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BobcatBULLETIN www.blackwellptsa.org

February/March 2004

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Recently, while attending a charity fundraiser, the MC asked if we had all been asked in the past to "give until it hurts". Then he commented that at this particular event they wanted everyone to "give until it feels good!" I thought a lot about what that request meant, and I wondered how often we think of giving for our own benefit. Do we ever serve others to actually help ourselves?

Here at Blackwell, parents can be found giving in numerous ways. The culture of our school is such that teachers welcome classroom volunteers, parent room leaders, field trip chaperones and party organizers. I would venture to guess that working in your child's classroom is the most popular form of volunteerism because it gives parents an opportunity to observe the teaching style of their child's teacher. You can witness your child interacting with other children, and spend additional time with your child that you don't always get during the week.

A close second would probably include the acts of service we offer in our own homes by reading together, helping with homework, science projects and creating an environment in which to foster learning. When we do so at home, we affect our own children specifically. When we volunteer in the classroom, however, we help 30 children at once. When you attend PTSA meetings, chair a committee, or serve on the PTSA Board, you impact the entire student body and learning community at Blackwell.

At this time of year, the newly elected nominating committee, chaired by Barbara Coyner, will begin their search for next year's board and committee chairs to serve the students of Blackwell. I would humbly request that you continue to share your time, talents and skills with your children and their classes, but also give thought to the impact that you can have on the entire school by volunteering in a broader capacity. Soon the nominating committee and this year's board will be calling on prospective members to indicate their areas of interest for volunteer service, and in order to compile a parent volunteer database that allows the PTSA, teachers and staff to contact interested parents when needed. Please take the time to share with us how you'd like to help at Blackwell, where you can serve and how you can "give until it feels good!"

While writing to you, I am reminded of the research I have seen demonstrating that when parents are involved at school, attendance improves, behavior improves, and students experience more success with class work and on standardized tests. When I realize that my time and talents that are given to the school in service can make a difference, that giving doesn't hurt at all. It feels extremely good!

Please contact Barbara Coyner to nominate yourself or others for next year's PTSA Board and Chairs. Thank you for all you do to continually serve your children, Blackwell and the community here in Sammamish!

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Blackwell PTSA President

PRINCIPALS' MESSAGE

Greetings from all of us from here at Blackwell Elementary School. Although the days are still chilly and damp outside, inside the classrooms are filled with warmth generated by groups of students working hard to achieve academic success. As always, we really appreciate the constant support that is one of the hallmarks of this wonderful elementary school. As we sit here tonight, we are still uncertain as to the possible recommendations of the LWSD Boundary Review Committee. We realize that adjustments to school attendance boundaries may bring significant change to our learning community. We remain confident, however, that any change will result in an improved learning environment for all children. We thank you for your patience throughout this process and appreciate the thoughtful, respectful input you have provided. In the event that students are assigned to another school, we are determined to make the transition as smooth as possible. In the meantime, it is important that we continue to work together to help our students stay focused on their studies.

Over the last few weeks, the entire staff has been dedicating time and effort to promoting kind and respectful behavior among our students. It is common during this time of the year when children have become familiar with each other and are being stretched to reach new developmental levels, that we see increased incidence of teasing and bullying. "Bullying" is another name for harassment and it can be physical or verbal. It includes persistent threatening, teasing, ridicule or talking about another person in an unkind way. Here are strategies we encourage children to practice using if they feel that they are being bullied:

1. Try to avoid the bully as much as possible.
2. Use humor to deflect the bully's words.
3. Tell an adult what is going on and ask for help.
4. Ask the bully to stop and then walk away.
5. Let the bully know how you feel.
6. Remind yourself that what the bully is saying is not about you but about power and control.
7. Don't give the bully any attention when he or she is acting this way.



We take bullying and teasing very seriously here at Blackwell. We work very hard to create a positive school environment for all children. Your help and support reinforcing the positive behaviors we expect of our students is appreciated. As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if there is anything that we can do to help your student here at Blackwell Elementary.

Jeff DeSalle *Debby Hackbarth*

PTSA PARENT EDUCATION NIGHT

Thursday, February 26 – Body Image and How Societal Influences Affect Children's Self-Perception, 6:30-8:30pm, Elizabeth Blackwell Elementary School

The Elizabeth Blackwell Elementary PTSA invites all community parents to an educational presentation and discussion during **Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2004**. Bring your elementary-aged children to enjoy "Beauty As We Read It." Local teens will read positive body image-specific books to children.

