew she was ready. Another family (a student and her father) saw Ami at the store, and pulled out their ‘Symbols of Success’ from one of the physical challenges completed on the culminating camping trip, remembering what a significant time that was. This stuff matters.

Pathfinder graduates quality students. They find their academic strength. They are physically prepared. They are social-emotionally balanced. And they know what they believe in. It is what I was looking for in my children’s education when I started looking at Kindergartens and I am glad it continues throughout the 9 years of education offered at Pathfinder K-8.

Audrey Kaplan, mother of 7th grader Alyssa, and Pathfinder graduate Theo

206-932-5560, ask4peace.now@gmail.com

Lord Byron wrote in Don Juan, “There is nothing so difficult as a beginning except perhaps an ending.” As an 8th grade teacher at a K-8 school, I have to agree. It is hard for our students to leave. Pathfinder is another home for them.

Nothing delights me more than the never-ending stream of former students who come back year after year to say hello, let us marvel over how tall they’ve grown, relay their triumphs and struggles, and remember how happy they were when they were here.

Ami Pendley, Snake Clan Teacher



Auction Countdown — 3 Weeks to Go!

March 15th is the date! The annual “Pathfinder” Auction is our biggest fundraiser and community event of the year – this year will be a lot of fun with a circus theme — Under the Big Top!

Our goal is to raise \$40,000 after expenses. Now’s the time to start thinking creatively about how **each of us** can help to make this year’s event the best ever! Here are a variety of ways that all can be involved – it doesn’t require a lot of money or time, just a commitment to put your talent and energy to use in the way you enjoy most.



Prior to Auction Day

- ◆ Buy your tickets and invite friends & family. The Auction Committee sent out several invitations to Pathfinder Alumni, but we probably missed some folks, so feel free to invite past Pathfinders to come and reconnect with old friends. Ticket forms are available at school or on the Auction Page of Pathfinder’s website, or contact Sheila Boyer (935-7375 or boyerst@comcast.net).
- ◆ Procure items – they are starting to come in and there’s some great stuff to be had! Of course more is better, so be creative, ask family/friends/service providers, think of unique items, services or experiences. Take a sneak-peek at the current list on the Auction web page!
- ◆ Bake or procure tantalizing desserts for the ever-popular and quite lucrative dessert auction (last year our collective sweet-teeth brought in \$2,000). Contact Joey Shearer-Harvey (935-5570; gagajoey@gmail.com) or Wendy Prowell (wbcprowell@comcast.net).
- ◆ Help organize the Art Walk (March 6th), previewing Clan Art up for sale at the auction. Leslie Cole is leading the effort (lesliehcole@msn.com).
- ◆ We have partnered with several other West Seattle schools to share ideas & volunteers. We still need folks to help with cashiering/check-out at Schmitz Park’s auction on March 1st (at the Hilton downtown) and Madison Middle School’s auction at the Hall at Fauntleroy on March 22. Your observations and ideas from that experience are extremely helpful as well. This is a great opportunity to learn as well as build our West Seattle school community! Let Co-Chair Akemi Hart know if you’re interested.

On Auction Day

- ◆ We need lots of helpers to make the space festive and well organized! This involves unloading all items, packaging and display of items for both the silent & live auctions, assuring all paperwork and forms are in order, decorating, and general set-up tasks. Contact Elliott Toler-Scott (tolerscott@comcast.net) if you can help (767-6087).
- ◆ At the auction, there are a lot of “behind the scenes” tasks that make the auction run smoothly. The Brockey Center staff handles all serving and clearing – we need to staff folks to be “bid runners” (capturing final bids on paper and bringing them to the bidder for signature), closing out silent auction tables, organizing items for take-home, etc.
- ◆ And, of course, break-down/clean-up duty!

We would love to receive your paid registration early this year, this helps enormously with planning and budgeting. If you are unable to attend the auction but would like to make a (fully tax-deductible) financial contribution, that is of course most welcome and counts toward our goal. Checks can be made payable to Pathfinder PTSA; please note “auction donation” in the memo.

Stay tuned for more information about affordable childcare for Auction Night. Please contact any of the following with your ideas or offers to help.

