



BERTSCHI NEWS

January/February 1997

Dear Parents,

Bertschi School has met many challenges during its first 20 years. We have set high standards for our school in terms of our curriculum and our facilities, and we have made great progress in achieving the goals we have established as we've worked to meet those standards. Now, as Bertschi School embarks on its third decade, we are working to achieve the goals defined in our 10-Year Strategic Plan.

The Bertschi School Board of Trustees has confirmed through its 10-Year Strategic Plan that the essential character of Bertschi School should remain as it is today—a small elementary school that provides a world-class education to its students, through a collaborative learning experience that accommodates individual learning styles and differences.

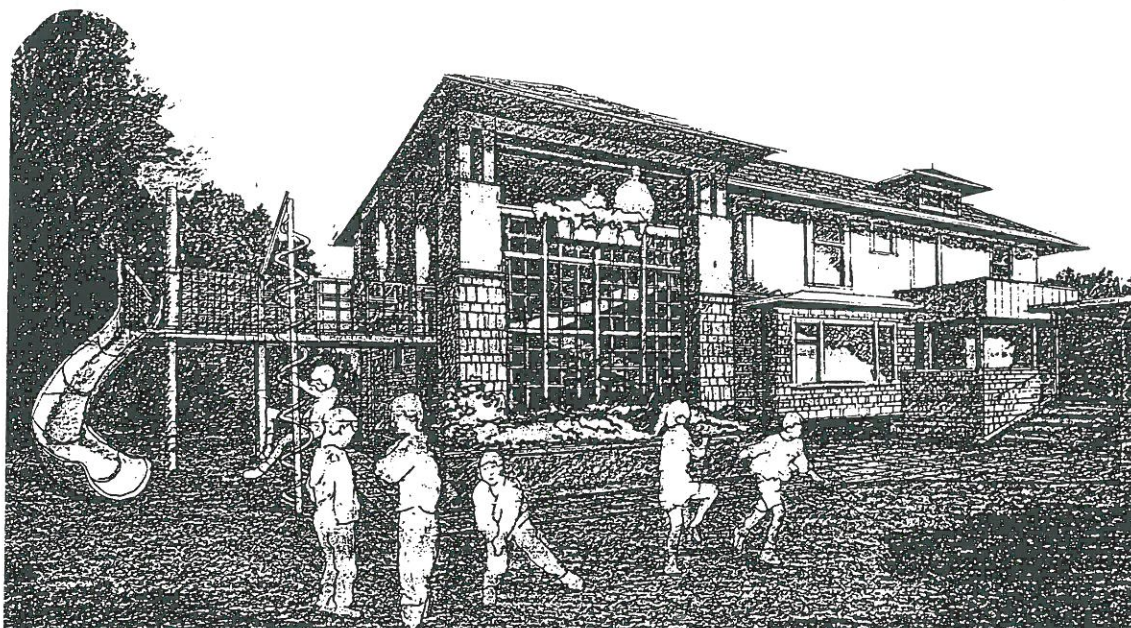
In our work toward this vision, Bertschi School is planning to reshape its campus. The Facility Master Plan, created over the last year by a committee of the Board of Trustees, outlines our plans for expanding our facilities to meet the future needs of our program. Our immediate goal in this regard is that by the fall of 1997, we will have two classrooms per grade level in Kindergarten through grade 5, phasing out the split classroom concept.

As important as our immediate facilities improvement plans, however, is the need for the school to expand its financial base in order to provide for future planning and development. Our plan is to provide for this stability through the building of an endowment fund.

I look forward to meeting with you over the winter quarter, to discuss our plan for our school's future. Personally, I am delighted with our 10-Year Strategic Plan, as it builds upon the original mission of Bertschi School—to provide an excellent educational learning environment for students, faculty, and parents.

Brigitte Batdau

*Bertschi School's Plan for the 21st Century
View of Phase I from the Playground*



From the Board of Trustees

1997/98 Bertschi School Budget

by Tony Gaetjens, Finance Committee

Each year, the Bertschi School Board of Trustees faces the challenge of setting tuition. Our goal in meeting this challenge is to keep tuition low enough to ensure that our school continues to be accessible to a broad section of the community. At the same time, however, we must support the demands of maintaining our excellent educational program.