TYPE TO LEARN

Keyboarding is an essential skill for students to be successful. At Blackwell, we have a site license for "Type to Learn" and many students utilize this program at school. However, there is often not enough time in the school day for students to use a computer for practice. Keyboarding is something that can easily be worked on at home, is an appropriate use of "homework" time (especially in grades 3 and up) and something that will benefit students their whole lives. The Blackwell Technology team, with the support of our PSTA, is working with Scholastic to offer an opportunity to purchase a home version of Type-to-Learn.

The Scholastic "Software Club" flyers for Type to Learn 3 (Ages 8 - up) and Type to Learn Jr. (Ages 5 - 7) will go home on February 13th. The cost of both programs is \$14.95, which is \$5 less than the retail price. All orders for software programs need to be **returned to the Library by March 1st. Checks should be made payable to Scholastic Inc.** Please be sure to indicate your child's name and classroom teacher's name on the order form. (Other software programs may be ordered, as well.) Contact **Kathy Pazaski**, Teacher-Librarian, if you have any questions. Thank you!



APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE FOR BLACKWELL PTSA SPECIAL GRANT

If you have an idea for enriching the classrooms and benefiting our wonderful students, the PTSA would love to hear from you! Whether its flashcards or books, bookshelves or computer desks, playground equipment or anything else, we welcome your ideas and value your input.

The 2003/2004 PTSA board plans to compile all the applications we receive and award funds to as many as we can as funds are available. The applications we are not funding this year will be passed along to next year's board. Our intent is, on an on going basis, to fund as many applications as possible as additional funds become available. This process may take a few years, it may take five, but it will be worth it if we can provide teachers, staff members and students with things they really want and need. Deadline for completed applications is **March 1, 2004**. For complete details on the application and criteria for funds being awarded, please stop by the office and pick up one of the application forms. Teachers, staff members, parents and students are encouraged to submit their ideas through this Special Grant process. Good Luck to everyone!

PTSA MEMBERSHIP—547 AND GROWING!

Don't miss out! One of our PTSA goals this year is 100% membership - that is one member for each child at Blackwell. So far 547 of our parents and staff have joined the PTSA. Yes, it's wonderful, but it's not enough! We need 88 more members to meet our goal. If you have not yet joined, please fill out the form below and send it in today. Each member will receive a Student Directory.

\$10 Individual

\$18 Couple

Member Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Child's Name/Teacher: _____

PTA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Focus Day Event

On Thursday, February 12, PTA members will come together in Olympia to speak face to face with our lawmakers about issues that affect the health, safety, welfare, education and well being of the 1.5 million children in our state. Parents, students, grandparents, and school administrators have set appointments to make their voices heard and discuss the issues with their senators and representatives.

NEW—WA State PTA Legislative Action Center Online!

You can immediately advocate for kids through a new online "Legislative Action Center." Check the Center out at www.capwiz.com/wastatepta. If you have not signed up to receive "calls to action" through the WSPTA's action alert system, just e-mail Jean Carpenter jcarpenter@wastatepta.org to be included. Legislative session is upon us, with many big decisions looming that could hurt or help children and families. NOTE: The "Legislative Action Center" provides a collective overview and links to everything associated with legislative activity in Olympia, whereas the "Legislative Action Alert" is a broadcast (one-way) listserv that sends out requests for action on PTA legislative issues.

Get Connected

There are several ways you can stay updated on legislative activity and track the progress of bills of interest. Following are a few online resources:

- **WA State PTA's "Grassroots Connection"**

Grassroots Connection is a weekly bulletin from the Government Relations office of WSPTA. It is designed to provide information that will increase WSPTA member involvement in the legislative process. With the start of the legislative session, there will be many bills, hearings, meetings, and demonstrations around issues of importance to Washington State PTA. Mary Kenfield, our lobbyist, will be updating members through the *Grassroots Connection*, a weekly publication. The *Grassroots Connection* will include:

1. Review of the previous week in Olympia;
2. Status of priority legislation;
3. List of committee hearings for the upcoming week;
4. Two or three possible action items;
5. Advocacy information (resources, links, meetings/trainings, etc.)

