

Welcome Back Washington Families & Teachers!

CALENDAR

October

11th - No school, staff development day

12th – PTA meeting 6:00 p.m. - dinner (cafetorium); 6:30-8 p.m. - meeting (library). Childcare provided. Small donation requested for food and childcare.

13th – African American Unity Meeting 5:30-7:30, Bungalow 12.

14th – School Board Candidates Debate 7 p.m. Longfellow Middle School, 1500 Derby St.

27th - ESL Class for Parents 1:30 - 3:30, Bungalow 12. Childcare provided.

28th - Latino Family Potluck 6-8 p.m., Bungalow 12

29th - Halloween Parade 1:25-2:00 p.m., schoolyard

November

2nd - Leadership Team meeting

Nov. 5-12 - Parent/teacher conferences

It was great to see so many new and returning parents and staff at our first meeting of the year and the school BBQ. Parent involvement will make the difference in the success of your child and our school. Below, we describe many ways - large and small - that each of you can become involved in and support the PTA.

PTA Goals This Year

After meeting over the summer, the PTA steering committee has decided to focus on two main goals: first, to provide parents with information about the school and, second, to sponsor educational and enriching programs.

We will accomplish the first goal by featuring the principal, teachers, staff and other guests at our meetings to speak on various topics and allow time for questions. To accomplish the second goal, we will work with school staff to plan events and activities that will bring together our Washington community.

The PTA will continue to support teachers with money for their classroom supplies and fieldtrips, provide funding for the Family and Community Resource Programs (formerly Healthy Start), sponsor scholarships for after-school classes, and provide YMCA swim lessons for K-3rd students.

The biggest change from last year in our fundraising plan is that we decided not to fundraise through a Sally Foster gift wrap drive. We thought that kids' and parents' time would be better spent directly on school activities. But this means that we need to replace the \$8,000 we

raised last year through Sally Foster. Our goal is to do that through direct donations and Escrip.

How You Can Help

Please do three simple things to help achieve the PTA's goals:

- Make a **direct donation** of between \$20 and \$50 per child attending Washington (more if you can, of course!). Just make a check out to "Washington PTA" and drop it in the white PTA lockbox in the main office, put it in the PTA mailbox in the staff lounge, or mail it to the school (address on back page).
- Sign up for **Escrip**. Escrip costs you nothing except the 5 minutes it will take to register your ATM and credit cards. After that, retailers contribute money to Washington every time you use your plastic. Just log on to www.escrip.com (then click "welcome" and "sign up") or pick up a form at the PTA corner across from the main office, fill it out, and drop it in the white PTA lockbox in the main office.
- Become a **member of the PTA** (only members can vote). Pick up an envelope at the PTA corner across from the main office, fill it out and include a \$7.50 check to the "California State PTA". Dues support the state, district, council and school levels of the PTA. The PTA advocates health, safety and education legislation for children.

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Letter from Principal Kimball

Tune In to Washington Talk!

Get the latest news and announcements from Washington School by email -- sign up for Washington Talk!

It's easy - just send a blank email message to [wtalk-
subscribe@topica.com](mailto:wtalk-
subscribe@topica.com).

Send your own messages to everyone on the list by sending a message to wtalk@topica.com.

Measure B - Vote November 2!

Measure B on the Berkeley ballot will help to lessen the impact of the state's declining support for education by providing \$8 million for Berkeley schools for each of the next two years.

Two-thirds of the funds will go to reduce class size, one-sixth to libraries, and the rest to music, teacher training, program evaluation, and outreach and translation.

Volunteers are needed to help with the campaign. Contact Wanda Stewart (510-665-1665) or PTA co-chair Linda Currie (510-848-4005). More information is available at www.YesOnB.net.

Families, welcome to Washington School! There are many opportunities to be part of the Washington Community, and Leadership Team is one way to contribute your time and energy. The Leadership Team assesses the school, gathers information, and makes program and financial decisions based on input from the community.

Voting at Back to School Night in September resulted in the following eight parent members:

- Representing parents whose 1st language is not English: Marina Hernandez and Eva Guzman
- Representing children who have been in after-school reading, math or summer school: Anita Payne
- Representing the city money: Marlene Cornelius and Gretchen Wobrock
- Representing the money received from the state: Norelia Maldonado
- Representing families with gifted and talented students: Kish Castillo and Tamiaka Spriggs.

Two additional parent members will be added from the African American Unity Group and the PTA. Staff members are the other half of the Leadership Team.

The Leadership Team's first meeting was held on October 5. Minutes from all meetings will be posted in the Parent Center (across from the office). The Leadership Team has traditionally met once a month.

The African American Unity Group's first meeting will be on October 13th, 5:30-7:30 p.m., in B12. Come to the first meeting to be part of the learning and plans for the school year!

Many family members have already been working as volunteers in the classrooms. Talk to your child's teacher to find out how you can contribute.

Washington's Environment/Nutrition Committee has been busy all summer. We met the first week of October to interview architects who can work on beautifying our student outdoor areas. Our committee will keep the community informed about our progress.

The end of the first trimester will be on October 29th. Family Conferences will be held during November. Sign up for a conference with your child's teachers -- teachers want to meet with all families. Four of these conference days will be shorter learning days for students and there will be one full conference day with no student attendance, with a holiday in between.