As a member of Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools (PNAIS), the National Association of Schools and Colleges, and Washington Federation of Independent Schools, Bertschi School is required to meet certain financial standards. In accordance with those standards, the Board of Trustees approves the operating budget each year.

The Finance Committee is currently developing the budget for the 1997/98 school year. Our preliminary budget includes a tuition increase of 5%, which would raise our annual tuition from \$8,200 to \$8,600. The Board of Trustees reviewed the preliminary budget at their December meeting and will vote on the budget at their January meeting.

Following is a list of proposed expenditures for the preliminary 1997/98 operating budget, as compared with the 1996/97 budget.

Bertschi School - Preliminary 1997/98 Budget					
	Exp. (000's)		Incr. (\$)	Incr. (%)	% of Total Incr.
	1997 /98	1996 /97			
Faculty	\$ 956	\$ 893	\$ 63	7%	56%
Program	116	100	16	16%	14%
Plant	341	331	10	3%	9%
Admin.	358	335	23	7%	21%
Total	\$1,771	\$1,659	\$112	7%	100%
NOTE: For comparative purposes, \$20,000 of summer program expense has been excluded from 1996/97 expenses, since the program will not operate in 1997/98.					

The faculty expense change reflects our planned move to two full first and second grade classes, which requires replacing an aide with a teacher. This shift combined with faculty raises accounts for the faculty expense increase. The program expense change is primarily due to technology program costs previously funded as enhancements. Administration

costs include \$8,500 for PNAIS evaluation and accreditation, required every eight to 10 years.

The Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee work to meet the educational goals of our school in a fiscally responsible way. We strive to keep administrative costs low and maximize our investment in a fine faculty and an excellent curriculum. If you have any questions regarding the 1997/98 budget, please feel free to call me.

Development Committee

by Sheri Schultz, Committee Chairman

The start of a new calendar year gives us a chance to reflect on the past months, and at Bertschi School, those months have been exciting and productive.

The **Annual Fund**, which began in October, now totals over \$93,000 in gifts and pledges. This total reflects the participation of 78% of our parents, 100% of our Board members, and 42% of our staff. Many thanks to Thomas Kemper Soda Company and Mariner Biscuits for their challenge to parents to get their pledges in by October 18! As parents and Board members, we thank Margot Kenly for her superb job as Annual Fund Chairman, as well as each and every one of you for your continued support.

The Bertschi School Auction, "**Starlight Express**," was held on November 16 at Union Station, and exceeded all expectations. Sales of auction items, net of expenses, totaled over \$66,000. Thanks to Lyn Lacher, Acquisitions Chairman, and all the Bertschi volunteers who made this possible. Fund-an-Item for Technology accounted for an additional \$10,400—enough to purchase four new laptop computers, complete with docking stations and keyboards, for use in the classrooms during the day and at home by staff after hours. This tremendous support demonstrates our community's commitment to our common goals.

At its December meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the first four areas in our school to be funded through endowment:

- Tuition Sponsorship
- Professional Development
- Campus Enhancement
- Other Areas of Greatest Need

Bertschi School is now able to accept endowed gifts in any of these categories. If you have any questions or suggestions or if you'd like to become involved, please call the Development Office at 324-2150.

Facing "The Challenge and Imperative of Diversity"

by Naomi Barry, Diversity Committee

Those of you who attended or heard about our very informative October 8 meeting on diversity can prepare yourselves for another helpful, stimulating, and thought-provoking meeting on **February 12, from 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.** This upcoming meeting will be facilitated by T.J. Vassar, Director of Diversity at Lakeside School. The meeting will focus on Bertschi School's Multicultural Strategic Draft Plan, copies of which were distributed at our last meeting. After a brief presentation, we will break into small groups to brainstorm the many topics addressed in the draft plan. Please plan to attend and feel free to give voice to your concerns, as this is a crucial step in the learning process for all of us at Bertschi School. **NOTE: This meeting was originally scheduled for January 14. Please update your calendars!**

Financial Aid for 1997/98

The Board of Trustees has budgeted seven percent of 1997/98 tuition revenue for financial aid. To ensure fairness, all applications are processed by School and Student Services (SSS). Bertschi School makes awards based on the recommendations of SSS within the limits of the financial aid budget.