To sign-up for the update, please see our website at <http://www.wastatepta.org/programs/Legislation/listservs/grassroots.htm>

- **Washington State Legislature Online**

Find out who represents you, read entire text of bills, track daily activity, visit the kids page, and contact your legislator at this comprehensive site: www.leg.wa.gov.

- **Washington Votes.org**

Click <http://www.washingtonvotes.org> to track bills and for information on what the legislature is doing. Every step of the 2004 Legislative Session will be documented by WashingtonVotes.org, a revolutionary website that provides concise, plain-English, objective descriptions of every bill, amendment and vote of the Washington legislature. The site's searchable electronic database, by issue or bill number, allows users to learn about every action of the legislature within 24 hours of its occurrence.

- **TVW**

Streaming video and audio of legislative hearings and sessions are often available at www.tvw.org. There are many hearings broadcast live on the internet, and others archived so that they are available to interested folks.

PTA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE *CONTINUED*

NEW—5th District Representative

To all of you in the 5th District. Cheryl Pflug is being replaced by Jay Rodne. His info is below. Please update your contact information.

Rep. Jay Rodne
 441 John L. O'Brien Building
 P.O. Box 40600
 Olympia, WA 98504-0600
 (360) 786-7852
 E-mail: rodne_ja@leg.wa.gov



Washington State PTA is a non-partisan advocacy group, which does not endorse a political party or individual candidates. PTA advocacy efforts are focused on issues submitted by membership and prioritized annually at Legislative Assembly in October. To see the 2004 Legislative Platform, 2004 Legislative Guiding Principles, issue papers, and other helpful information, please visit the Washington State PTA website at www.wastatepta.org.

Heather Christensen, Legislative Chair

WHO REPRESENTS YOU?

Washington State Legislators	
5th DISTRICT	45th DISTRICT
Sen. Dino Rossi (R) 109A Irving R. Newhouse Building P.O. Box 40405 Olympia, WA 98504-0405 (360) 786-7608 E-mail: rossi_di@leg.wa.gov	Sen. Bill Finkbeiner (R) P.O. Box 40445 Olympia, WA 98504-0445 (360) 786-7672 E-mail: finkbein_bi@leg.wa.gov
Rep. Glenn Anderson (R) (Republican Floor Leader) P.O. Box 40600 417 John L. O'Brien Bldg. Olympia, WA 98504-0600 (360) 786-7876 E-mail: anderson_gl@leg.wa.gov	Rep. Toby Nixon (R) P.O. Box 40600 437 John L. O'Brien Bldg. Olympia, WA 98504-0600 (360) 786-7878 E-mail: nixon_to@leg.wa.gov
Rep. Jay Rodne 441 John L. O'Brien Building P.O. Box 40600 Olympia, WA 98504-0600 (360) 786-7852 E-mail: rodne_ja@leg.wa.gov	Rep. Laura Ruderman (D) P.O. Box 40600 Mod 1 Building - Rm.111 Olympia, WA 98504-0600 (360) 786-7822 E-mail: ruderman_la@leg.wa.gov

Lake Washington School District Board of Directors		
Nancy Bernard, President	District 3	(425) 820-2007
Douglas Eglinton, Vice President	District 4	(425) 868-7218
Robert Hughes	District 2	(425) 828-6340
Ravi Shahani	District 5	(425) 703-5468
Jackie Pendergrass	District 1	(425) 821-1157
Each board member represents all students and schools.		

Web Addresses	
Lake Washington School District	www.lkwash.wednet.edu
Washington State PTA	www.wastatepta.org
Washington State Legislature	www.leg.wa.gov





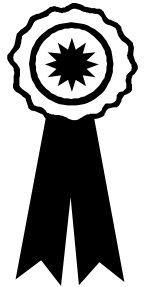
GOLDEN PENCIL SHARING

Bobcat congratulations to authors who shared their literary works with the Blackwell community on January 16, 2004! Write on!