Auction Co-Chairs

Akemi Hart	makeupbyakemi@earthlink.net	850-5415
Lilith Lysistrada	lilithl@mac.com	932-9483

Committee Leads

Procurement	Tammy Kaiser & Mo Makein
Kid/Clan Art	Leslie Cole
Decorations	Naoko Barker
Cashiering	Brent Morgan
Database Entry	Leslie Peterson
Publicity	Laura Staley
Communications	Amy Daly-Donovan
Packaging & Display	Jennifer Kocir
Group/Staff Events	Janice Marshall
Thank You Process	Ruth Herman-Dunn
Ticket Sales/ Promotion	Darlene Williams

Reservations/ Site Liaison	Sheila Boyer
Day Of Set-Up Volunteer Coordinator	Elliott Toler-Scott
Catalog	Amy Daly Donovan
Clean-Up Coordinator	<i>Come on, you know it's fun!</i>
Dessert Auction	Joey Shearer-Harvey & Wendy Prowell
Centerpieces	<i>Can you lead this?</i>
Day After Audit <small>(review all receipts/accounting)</small>	<i>Are you good with numbers? We need you!</i>



Clan Art is underway for the Auction! Come to the Auction Art Preview Night on Thursday March 6th to see amazing art by amazing Pathfinder kids!

PTSA

PTSA Monthly Meeting

The Pathfinder PTSA had a spectacular meeting on January 29. Mike Donlin from Seattle Public Schools gave a terrific talk and answered questions about cyber-safety. He suggested that all parents be mindful of their children's activities and safety on-line and have open discussions about technology and its ill-use.

Afterwards, Akemi Hart encouraged everyone to donate to the auction as it is what funds most of the PTSA activities through the year. Finally Jen Giomi presented some exiting news on the Facilities Team's efforts to make the portables more attractive. You can read all about that on page 11.

Wreath Making 2007

Another successful wreath making season wrapped up with the final tallies reported! After expenses for ribbon, metal rings, printing, et cetera, the tremendous effort put in by so many folks resulted in **\$6853** to support Pathfinder's camping and other outdoor adventures!

This fundraiser has been a Pathfinder tradition for many years. It is one of the few that requires minimal investment of funds (greens are free!), but needs the dedication of many to make it work. Each wreath is handcrafted and is usually created on a chilly evening in the play court, with temporary lighting and heating rigged up to make a somewhat cozy space. We use an "honor system" for ordering, pick-up, and payment. We hope you will double-check your records to make sure that any outstanding funds due are sent in as soon as possible, as of press time there are still about 30-40 wreaths that were made and delivered but not paid for – that's \$600-800 that can make a real difference for a Clan's camping trip.

So many people worked hard this past November/December to make it all happen, but we must give special thanks to **Eric & Laurie Reinhardt** and **Brent & Mary Morgan** for taking the lead with endless hours of organizing, gathering, creating, setting up/tearing down, and overall good cheer. We also need to recognize:

- ◆ **Lynette Martin**, a wreath making powerhouse
- ◆ **Brenda Dean**, for keeping track of sales
- ◆ **Linda Bruton**, aspiring new wreath artist who hit her stride!
- ◆ All the folks who sold at the Farmers' Market
- ◆ All those who stepped out in faith and made wreaths for the first time
- ◆ **Darlene Williams**, for volunteering to help Mary & Brent Morgan take it on next year!



The next PTSA
General
Meeting will be
on
**Thursday,
March 27th,
from 6:45 pm
to 8:30 pm**

Facilities News

by Jennifer Giomi

Things continue to move regarding facility improvements. About 70 people returned the Facility Survey. Results showed that after a school map in the main hall and better signage for the portables the most popular improvement was painting the portables attractive colors. Color consultants from Authentic Home on California Avenue came out took pictures of the portables, walked around and then made some great color suggestions. Look for the color options to come out soon for community comment. Also, watch for the school map that will be put up in the front hall in the next 2 weeks!

The next most popular improvements were, in order: stain portable porches and railings, create some kind of covered outdoor space between portables, have clans create portable murals to hang on exterior of portables, and renovate existing raised garden beds on blacktop. There was also a positive response toward creating some kind of native plants garden.

Based on survey results, David and Jennifer of the PTSA facilities sub-committee met with Gretchen Decker of the District Self-Help Department on February 1st. She was very helpful and, on the spot, committed Seattle Works volunteers (up to 30) for a work party at Pathfinder on Saturday, May 10th. This day will be a great opportunity for Pathfinder to get some work done! Yeah! The plan at the moment is to paint the portables if the weather cooperates and it doesn't rain. In case of rain, the facilities committee is coming up with back up plans to clean-up the grounds and maybe do some inside projects. Please look for more information regarding this great day!!! We'll need everyone's help.

In addition, a landscape designer from Silverleaf Landscape came out to Pathfinder last weekend and in the next weeks will be creating (pro bono) several different designs for a "plaza/covered outdoor space" between the portables.