Financial aid application packages for the 1997/98 school year are now available in the school office. Since financial situations can change from one year to the next, all candidates, including those currently receiving financial aid, must reapply each year. All applications must be completed and sent directly to SSS **no later than February 1, 1997**. In addition, copies of your 1996 IRS tax form 1040 and all attached schedules must be sent to Bertschi School along with the school's application form. Additional information is required of families with non-custodial parents or family businesses. **We will not be able to grant awards until all information is received by the Business Office.**

If information is available from SSS, financial aid awards will be made at the time contracts are offered. If this information is not available, contracts will be offered pending financial aid award decisions. For further information, please call the Business Office at 324-5487.

Admissions

by Kelly Maunsell

Because of changes in the class configurations planned for next fall, this is a unique year in the Admissions Office. With the end of the PreK program, this is the first year that we have all new applicants for kindergarten. Also, with the addition of one more classroom next fall, we will have two classrooms per grade level in Kindergarten through fourth grade; this will create additional openings in first, second, and third grades.

Just a few notes for parents who are in the process of applying to schools:

- Bertschi School will see all sibling applicants by the end of January. Contracts for sibling enrollment will be mailed in February, at the same time current student re-enrollment contracts are mailed.
- Middle school applicants: Please note that some middle schools have changed their application deadline to January 31. Check the literature from the schools you are applying to in order to be sure you don't miss a deadline!

It has been a delight to have parents of current students on our school tours in November and December. We look forward to seeing the children later this month.

If you know any families interested in applying their child to Bertschi School, please encourage them to call the Admissions Office at 324-2150.

BERTSCHI SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Bertschi School welcomes you
to attend our
Open House for Prospective Parents

Thursday, January 23, 1997
7:00 - 8:30 P.M.

Please join us for this adults-only evening!

News from the Classroom

Second Graders Study Shelters

by Eileen Hynes

The second grade is involved in a year-long study of shelters that includes: building of our own structures; working on research projects related to the theme, Families Around the World; and studying animal habitats.

During the first part of the year, the class investigated many of the physical aspects of building and creating shelters. Through the use of blocks in the classroom, woodworking in the art studio, and a study of balance in science, the students had many experiences relating to the creation of structures. During the evening, they closely observed their own homes, creating observational drawings of the outside of their houses and their own bedrooms and lists of the different materials used to build their homes. Interviewing their parents, they learned about when and why their own families came to live in Seattle.

One October day, we all went to the Children's Museum to participate in the "If I Had a Hammer" program and to put our accumulated knowledge to use. Working in four teams and with the help of enthusiastic parents, the children built a house big enough for everyone, with a door and windows that opened and closed. Back in the classroom, the children worked together, retelling their story of how they built a house. Their ideas are now being developed into a slide show presentation.

Mathematics, reading, and writing skills have been enhanced and practiced throughout the study. Primary age children learn best by doing. When they are engaged in solving real problems and communicating knowledge they have gained through physical understanding, children will work with untiring energy to find answers to their questions. They are eager to express their ideas and share information with one another in ways that can be clearly understood. This kind of group experience leads to the development of a learning community with common goals and a shared understanding of the values that underlie their exploration.

As we shifted our focus to the world and its wide variety of places and people, each student made a list of questions. Some of the things second graders want to know are: What are families like in other parts of the world? What kinds of houses do they live in? What are the houses made of? What languages

are spoken? Do all houses need heat? Where do families eat their meals? What games do children like to play? Where do the children play? How many people live together? What do they learn in school?

In their search for answers to these questions, each child chose a specific place on earth and then wrote about why they selected that place. Their reasons were as varied as the children themselves: "Romania, because my mom was born there." (Andrea Arkans) "I chose Israel because it is my religion." (Lilah Melzer) "I chose Ireland because small cities are peaceful." (Darien Taie) "I chose Venezuela because I am taking that language at school and my Dad is from there." (Hilary Armstrong) "I chose Costa Rica because my sister is there. I wonder what it is like there." (Stassi Lemly)

Of course, it is the journey we go on as we try to find the answers that is so much fun. The most widely used resources for second graders are: encyclopedias; a world atlas; picture books, both fiction set in a specific place and non-fiction; maps; interviews with primary sources; and the Internet. Students work together to find and interpret information. Fifth graders help them navigate the Internet, providing the class with many photographic images. Second graders find partners to help them understand new vocabulary relating to geography. Information is shared, ideas change, and horizons are broadened.



