

# PUP PRESS



Brought to you by the Thurgood Marshall Elementary PTA

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**Principal  
Katie May**

## UNDERSTANDING THE GRADING SYSTEM

Progress reports will be sent home this Friday. In talking to parents about report cards over the past few years, I have noticed that as clear as teachers feel they are being in assigning grades and comments, there can still be some confusion. This is our first time using the new Elementary Progress Report – as with anything new, we may notice some kinks to be worked out. You are always welcome to talk to me or to your child’s teachers about questions you have, and I thought I would also address our system of grading here.

We measure the academic benchmarks on our report cards by using a scale of 1-4. This reflects your child’s progress towards specific grade level standards. The scale is as follows:

- 1- Below performance expectations for this time
- 2- Approaching performance expectations for this time
- 3- Meeting performance expectations for this time
- 4- Exceeding performance expectations for this time

Standards based grading is different from traditional grades of “A”, “B”, “C”, etc. that most parents received growing up. The numbers 1-4 do not equate to traditional grades (i.e., a “4” does not equal an “A”). They are not an average of work that a student has done over the first trimester. If a student really struggled with a concept at the beginning of the year and earned scores of mostly “1”s, but had demonstrated consistent grade-level understanding by the end of the first trimester (earning a “3”), that child would **not** receive an average of the “1”s and “3”s equal to a “2.” She or he would receive a “3” by being able to meet the standard. Likewise, a child who was able to meet the standard early in the trimester and continued to do grade-level appropriate work by the end of the trimester would also receive a “3.” The purpose of standards-based grading is not to compare your child to other children, but rather to give you information about how your child is progressing towards the expected grade-level skills.

**Attendance** – Please pay special attention to the attendance shown on your child’s report card. We know that parents are working hard to be sure that their students come to school on time each and every day. If you are noticing a large number of tardies or absences, please talk to your child’s teachers so that we can develop a plan to support your child. Learning begins the moment your child enters the classroom at 9:30 am and continues until our 3:40 pm dismissal. We want your child to benefit from all that happens here!

Equally important to coming on time each day is making sure that your child has a ride home at 3:40 pm (or the end of an after-school activity) each day. We have had an increasing number of students not picked up on time at the end of the day. It is anxiety producing for children to not know who will be picking them up or when they will be picked up. Our school staff is very committed with meetings and other work after school, and they are not able to provide additional care for your child after hours. Please make sure you have a plan in place for your child.

## Fair Raises \$1,500, Adds Books to Library, Classrooms

Due to the great support of student and parent shoppers, **over \$1,500** is now available for our library budget. Additionally, the fair brought **over \$1,000 worth of books for the library**, as well as **a book for each teacher’s classroom library**, a book for each student in the Peace Academy, and books for more than 60 needy students.

Ms. Hudson and Thurgood Marshall especially appreciate all the volunteers who helped out with counting pennies, ringing up books, setting up tables and restocking books. Not to mention all those patient volunteers who chipped in money for kids who were short...it takes a “village” to run a book fair. Special thanks to **Karen Sampson Liu** who coordinates this event. She was in the Library every day making sure that the Book Fair ran smoothly.

## EVENT CALENDAR

**Fri., Dec. 12**

**Pajama Day!** Students can wear PJs to school!

Washington Middle School Tour

7:50-9:15 am at WMS

**Tues., Dec. 16**

Family & Community Engagement Potluck

6:30-7:30 pm in Cafeteria

**Mon., Dec. 22 – Fri., Jan. 2**

Winter Break—No School



**ALL MONTH LONG**

Annual Fund Winter Challenge Match

**Wed., Jan. 7**

Principal Coffee w/Dr. Stephan Blanford

## TUTU’S PANTRY

**Dec. 15:** 1st-Grade Donations

## Pajama Day Tomorrow

In case you haven’t heard...this Friday is Pajama Day! Students can come to school dressed in pajamas and can bring a small blanket or stuffed animal that can fit in a cubby. Be sure students wear shoes appropriate for PE and recess and have a warm coat for outdoor play.

## Family Engagement Potluck

All are welcome to attend a **dessert potluck and meeting** next **Tues., Dec. 16** from 6:30-7:30 pm in the Cafeteria to kick off the action plans that came out of the CPPS Leadership Workshop last month. A diverse group of TM parents will be looking at how to increase parent involvement, create gathering places for parents, and foster communication and connections between families.

To meet other families and share ideas, please join us! Please bring a dessert to share; children are welcome.

## PTA Email Issues

We are sorry to report that email messages sent since Dec. 3 to the PTA’s [Tmlink.org](http://Tmlink.org) addresses may not have been delivered. If you sent a message but didn’t receive a reply, we apologize and ask that you resend directly to one of the following personal addresses:

**Annual Giving:**

Jenny Ott, [jennyhannaott@gmail.com](mailto:jennyhannaott@gmail.com)

**All other PTA matters:**

Tasha Irvine, [tsoudah@seanet.com](mailto:tsoudah@seanet.com)

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## Annual Fund Corner – Winter Challenge Match

**Our Winter Challenge Match is going strong!** We are so inspired by the generous response to **#GivingTuesday**, a national day of giving when we launched the Annual Giving Fund Winter Challenge Match. Thanks to over a dozen families who donated so far, we are getting close to our \$10,000 challenge match goal.

