

Beacon Hill International School News

A World of Learners

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Beacon Hill International School

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Dr. Susie Murphy, Principal

Allison Delong, PTA President

March 10, 2011



Dear Parents, Guardians and Friends of Beacon Hill,

In the past I have written to you about periodic assessments that schools use to determine student progress and to modify instruction so that it best supports student learning. This month I want to specifically address the MAP Testing.

MAP stands for Measures of Academic Progress. This test is given three times a year to all kindergarten through fifth grade students across the Seattle School District. This computer-based test measures two areas of the curriculum – reading and mathematics. There are two forms of the test – the *MAP for Primary Grades*, for students in kindergarten, first and second grades, and the *Survey with Goals* test for students in second, third, fourth and fifth grades. The *MAP for Primary Grades* test is taken on the computer, but students also have headphones and the instructions are read aloud to the student. The *Survey with Goals* test is also taken on the computer, but it has no audio component. One other important aspect of the MAP test is that it is “adaptive.” This means that if a student responds incorrectly, the test automatically adjusts and offers the student an easier question. Alternatively, if the student responds correctly, the computer will adjust and ask the student a more challenging question.

MAP was developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) and is nationally normed. This means that many students across the country have taken these tests and the numeric results are considered reliable and valid for comparable students. Because it is a computer-based test, results are

generated very quickly. Teachers may receive information about students within a few days or weeks. The amount of information that is generated for teachers by the MAP testing is considerable. Parents are also provided with information about their child’s MAP scores.

This is our first year administering MAP tests at Beacon Hill. We were provided 32 laptop computers to use for the testing administration. The intent was to move those computers around from classroom to classroom. The technological requirements were significant and the fall administration was logistically challenging. We tried several different strategies, but were unable to find a solution that worked well. The district helped us create a temporary location for the winter MAP testing. The winter test was administered to the third, fourth and fifth graders, as we adapted to the new space and procedures. We will use the same space for the spring testing this year for all kindergarten through fifth graders.

You may have noticed that second graders can take either the *MAP for Primary Grades* test or the *Survey with Goals* test. Because of the number of Beacon Hill students who speak a language other than English at home, we decided to test all second graders using the *MAP for Primary Grades* test in the fall. In the spring administration, second graders scoring below 200 on the fall test will take the *MAP for Primary Grades* test. *Second graders who scored above 210 on the fall test will take the Survey with Goals* test. Second grade students scoring between 200–210 on the fall test will take the form of the test that their teacher recommends.

Dr. Murphy to Retire in June

Though we want the test to be as valid and reliable as possible for every student, there are some aspects of the testing situation that need to be taken into consideration. First, it is important to recognize that some of our students have had multiple opportunities to work or play on computers. For others this was their first experience. An additional consideration is that many students in the immersion programs receive content instruction in Spanish or Chinese. The MAP assessment, however, is only available in English. Finally, since this is the first year of MAP testing at Beacon Hill, we are all, students and staff, learning about the test, the administration and how to interpret the results. This means that we need to consider this first year as a pilot experience.

Parents may find the information about test scores complicated. The NWEA website can provide a great deal of technical guidance for parents (www.nwea.org) or, certainly parents can talk with their child's teacher. There are a couple of things to remember. The results of the MAP tests are just one data point. It is important to understand that individual student performance on a test can vary greatly. A student may score well one day and poorly the next. If a score on a test corresponds with the sustained everyday work that a child produces in the classroom or with the end of unit or classroom tests administered by the teacher, then it is a confirmation. On the other hand, if a score is very different from other measures of student progress, it raises interesting questions we need to learn more about.

If you have misplaced your child's MAP test results, you can find them in his or her student records at www.source.seattleschools.org under "Assessments", and can find additional information about the scores at that location.

If you have questions about MAP testing, please feel free to contact your child's teacher, myself, our school testing coordinator, Ms. Helen Finch, or our MAP coordinator, Ms. Julie Black.

Sincerely,
Dr. Susie Murphy
Principal

Early in February, Dr. Murphy told the Beacon Hill International School staff and parent community of her intention to retire this coming June. Parents and staff have wondered how a new principal will be assigned. The following questions and responses will, hopefully, clarify the process.

Question: How are principals assigned to schools?

Answer: Principals serve at the discretion of the superintendent. Generally, there are two ways that principals are identified for a particular school.

It may be that the superintendent decides that a qualified current district employee would be a good match for a particular school. In that situation, the superintendent often consults with the retiring principal, other key staff in the district, and the person who is being considered for an appointment. Then the appointment is announced to the school and the school community.

Alternatively, the superintendent may decide that the position should be open for consideration by qualified administrative applicants within and outside of the district. Applicants are screened at the district level – both paper screenings and interviews. Once potential candidates are identified at the district-level, the school building establishes a hiring team, develops a list of attributes the team would like to see in the next principal and develops a list of questions. The building team is then given the opportunity to interview candidates. Generally five or six candidates are interviewed in this process. After the interviews, the team identifies two or three candidates (in no particular order) to recommend to the superintendent. The superintendent generally interviews the two or three candidates and selects one. The selection is subject to the needs the superintendent has identified across the district, the needs of the particular school in question, and the strengths the superintendent sees in the various applicants. Once the superintendent has made the selection, the appointment is announced to the school and the school community.