If you would like to get involved in the facility improvements on a planning level or have any more ideas for improvements, please contact Jennifer Giomi 937-2247 or jgiomi@comcast.net. We'd love your input and energy!

Culture

Primitive flight of human soul catching light on earthly shoal.

Wayward friend who comes and goes, marches forth from shore to shore.

Handed down from tribe to city, black feet, red shirt, infinity.

Stories told to secure a place in a future of buildings laced

Only now swept away without a trace.

Chris Cain, 2/7/08

Father Clan



A Conversation with Dr. Goodloe-Johnson

(continued from page 5)

in the school, the HVAC system as well, and the water line will be replaced also. The planning for that will occur in spring '08.

Beth Bakeman No plans to do anything with the portables?

Bridget Chandler [Director of Public Affairs] That I don't know. I can go back to ask Fred Stephens in Facilities... What I would emphasize now is that the Facilities Master Planning process is an important way for people to weigh in and say, "Be sure you are thinking about our school, these are some of the needs we see on a daily basis."

What is your vision for the alternative schools in the Seattle Public School District in the coming years? Do you see their role / definition / numbers changing?

I haven't visited all of the schools yet. And again alternative schools to me are about choice. And my vision is about duplicating success and making sure we close the gap and creating quality all throughout the system... Alternative schools are part of what we offer in Seattle Public Schools, so they are part of the same vision I have for all Seattle schools.

Do you see the numbers of K-8s in our district increasing, decreasing or staying the same? And why?

Too early to tell... Certainly K-8 provides one less transition and most parents really like that... Grade configuration decisions are tied in with facilities plans, academic vision and demographic studies... Those are all the array of components and issues we have to look at...

At some schools, the new weighted staffing formula may result in a significant loss of staff. What are the plans for supporting schools in the transition from weighted student to weighted staffing funding?

First of all, I don't know any school that's losing significant staff. We have principals that work with instructional directors... There's an opportunity to request a waiver or ask for mitigation funds... it's really just the first step in the transition to a new system.

Communication

The communication style of some district staff has, in the past, been described as a "siege mentality", in which the most frequent response to questions was to either erect larger barriers to communication or hide behind existing ones. What are you doing to improve communication between the district, its families, and the larger community?

That is one of our focus areas this year. We are creating an engagement strategy that really sets up clearly how we engage parents. The strategic plan is going to be our first big kickoff to that process... It's about two-way communication... having a website where you can access information... about where community meetings are held, how we are gathering information, what do the peer reviews say so far, what is the timeline for the process, who will take input... and it's not just community meetings. There will be surveys and there will be lots of ways to outreach.

Another piece is that Bernardo Ruiz runs the Family Advisory Committee and is doing lots of outreach as it relates to engaging our families, supporting our families, and making sure we are having two-way communication...



A copy of this newsletter can be found on the News & Events page of the Pathfinder K-8 website at

<http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/pathfinder/news.html>

It's a culture shift for sure... Part of my premise is that we have to be transparent, we have to be open, we have to be honest...

...What I try to always tell people is you get back to people and tell them what you know and what steps you need to take to get the information or if you know where they can find the information, do that.

...We still have a lot of work to do and we are working on it and hopefully folks will see that change.

If parents or others have questions or suggestions for you or the district, how can they best communicate them?

Send an e-mail to superintendent@seattleschools.org or talk with me or district staff at community meetings or call Customer Service at the Stanford Center.



Dental Care for Kids in King County

Paula Murray, Family Support Worker

The KC KIDS program provides dental care coverage, at no cost, to children who qualify. You are likely to be eligible if:

- ◆ You live in King County, Washington
- ◆ Your children are under the age of 20.
- ◆ Your income meets our program guidelines.
- ◆ Your children have no other dental coverage.

The KC KIDS program runs from January 1 to December 31, 2008. In January 2009, families will need to apply for benefits through the state of Washington.

KC KIDS is a King County children's oral health pilot program, supported by a \$1 Million gift from Washington Dental Service (WDS) in partnership with King County Executive Ron Sims' Children's Health Initiative.

To learn more visit our website at www.kckidsdental.org or call (866)-839-9466 Monday to Friday, 6 am to 6 pm.



Math Night an Exponentially Huge Success

by Heidi Jindrich

The Pathfinder Math Night on Friday, January 25th was well-attended and fun, as usual. Approximately 150-200 Pathfinder students and family members came to enjoy a sumptuous spaghetti feast, while playing a wide variety of math games from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

This was the culminating festivity of a day in which clans in rotation visited the game-bedecked cafeteria, to peruse and try out almost innumerable games involving math skills.