Katie Rolls, Soren Christensen, Abby Gilham, Christian Cinderella, Kyle Suver, Reagan McCauley, Joe Longcore, Jakob Grasst, Mitchell Neale, Nicole Dankert, Ben Kelleran, Noah Curtis, Christian Epperson, Erica Yock, Brendan Greenheck, Joey Park, Allie Jost, Elle Sparks, Scott Seymoure, Melissa Jung, Lauren Ryan, Stephen Coyner, Rebecca Fabian, Ben Trowbridge, Katie Litton, Rylie Sutton, Forrest Ryan, Annabella Zenan, Kate Pullen, Neesha Ajmera, Ashley McCutcheon and Aubrey Butler

BLACKWELL STUDENTS WIN TOP HONORS AT DISTRICT REFLECTIONS

Blackwell was well represented this year among the students placing at the school district level (competing against all the other schools in the LWSD). We had five first and second place winners that will go on to compete at the state level! They are, Nick Musolino for his first place win in Primary Literature, and first place went to Delaney Ryan for her Primary Visual Art entry. Michele Dusche received second place for her Intermediate Musical Composition, Nicole Benjamin got second place for her Intermediate Photography entry and Tyler Yen placed second in Primary Visual Arts. Good luck to them at State! Congratulations to Honorable Mention winners Timothy Sisneros for his Intermediate Photography piece and to Nathan Allen for his Visual Art entry. We are very proud of all the students who entered the Reflections competition this year and want to encourage them to continue being creative!



BLACKWELL ELEMENTARY PTSA FUN RUN/WALK VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

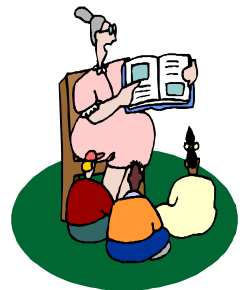
We are looking for several open positions to help out at this years event. The fun run/walk will be happening on April 2nd at 12:30 p.m. and we'll need several volunteers that day but need some in the planning phase as well. If you would like to help out for this event in any capacity, please contact **Brad Sutton** @ 425.836.9636 or suttonbrad@hotmail.com.

CLASS PICTURES

Class Pictures will be taken on Wednesday, March 3rd! Order forms will be sent home the week before. Please contact **Tara Erickson** at 836-1200 with any questions.

AUTHOR VISITS BLACKWELL

On **February 11th** Tammy and Mathew Bronson will be visiting to talk about their books and the writing process. **Tammy Carter Bronson** is the author of *Kaleidonotes*, *Tiny Snail*, and *Polliwog*. Blackwell is very excited to have these two share with us how their love of a hobby turned into a career of writing books. Flyers have already gone home to return for Autographed copies of her books. Book signings will take place after school.



2003-2004 PTSA & SCHOOL CALENDAR



February	16 No School—Presidents' Day	May	WSPTA State Convention
	17—20 No School—Midwinter Break		"Super Sitters" Class
March	3 Class Pictures		7 Half Day for students—AED
	4 PTSA LWSD Council Meeting		12 PTSA Board Meeting—old/new members (evening meeting)
	5 Half Day for students—PDD		14 PTSA LWSD Council Meeting
	10 PTSA Board Meeting		20 Skate King Family Night, 6:00—8:00 pm.
	19 No School for students—Grading Day for staff		28 No School for students—PDD & AED
	31 Half Day for students—Optional Conferences		31 No School—Memorial Day
	31 April/May "Bobcat Bulletin" news due	June	3 PTSA LWSD Council Meeting
April	1 Half Day for students—Optional Conferences		4 PTSA Volunteer Recognition
	1 PTSA LWSD Council Meeting		9 PTSA Board Meeting (new members attend)
	2 Half Day for students—PDD		9 June "Bobcat Bulletin" news due
	7 PTSA Board Meeting		24 Half Day for students—Last day of school
	12—16 No School—Spring Break		
	22 PTSA General Membership Meeting		

2003-2004 PTSA Board

President	Jayne Cadrez	836-1114	jayneecadrez@hotmail.com
Executive Vice Pres.	Sonja Michalik	868-3101	sonja.al@verizon.net
VP Ways & Means	Debra Kelly	868-0593	bradanddebbie@comcast.net
VP Ways & Means	Kate Samuelson	898-0679	marknkate@aol.com
VP Communications	Robyn Seymoure	836-4715	robynls@comcast.net
VP Curriculum	Julie Henderson	836-2262	GJHEN5@msn.com
Legislation	Heather Christensen	836-4068	heather_christensen@yahoo.com
Community Liaison	Marilyn Dusche	836-4757	MDDusche@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Kim Forrest	836-8430	kim@forrest.cc
Secretary	Melanie Shore	836-4001	mshore22@attbi.com