Question: How is this process impacted at Beacon Hill by the appointment of Dr. Susan Enfield as superintendent?

Answer: Dr. Enfield, as Chief Academic Officer of Seattle Public Schools, was well aware of Dr. Murphy's retirement plans. She has been working, since her transition to superintendent, to determine the leadership needs across the district for the coming year. She has spoken with Dr. Murphy, with the Executive Directors, and is developing a plan to address possible openings K-12. Review of applications from prospective candidates has begun at the district level. That screening may take several weeks. We anticipate that Dr. Enfield will let us know soon what process she will use to appoint a new principal for Beacon Hill International School.

Question: If I want to serve on a possible Beacon Hill Interview Team, what do I do?

Answer: All interview team members must have participated in a *Site-Based Interview Training*. These are offered jointly by Seattle Public Schools and the Seattle Education Association (SEA). The training takes one hour and is held at either the John Stanford Center or the SEA offices. Training sessions are open to all administrators, certificated and classified employees, as well as parents, students and community representatives. Advanced registration is required. To register, please email Regina Redmond at redmond@washingtonea.org. Dates for upcoming sessions are listed below:

March 24	4pm–5pm	SEA Board Room – 5501 4 th Ave. S
April 5	4pm–5pm	John Stanford Center
May 5	5pm–6pm	John Stanford Center
June 9	4pm–5pm	John Stanford Center
July 12	4pm–5pm	John Stanford Center

Parents who have taken the *Site-Based interview Training* are eligible, in the future, to participate in school-based interviews of potential teachers.

Volunteers of the Month

The **Family Volunteer of the Month** for **February** is our PTA Treasurer, **Jennifer Matter**. Jennifer is doing a wonderful job keeping track of the PTA expenses, making deposits, paying the bills, and learning about and educating the rest of the Board on the budgeting process. This is Jennifer's first year as Treasurer and is hoping to find a Co-Treasurer to work with her next year. Jennifer has 2 sons, Samuel (A1/A3) and toddler, Hugo. Thanks, Jennifer for being our wonderful PTA Treasurer!!

The **Community Volunteers of the Month** for **February** are our very own Washington Reading Corps members: **Andrea Alvarez, Aron Patton, and Nat Samson**. They are here at BHIS all day on Mondays-Thursdays. They work with students with literacy, and plan the Family Literacy Nights and the Summer Activities Fair. Thank you Andrea, Aron and Nat for your invaluable service to the students of BHIS!



- PTA News -

Mark your calendars! The remaining meetings will all involve student performances so you won't want to miss any! 6:15pm Pot luck – **Dish up** in the Library and **Eat** in the MPR so you can get a seat before the 7pm performances. This one will likely last till 8:30 with younger grades performing earliest.

3/22 Dia de los Niños Meeting: pot luck
6/7 Celebrating the Arts pot luck

Spring Walk-A-Thon – May 20

It's time to volunteer for the Spring Walk-A-Thon scheduled for Friday, May 20th. About 30 parents are needed to tally laps completed by walking & running teams from each grade, which occur all day long!

It is extremely fun, and will be held in the Spring this year with hopes for better weather than our first ever "WAT" held in Fall 2009. Rain or shine the kids will walk and run to support BHIS, get some exercise, and we hope you will be there too!

We will also need money counters, furniture movers, clip board organizers, and a trainee Walk-A-Thon Chairperson for next year. **Erin Musser** will Chair the WAT again this year. Anyone interested in assisting in any way can contact her at epoly@aol.com.



Tamale Sale!

The tamale sale was another great success. The PTA Executive Board is so grateful to the PTA's Latino Family Committee for their efforts over the past several years to create this unique and delicious fund raiser. Several English speaking moms got to help this year and so did Principal Murphy! Nearly 1,200 tamales were sold (570 chicken, 312 pork and 300 vegetable, to be exact) and more than \$2,000 profit was made. Special thanks to former BHIS parent Ortencia Santana who spent one last year helping keep this great fund raiser going.



Venta de Tamales!

La venta de tamales fue, de nuevo, un gran éxito. Le Junta Ejecutiva del PTA es muy agradecido al Comité de Familias Latinas del PTA por sus esfuerzos durante los últimos años para crear esta recaudación de fondos única y deliciosa. Varias madres de habla-inglés ayudaron este año, y también la Directora Murphy! Lesley Ernst se merece nuestro agradecimiento por su esfuerzos. Un agradecimiento muy especial se manda a Ortencia Santana que, por una ultima vez, ayudo a mantener esta recaudación de fondos en marcha. Se vendio 1200 tamales, y se recaudo mas de \$ 2,000, dinero que se usara para los programas educacionales en nuestra escuela.