My Room

Nabina Liebow, grade 2

If my room had an apple tree in it I would eat apples all day. And if I had a waterfall in my room I would hear the water flowing down. If I had roses in my room I would smell in my room such a good smell. I love it! And that reminds me that if I had a pet rabbit in my room I would feel it, so soft and furry. And if I had a beach in my room I would see the shiny rocks, shine so much in the sun. But I do not think it will ever happen.

Salmon Swim the Web

by Liane Nolan

On a recent, very cold, November day, my fourth grade class made the trek to the University of Washington's fish hatchery to pick up Chinook salmon eggs and milt. We plan to raise the fish in our aquarium at school and release them in Thornton Creek next spring. My class has been doing this project for several years now, but this year, we decided to extend our studies and share our knowledge with a larger community. Thus was born the idea of our salmon swimming on the Web.

Combining the resources of science, technology, and classroom studies, the fourth grade class is creating a Web site on the Internet telling about its two-fold, water quality study. One part of our study focuses on learning about salmon and raising them at school. The second part is new this year. The students are becoming stream keepers, monitoring Thornton Creek on a monthly basis for oxygen, depth, pollution, stream flow, insect life, and other attributes.

At a site connected with Bertschi's Home Page, users soon will find commentary, pictures, charts, and graphs posted by the students. They may find a comment similar to Sara Wyckoff's: "At the hatchery, the fish were very active. To my surprise, they didn't chop off the head. They just made a cut behind the head. After that, they squirted out the sperm, and they had to slit open the belly of the mom fish, and someone had to reach in and scoop out the eggs. After that, we came back to school and fertilized the eggs and put them in the tank. Now that was a very exciting day!"

Many thanks to Nancy Osborne and Julie Blystad, who have the vision and skills that have made this project possible.



Bertschi School Students Jump for Joy!

Parent Council News

by Jayne Hulsey, President

The Bertschi Parent Council extends its sincere thanks to all of the class coordinators for their generous help at the Bertschi School Auction and in the classrooms. Class coordinators will be assisting us yet again at the Bertschi School Open House which will be held on January 23 from 7:00 - 8:30 P.M. The Open House is a wonderful time to introduce prospective parents to our school.

On February 12, the Bertschi Parent Council and the Diversity Committee will co-sponsor our second diversity workshop. T.J. Vassar, Director of Diversity at Lakeside School, will lead this forum focusing on Bertschi School's long-term diversity plan. This promises to be an informative and exciting evening. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us.

Jump for Joy

by Gabrielle Snyder

This holiday season, Bertschi School staged its second annual Jump for Joy. Once again, this all-school event proved to be profitable as well as fun, with students earning a grand total of \$5,102 for Hawthorne Elementary families in need.

Parents, teachers, and students all collaborated on this physical fitness/community service project. Students began by soliciting pledges from family and friends and then earned their pledge money by performing a variety of jump-rope activities in P.E. Students jumped continuously during three P.E. class periods, performing such feats as doubles jumping, speed jumping, and skip jumping. Their efforts improved their jumping skills, as well as their cardiovascular fitness. During Jump-for-Joy Week, parents and teachers were invited to jump rope with the children during P.E.

Jump-for-Joy pledge money was divided evenly among Bertschi School's 10 classrooms, with each class using its \$510.20 to purchase food, clothing, and toys for two Hawthorne families. Deciding how best to spend their money provided the students with a great opportunity for sharpening their math and reasoning skills. Gifts and food were delivered to the families in plenty of time to provide holiday cheer.

We thank all the students, parents, and teachers who helped make this year's Jump for Joy a huge success.

January

- 6** First Day of Winter Quarter
- 17** NO SCHOOL - Report Card Writing Day
Extended Day Available
- 20** NO SCHOOL -
Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
No Extended Day
- 23** Open House for Prospective Parents
7:00 - 8:30 P.M.
- 31** Early Dismissal, 1:30 P.M.
Teacher Professional Planning
Extended Day Available

February

- 12** Diversity Workshop, 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.
- 17** NO SCHOOL - Presidents' Day
No Extended Day Available
- 18** NO SCHOOL - Mid-term Break
No Extended Day
- 28** Early Dismissal, 1:30 P.M.
Teacher Professional Planning
Extended Day Available

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