Of Campfires & ‘Challenge Zones’

Students experience many field trips during their Thurgood Marshall education. But the one that most students – and chaperones – will remember for a long time is the annual 5th-grade stay at Camp Orkila on Orcas Island. This was my third year, and it was definitely the best so far! My highlight of the three days earlier this month was finally mustering up the courage to ride the zipline. And the only reason I could step off that very high platform was the encouragement and support of students. There is something so special about having children cheer you on. The group of kids eagerly waiting and cheering me on at the landing platform also gave me confidence in what I’m doing every day here at TM.

In addition to attempting acts of courage with the kids, I also watched skits by campfire, covered many children in rain ponchos, encouraged kids to get into their “challenge zones,” and took a marvelous beach walk with Mrs. Kierstead and students. The relevant and immediate integration of knowledge with experience is the stuff of dreamy pedagogical goals. I began to think about other field trips where I’ve witnessed and assisted that process: 3rd-graders realizing that Chinatown is just as much a part of their city as their own neighborhood; 4th-graders at the Seattle Art Museum making origami that integrated the colors and shapes of the Pacific Northwest; 2nd-graders at the Seattle Aquarium taking notes about their preferred animal so they could later write “aquarium all-about.”

While planning field trips is often tedious and time consuming, it is usually worth the extra efforts. Students experience things together for the first time. They see one another move around the world – which casts well-known friends and less-known peers in different lights. Kids witness their teachers learning and trying new things. I think all of the parent chaperones on our Orkila trip would also claim to have similar new understandings of their own kids and teachers.

Continued on Page 2

Chess Bullpups Triumph in Tri-Cities Tourney

TM had a great time at the State Elementary Chess Championship in the Tri-Cities on April 21, including a 14th-place finish (out of 177 teams) in the Grades 4-6 Division.

Team members on the trip were Selina Cheng (Gr. K), Frederick Barr (Gr. 2), Soren Liden, Vinayek Venugopal and Benjamin McAteer (Gr. 3), Walter Barr and Reece Cole (Gr. 4), Edward Cheng, Julian Ross and Eliot Kasha (Gr. 5) and Zack Bukovec and Howard Cheng (TM alums now in Gr. 6).

All the competitors played five difficult matches against the rest of the best in the state. This was in spite of the tournament being held in an equine event center, complete with a dusty dirt floor.

A win equals 1 point and draw is a half-point. Walter ended up with 3.5 out of 5 points, while Julian, Edward, Reece, Vinayek, Selina and Eliot all won 3 of 5. Congrats to these kids, and to their parents who can now get their Saturdays back until next fall. ... Look out Medina, we’re coming for you!
We all want to keep our kids safe. We make sure they wear their seat belts and bike helmets, and look both ways before they cross the street. We have to teach our children these safety procedures and practice with them so that it becomes second nature. Talking to children about body safety is crucial, but sometimes we overlook telling our kids about safe, unsafe, and unwanted touch because it can be uncomfortable.

April is National Sexual Assault and Abuse Prevention month, so I want to provide families with tools for how to bring up this delicate topic in a way that feels comfortable for grown-ups and informative to kids. Committee for Children just released a wonderful set of videos, as well as a conversation guide, to help families understand how to talk about these potentially frightening topics. See www.hotchocolatetalk.org.

Take a look, start the conversation, and if you ever need help, please let me know: mkaloper@seattleschools.org.

**Grade 5 Trip Opens Eyes**

*Continued from Page 1*

I am proud to also share that we strive to make field trips an equitable experience. Many of you make scholarships available through your charitable donations. We have established a field trip policy that ensures students from all programs have similar opportunities at each grade level.

Our partner organizations, such as the YMCA, often provide scholarships so that no student is turned away due to lack of funds.

Orkila was a wonderful experience for our 5th-graders and the adults that accompanied them. I am especially grateful to the 5th-grade teachers, Counselor Meghan Kaloper, Instructional Assistant Diane Lesemann, and all the parents that came along. I am already looking forward to returning next year.

**There’s Still Time to Step up to TM PTA Board**

Many hands make light work. That’s why more people are needed for next year’s PTA Board. Your interests will match a role! Treasurer? Events Co-Chair? See www.tmlink.org or contact PTA Nominating Committee members Tasha Irvine (lashasirvine@gmail.com) or Casey Sommers (caseypilar@gmail.com).

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**Bullpup Briefs**

**Third Place Event: $675 in New Books for TM**

The proceeds from the fundraising event sponsored by Third Place Books in Seward Park will result in $675 of new books for TM. That’s because the store is donating 20 percent of the purchases by patrons who mentioned TM at the store and its Raconteur restaurant on April 18, and will also provide a 20 percent discount when TM’s Library chooses what to buy.

**Girl Scouts Seek Sheets, More for Homeless**

The 4th-grade Junior Girl Scout Troop 48638 is launching a supply drive to support people experiencing homelessness at Mary’s Place Family Shelter. Based on current needs, we are collecting: lightly used or new twin-size bed sheets and bath towels, and new underwear and socks of all sizes. Put donation in the box in the front office. Deadline: mid-May.

**Help Plan Grade 5 Promotion on June 19**

Fourth-grade parents, join the committee planning 5th Grade Promotion on June 19! (TM tradition is to enable 5th-grade families to enjoy the event without leading it.)

A guide to putting on the event has been compiled over the years. If you would like to help in any way, large or small, please email caseypilar@gmail.com.

**Open House on Judkins Park Light Rail Station**

Construction will soon begin on the Judkins Park station of the “East Link” light rail expansion, and Sound Transit is holding an open house 5-7 p.m. Wednesday (May 2) at the Northwest African American Museum (2300 S. Massachusetts St.). The contractor and other officials will take questions. The station’s eastern entrance will front 23rd Avenue S. just south of the S. Judkins Street intersection.

**Washington Middle School Names Principal**

Washington Middle School’s new Principal is coming from Indiana, where since 2014 she has led the turnaround of a high school that formerly included the middle grades. Emily Butler has also been an administrator and teacher in Baltimore and the District of Columbia. As Principal at George Washington Community High School in Indianapolis, Ms. Butler managed efforts that improved graduation rates, math proficiency and school climate and safety. Ms. Butler starts July 1. She is replacing Susan Follmer, who is retiring.

**Join District’s New Info Tech Advisory Panel**


**New Superintendent Starts in July**

Denise Juneau, former Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction, has agreed to terms with the District and will start as Superintendent on July 1. The Seattle School Board had chosen her over two other finalists earlier this month. She will replace Dr. Larry Nyland, whose contract was not renewed.
## May

### Bike to School Month

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### How It Works

1. Keep track of the total minutes you ride.
2. Count the number of minutes your ride.
3. Enter your total minutes online.
4. Your participation automatically enters you into a drawing to win a prize.

### Golden Pedal Award

Help our school collect the most minutes ridden to earn an award.

### Bike to School Rules

- Bring this sheet back to school in June.
- Remember that scooters & skateboards count, too!

### Golden Pedal Award

- Teacher: [Teacher's Name]
- School: [School Name]
- Bike to School Month Rider (Circle one): Yes

- Grade: [Grade]
- Name: [Student's Name]