Muchas gracias to all who helped make tamales: Maria del Rosario de los Santos, Carmen Romero Valencia, Karen & Emanuel Espinoza, Guadalupe Hernandez, Viridiana Hernandez, Leslie & Adam Ernst, Doris Fuentes, Pilar Castillo, Juana Retana, Mary Ruvalcaba, Susie & Rich Murphy, Angela Castañeda, Sally Hedges, Doris Fuentes, Shelly Bates, Allison Delong, Masako Davison, Chilo Granizo, Dova Castañeda Zilly & Gabriela Lopez (5th grade, Seattle Girls School) & Mara Connell, (7th grade, Seattle Girls School.)

Even more thanks to the Mount Baker Presbyterian Church for allowing us to use their kitchen for steaming and refrigerating the tamales!

Annual Fund Success

Thank you to the generous contributions to the Annual Fund. This “just because” fund raiser has generated donations ranging from \$10 to \$1,000 for a total of almost \$4,500! The PTA is grateful for whatever contribution works for each family, to help support the extra services the PTA provides to BHIS.

It’s never too late to make an Annual Fund contribution. Just leave your check made out to Beacon Hill PTA at the front office.

Fresh Ometepe Coffee Beans



We have fresh coffee beans for sale to help raise money for our sister school in Nicaragua: \$10.00 for a 12 oz. bag. See **Diana Furuta** or me when you need a bag or five. We are trying to keep our supply continually stocked with freshly roasted coffee so that it will be available throughout the school year. Your family or friends might like some too. It’s less expensive than Starbucks and twice as good! Thanks for your support and spread the word!

--Warmly,
Andy Pickard

Taco Time Coupon Books!

Only \$1 for worth \$5 in savings!

- \$1 off any Platter item
- \$1 off any Menu item
- \$1 off a Soft Taco
- \$1 off any Tostado Salad
- Buy Two crisp tacos and get one FREE!

Coupons are not valid on Combo Meals. Coupons are valid until April 30, 2011. Coupon books are available for purchase from **Nancy Fujimoto** or at PTA sponsored events.

Seattle Public Schools Source

Use the Seattle Public Schools *Source* for information about your child’s education. Look at your student absences, state assessment scores, learning plans, checked out library books, and other great information. (At this time, *Source* information for students in grade K – 5 does not include grades.)

To register for *The Source* go to website: <http://source.seattleschools.org> Click the “click here” link to register and follow the instructions. To register you will need:

- Your student’s full name
- Your student’s 7 digit Seattle Schools student ID# (found on your student’s enrollment paper work, progress report or official school mailing.)
- School your student attends
- Your home telephone number that the school has on record
- Your student’s date of birth

If you have trouble registering, send the above information to sourcesupport@seattleschools.org.

Enrolling for 2011-12 School Year

Students who are new to Seattle Public Schools may enroll at any time! Early enrollment is recommended now for students who will enter kindergarten or for any new student who will be entering school in September 2011. Families who participate in early enrollment benefit by avoiding long lines and by receiving an initial assignment letter in March, 2011. Enrollment is available through the Seattle Public Schools Service Center. New students are assigned to their attendance area school. If a student wishes to attend any other school in the district they may apply during the Open Enrollment of March 15-31, 2011. Assignment depends on space availability.

Review school information and the enrollment process at seattleschools.org – click “Enrollment.” Questions? E-mail the servicecenter@seattleschools.org or call (206) 252-0760.

Family Involvement

Research shows that being involved in your child’s education can raise grades and test scores. There are many, many ways to be involved at BHIS. There are **two parent brunches coming up in March and April**, check the list of activities in this newsletter.

Contact **Nancy Fujimoto** for volunteer opportunities. Contact Nancy at 252-2735 or nkfujimoto@seattleschools.org.

For academic questions contact Helen Finch, Title 1 teacher or Susie Murphy, Principal at 252-2700. hafinch@seattleschools.org or sbmurphy@seattleschools.org.

We look forward to seeing you at school!

Newsletter Dates and Deadlines

Families – if you missed the February 2011 newsletter in kid-mail, remember, you can always find a copy on the website: <http://beaconhillinternationalschool.org/>

You can also use this link to easily forward the newsletter to family members who may be interested in what’s going on at BHIS, or check the archive for old newsletters you may have missed.

The deadline for the April newsletter is **Monday, March 28, 2011**. Submissions can be sent to newsletter editor, **Curtis Bonney** at: BHISnews@yahoo.com.

Calendar of Events

Sun., Mar. 13: Daylight Savings Time begins.

Thurs., Mar. 17: Family Coffee sponsored by Title 1 9:20 – 10:00 Multi-Purpose Room A “Reading standards at BHIS”

Fri., Mar. 18: Professional Development – NO SCHOOL for students

Sat., Mar. 19: Dance Rehearsal for Dia de Los Niños Performance

Tue., Mar. 22: PTA Potluck / Meeting / Dia de Los Niños Performance: Potluck: 6:15pm (Serve in Library, Eat in MPR; 6:45-7:00 PTA Business; 7-8:30pm Performance.

Fri., Mar. 25: FREE DRESS DAY

Mon., Mar. 28: Deadline for April newsletter: BHISnews@yahoo.com

Thurs., April 7: Family Coffee sponsored by Title 1 9:20–10:00 Multi-Purpose Room A “Understanding MAP and MSP scores”

Open Enrollment extended: March 15 – April 18