### Make your tax-deductible gift by Dec. 31 to be counted in the Winter Challenge Match.

- Every gift, of any amount, makes a difference.
- Return your green donation form by mail or to the office.
- Or, give online at [www.tmlink.org](http://www.tmlink.org).
- Many local companies offer matching funds - check with your employer.

**Questions?** Contact Annual Giving Co-Chair Jenny Ott: [jennyhannaott@gmail.com](mailto:jennyhannaott@gmail.com).

Your gift helps provide enriching activities and supportive programs that touch every student, every day. Thank you for your support!

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## Pancake Breakfast & Art Walk – Sat., Jan 24

The Pancake Breakfast and Art Walk is a favorite school event, held this year from 8:30-10:30 am in our Cafeteria on Jan. 24. All families are welcome to come enjoy pancakes and other breakfast treats, and see students' art throughout the school. Thanks to art teacher Ms. Zirngible for helping us continue the Art Walk.

### Pancake Breakfast Help!

Two 5th-grade parents have offered to help organize this year, but we need a couple of parents of younger students to have continuity for future years. If you are able to help organize this year's event and keep this tradition alive, email Jen Ellis: [jenniferellis.206@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferellis.206@gmail.com).



We could also use some **helping hands** before, during, and after the event. Join the festivities and help if you can: there are many ways to help. You can flip pancakes, serve food, collect food donations, pick up supplies, hang art, and more.

To volunteer, sign up at [www.bit.ly/TMpancake15](http://www.bit.ly/TMpancake15)

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## Students Start “Hour of Code” Program

Third, fourth and fifth-grade students are participating in the **Hour of Code** program this week and will have the opportunity to be introduced to “coding” during their library time this week.

Ms. Hudson is using the following websites:

- Official Hour of Code Site: [www.hourofcode.com/us](http://www.hourofcode.com/us)
- Touch Develop: [www.touchdevelop.com/hourofcode2](http://www.touchdevelop.com/hourofcode2)
- Hopscotch (for iPads): [www.gethopscotch.com/](http://www.gethopscotch.com/)

Ms. Hudson reported that the activities have offered a fun way to use the school's new iPads and generate interest in computing.

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## Ms. Shaw to Teach in Room 106

**Ms. Alex Shaw** will replace Ms. Goldner as a Room 106 PEACE Academy teacher on Jan. 5.

In addition to being a student teacher for Mary MacDonald's 4th-grade class at Thurgood Marshall, Ms. Shaw also completed a special education practicum at Northgate Elementary. Ms. Shaw will complete the requirements for her bachelor's degree in both elementary and special education this month. Ms. May and the rest of the staff are excited to add her to our team!

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## Literacy Tutors Wanted for K/1 Students

TM will be hosting a short informational meeting on Thurs., Jan. 8 from 8:45-9:15 am for parents/community members interested in **tutoring kindergarten and 1st-grade students in literacy**.

We will give you all the training and information you need; come meet the teachers and learn how you can help. PTA volunteers will provide supervision for children during the meeting. Please RSVP to Ms. Patu at [hjpatu@seattleschools.org](mailto:hjpatu@seattleschools.org).

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## Two Chances to Meet Dr. Stephan Blanford

Dr. Stephan Blanford, the School Board member representing TM's neighborhood, will be at next month's Principal Coffee on Wed., Jan. 7.

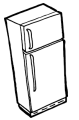


Dr. Blanford is also having a community meeting later this month, from 10-11:30 am, Saturday, Dec. 20, at Douglass-Truth Library, 2300 E Yesler Way. For more information, see [www.bit.ly/blanford](http://www.bit.ly/blanford)

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## TM Briefs

**Book Exchange Next Week:** All students will be allowed to pick a free book next week from the book exchange tables in the Library (during library time and recess). Students may bring additional books to trade—as many chapter books as they'd like but are limited to only two picture books to trade. Students will receive a ticket for each book that they bring and can trade their tickets for books.



**Fridge Needed:** TM is in need of a refrigerator for PEACE Academy classroom 106. If you have a gently used refrigerator to donate, please mail [kjmay1@seattleschools.org](mailto:kjmay1@seattleschools.org).

**Know How to Weld?** 2nd-grade teacher Ms. Kohls can use some help repairing the big red easel in her classroom. If you can help, please e-mail Ms. Kohls at [tlkohls@seattleschools.org](mailto:tlkohls@seattleschools.org).



**Another TM Chess Win!** Congratulations to the TM Chess Club for winning **second place** in the Grades 4-6 Team category of the Bryant Fall Classic on Dec. 6.



Participating players were: **Cynthia Chan, Graham Cobden, Kyle Cobden, Rohan Kannan, Andrew Nakamoto, Aiden Taylor, Kallen Young and Nicholas Ng (6th grader)**. Andrew and Nicholas qualified for the Washington State Chess Championship in Spokane on April 25, 2015. **Go Chess Bull Pups!**

**Many Items in Lost and Found:** Please check the Lost and Found in the hallway next to the Gym for any items you are missing. Items that remain will be donated during winter break.