As it wasn't a school night, students at Math Night seemed especially free to abandon their scheduling worries and devote themselves to fiercely pitched battles of chess, Racko, Blokus, Connect 4, and Apples To Apples, among many other math-related games.

And what better way to spend a Friday night with the most important people in your life, than enjoying a delicious free dinner and thought-provoking, engaging entertainment, thanks to the mutual efforts of Pathfinder and the Pathfinder PTSA?

Several attendees tried to learn the secret that made the dinner of spaghetti (sauceless, meatless, or with meatballs), salad, and bread so especially delicious, but **Terry Cochran** the Pathfinder Kitchen Queen was not about to spill the spaghetti noodles. I can only say, it has something to do with fractions!

A heaping plateful of thanks to **Elliott Toler-Scott** (Owl Clan), **Eric Baer** (Frog Clan), and **Lynette Martin** (Owl Clan) for doing a fabulous set up; to **Elliott, Lynette, Heather Floyd** (Bat Clan), **Julie Masonsmith** (Owl Clan), and **Wendy Nathan** (Blue Heron Clan) for being our most elegant servers; and to the many hands afterward who helped clear away tables.

Also, thanks to the multitude of anonymous donors without whose generous support many of our activities could never happen.

I especially want to extend my appreciation to the multitude of families who came to participate. Without you, nothing happens. And... we have a lot of leftovers.

If you see **Lisa DeBurle** (teacher, Frog Clan), please tell her how awesome she is for planning and promoting this event every year.

PTSA (continued from page 10)

Fundraising at Pathfinder

Dear Families,

The PTSA wants YOU to be a part of Pathfinder school fundraising.

At the end of each year, a budget for the upcoming year is submitted and approved. The **2007-2008 working budget is \$81,000**. A detailed listing of what these funds go toward can be seen on the web-site at: <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/pathfinder/PDF/2007-08%20Budget.pdf> or by contacting any PTSA officer. The following are but a few of the budgeted items:

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|---|----------------------------------|
| ♦ \$10,000 tutoring | \$3,500 school assemblies |
| ♦ \$15,000 culture/native studies/artist in residence | \$4,000 professional development |
| ♦ \$4,000 library | \$3,580 art |
| ♦ \$1,500 middle school science | |

Can you imagine any one of the above programs not existing?

To date **\$13,856 has been raised** through wreath making, gift wrap, original art works, spirit gear, box tops, and escript.

The bulk of our funds come in through the school auction, budgeted to raise \$47,000. Lastly, a 'to be determined' fundraiser of \$7,000 was included in the 2007-2008 budget.

Please consider supporting one or more fundraiser a year, either monetarily and/or by volunteering. Many hands make light work, as the saying goes. If we all participate in some small way, our budget goals can be met and our programs easily funded.

Pathfinder PTSA is continually looking for fundraising ideas that combine fun, community interest and involvement. Do you have an idea?! Please let us know. Drop the PTSA a note in the school office.

Editor's Blurb

Submission Timeline & Guidelines

The next issue of *The Compass* will be published and sent home on **Friday, March 21st**. Please submit your writing no later than **Monday, March 17th**. There are no restrictions on length, but the work may be edited, as necessary, to fit into available space.

Contact Information

Send your feedback, suggestions, and submissions to:

Beth Bakeman, bbakeman@comcast.net, 206-605-1327

Pathfinder K-8 Calendar

Friday, February 29th

Water Hall will be riding Metro all day interviewing people about Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Monday, March 3rd

Earth Hall storyteller in residence

Wednesday, March 5th

Water Hall to Seattle Symphony,
9:30 am - 12:30 pm

2-Hour Early Dismissal, 1:15 pm

Saturday, March 15th

Pathfinder Auction—Under the Big Top!, 5 pm
at South Seattle Community College's Brockey
Center

Friday, March 21st

No School for Students — Professional
Development Day for Teachers

Monday, March 31st to Friday, April 4th

No School — Spring Break

Monday, April 14th to Friday, May 2nd

WASL Testing Window

Wednesday, May 21st

2-Hour Early Dismissal, 1:15 pm

Monday, May 26th

No School — Memorial Day Holiday

Tuesday, June 17th

Last Day for Students

1-Hour Early Dismissal, 2:15 pm

Don't miss the Pathfinder Auction
—Under the Big Top!

Saturday, March 15th, 5 pm at the Brockey
Center at South Seattle Community College

Details on page 8.



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www.seattleschools.org/schools/pathfinder/

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