Teachers have individually tested students in reading skills, comprehension and math, so you will receive good information about what each student knows and what will be learned this school year. Ask what these tests mean, how you can help at home, and how to get extra support from the school.

Stay in touch with your teachers and with me for help and information! Our office number is 644-6310.

Rita Kimball
Principal

Welcome Back/How You Can Help

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Folders for all Washington Students

The Washington PTA has provided a plastic folder for each Washington student to better transport homework and school announcements. Parents, please look for any paperwork in the outside pocket for your review. Hopefully homework will be less wrinkled and lost homework can be easily reunited with the student.

Special thanks to Jay Pasama at **Longs Drugs**, 1451 Shattuck Ave., for donating the folders and recognizing this worthy cause.

PTA Volunteers Needed

We have a few important jobs left to fill. Contact PTA co-chairs Linda Currie or Mimi Chin (contact information on p. 4), or come to the next PTA meeting, if you can help out.

- **Classroom parent/PTA liaison** - Be your child's classroom liaison to the PTA by attending PTA meetings and channeling information in both directions.
- **Website help** - redesign and/or maintain and update the Washington PTA's website.

- **Escrip organizer** - help us meet our Escrip income goal by finding creative ways to increase parent participation in Escrip.
- **Cody's Book fundraiser** - manage our Cody's Book Fundraiser, which will take place December 7-9.

Last but not least, the next PTA meeting is this Tuesday, October 12! Parents and caregivers who come to PTA meetings can get a homework pass for their child to present to the teacher the next day. We hope to see you there!

BBQ-Potluck-Games Day a Success!

On Saturday, Oct. 6th, over a hundred people, including parents, caregivers, teachers and kids came to enjoy a day of delicious food, good conversation and games in the Washington yard.

Thanks to all who helped plan, promote, shop, set up, grill, and clean up!! Your efforts made the day a fun-filled event for all who came, especially for the families new to Washington!

A special thanks to Janine Stelling, our Sport for Kids Coordinator, for coming to school on her day off to organize the games and relays for the kids! Also thanks to Beth Newell, from Healthcorp, for bringing her health games and information.

Linda Currie and Mimi Chin
PTA Co-chairs

GOOD NEWS - 21st Century Grant staff has been hired and will speak at the next PTA meeting to talk about plans for the new after-school program! Be there Tuesday!

PTA Officers

Please contact any one of the officers if you have ideas, questions or concerns.

Linda Currie - Co-chair,
phone: 848-4005, email:
lindamurphydog@aol.com

Mimi Chin - Co-chair, phone:
510-548-2999, email:
mimichin@uclink4.berkeley.edu

Norelia Maldonado -
Secretary, phone: 510-520-
7461, email:
nori_maldo@yahoo.com

Linda Franco - Co-secretary,
phone: 510-558-0550

Alison Bryant - Treasurer,
phone: 510-644-8202, email:
alisonb11@juno.com

Newsletter Editor

Send ideas or information for the *Acorn* to Nancy Rader, phone: 510-845-5077, email: nrader@igc.org. The deadline for the next issue is Oct. 29.

Washington Elementary

2300 Martin Luther King, Jr.
Way, Berkeley, CA 94704
Phone: 644-6310
Fax: 644-7718

Rita Kimball, Principal, email:
rita_kimball@berkeley.k12.ca.us

Paula Shoemaker, School
Secretary, email:
paula_shoemaker@berkeley.k12.ca.us

Kate Graves, Family and
Community Resource
Programs, 644-6939
www.washington.berkeleypta.org

Berkeley Unified School District

2134 Martin Luther King, Jr.
Way, Berkeley, CA 94704
Phone: 644-6147
Fax: 540-5358
www.berkeley.k12.ca.us

Family and Community Resource Programs (formerly Healthy Start) - What's Going On in 04-05

The continuing goal of Family and Community Resource Programs is to connect families to each other and to services, information, and resources that are available in the school and the community. Coordinator Kate Graves oversees program staff and volunteers in providing Washington families with, or linking them to, many types of services, including:

- counseling
- academic and social skills support
- tutors and mentors
- equity and anti-racism efforts
- mental health services
- classroom and playground support
- insurance and healthcare
- health education
- foster grandparents
- Boys and Girls Clubs

The Family Resource area is still located on the left side of the library in the basement. Please stop by and say hello and see how we can work together! Look for signs and updates on the bulletin board near the main office. Call us at 644-6939 with any questions.

PTA Sponsors After-school Classes

There are four after-school classes being offered at Washington this fall. Pick up flyers in the PTA area across from the office. The PTA offers half-scholarships to students who need some help with tuition. Students may request up to two half-scholarships per school year. If you would like to see other after-school classes offered at Washington, please contact one of the PTA officers listed on the this page.

Chess Club (Grades 1-5) Mondays, Oct. 4 - Dec. 6, 2:30-3:30 p.m. Contact The Berkeley Chess School 843-0150, bcschool@pacbell.net.

Recorders & Flutes (Grades 1-3) Tuesdays, Oct. 5-Jan. 4, 2:15-3:10 p.m. Sorry, class is now full.

Dance/Movement (Grades K and 1-3) Oct. 12-Dec. 14, K 1:25-2:10 p.m., 1st-3rd 2:20-3:15 p.m. Contact Patricia Bulitt, 841-6612.

Storytelling (Grades K - 3) Oct. 13 - Dec. 15, 1:20-2:15 p.m. Contact Patricia Bulitt, 841-6612.