



BERTSCHI NEWS

March/April 1997

Dear Parents,

Over the last two months, I have spent an average of two to three hours a week observing our various classrooms and the remarkable mix within our student body. Each of our students bring their special gifts, talents, and interests to the school. Their curiosity and enthusiasm about learning is endless, and their contributions to our community are many—tutoring each other, caring for one another, problem solving with each other, and just sharing a grand time.

These visits reinforce for me that fundamental to the success of any school are its teachers and staff, as we are the mentors and models for our students. Bertschi School's teachers are highly qualified and experienced professionals, chosen from all over the country for their teaching ability, creativity, inspiration, and energy. Some have been with Bertschi School almost since it's inception. But as time has moved on, so has education. As we discover more about how children and adults learn, our teaching methods have changed. We are fortunate at Bertschi School to have a faculty that understands the importance of life-long learning and takes joy in that.

Our teachers' excitement about learning and their commitment to staying current in their fields is contagious. Their hard work and support of each other is an inspiration for our students and has resulted in some incredible units of study. In a recent project, for example, Julie Blystad, our science teacher, worked with Liane Nolan and her fourth graders on an environmental study of the Thornton Creek watershed. The students raised salmon and tested the quality of the creek water on a regular basis. Bertschi's art teacher, Tom Hoffman, worked with the students on an associated art project, and Nancy Osborne, our technology teacher, assisted the students in putting their information and artwork on our home page to share their findings with the world.

Our curriculum offerings, too, have grown. Technology has become part of the integrated curriculum, as has community service, our Spanish program, the arts, and science. Now we are in the process of learning more about diversity and the challenges we face as we work to support a learning environment that is inclusive of all, one that reflects our mission: "to encourage the children, meeting academic challenges with openness, a willingness to solve problems while respecting individual differences, in an atmosphere of cooperation." We are striving to make children confident and creative builders of their futures.

To this end, T.J. Vassar, director from Lakeside School's LEEP program, did a superb job of leading the second of our parent meetings on the subject of diversity. Hearing from parents, board members, faculty, and staff was a necessary next step in addressing this important issue, as we continue this long and challenging journey. Thank you also to all the members of the Diversity Committee for your commitment, time, and energy.

Finally, I very much enjoyed seeing so many parents at our Tuesday morning class meetings and sharing with you Bertschi School's vision and plans for the future. Your comments and insights were valuable and important to me. Thank you for your support.

From the Board of Trustees Facing "The Challenge and Imperative of Diversity"

by Naomi Barry, Diversity Committee

Bertschi School's Long-Range Diversity Plan moved one step closer to completion with the parent/staff workshop held on the evening of February 12. This workshop was actually the second phase of a process that began in October, with a panel discussion that addressed, "The Challenge and Imperative of Diversity in Business and Education."

While all of our children are firmly grounded in the present, challenged daily in their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth and development at Bertschi School, many dedicated parents and staff contributed to the ongoing discussion of what lies ahead in our children's educational journey by way of their participation in this workshop.

The evening was facilitated by T. J. Vassar, Director of the Lakeside Educational Enrichment Program (LEEP) at Lakeside School. Mr. Vassar did a superb job of establishing a welcoming environment of comradery, confidence, and excitement amongst the participants. After introductions, ground rules, and goal-setting, the attendees broke into three groups to work on different areas of the plan: Curriculum and In-Service Training, Admissions and Recruitment, and School Climate and Budget. Despite the short amount of time that the participants had to expand upon the various aspects of the plan, each group's summary report to the group at large clearly showed what a thoughtful, creative, and necessary resource parents are in this collaborative process.

Brigitte Bertschi and T. J. Vassar at Bertschi School's recent workshop on diversity, facilitated by Mr. Vassar, Director of the Lakeside Educational Enrichment Program

The meeting concluded with the understanding that the Diversity Committee would more fully discuss all of the notes from the workshop and incorporate them into the Long-Range Diversity Plan, which will be shared with the greater school community in the near future.



"I think many other schools should look to Bertschi as an example of a school dedicated enough to teaching that it is willing to risk the ambiguity of not knowing where change will end up, but understanding the value of the journey for the kids and the faculty."

T. J. Vassar



Once again, we were reminded that addressing the issues of diversity can be a complex and challenging, but rewarding learning process for both us and our children. Commitment and participation are the key to Bertschi School's continuing success in achieving the goal of helping our children to be better, more fully developed human beings. Thank you to all who contributed to this significant workshop.



1997/98 Bertschi School Budget

by Tony Gaetjens, Finance Committee

The Bertschi School Board of Trustees has approved the 1997/98 preliminary budget presented by the Finance Committee. Next year, our operating budget will be approximately \$1.771 million with 91% from tuition and fees, 7% from fundraising and 2% from interest income. Tuition for 1997/98 will be \$8,600, a 5% increase over this year's tuition.

The preliminary budget reflects our plans to remodel the school house, an effort that will provide one additional classroom by the fall of 1997. The extra classroom will enable us to eliminate the first/second grade split and have two first and two second grade classes. The faculty will be increased by one teacher and reduced by one teacher's aid to support this new configuration; enrollment will increase from 170 students in 1996/97 to approximately 180 students for 1997/98.

The new budget also reflects our commitment to funding technology as a regular part of the program and not as a special project. The technology budget will increase from \$26,000 to \$42,000; remaining technology needs will continue to be funded as enhancements from excess fundraising.

Of the total expense increase, 53% is for faculty compensation, based on the Personnel

Committee's recommendation. Financial aid accounts for 20%, due to higher enrollment, higher tuition, and a higher percentage of tuition income set aside for aid (at 7%, up from 6% in 1996/97). Administration, which accounts for 20% of the total increase, includes \$8,500 for the PNAIS evaluation and accreditation, which is required every eight to 10 years. Plant expense increases account for most of the balance, with some increases for summer project help.

The following table shows the proposed expenditures for the preliminary 1997/98 operating budget, as compared with 1996/97 expenditures. The Board strives to keep tuition in the range of our peer schools and, at the same time, adequately support our excellent program. If you have any questions about the 1997/98 budget or the budgeting process, please feel free to call me.

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.					



Panel members making their opening remarks at Bertschi's Diversity Workshop. (Left to right) Brigitte Bertschi, Sara Carrasco, Randy Katz, T. J. Vassar, Kelly Maunsell

News from the Classroom

Welcome to the Dragon Parade!

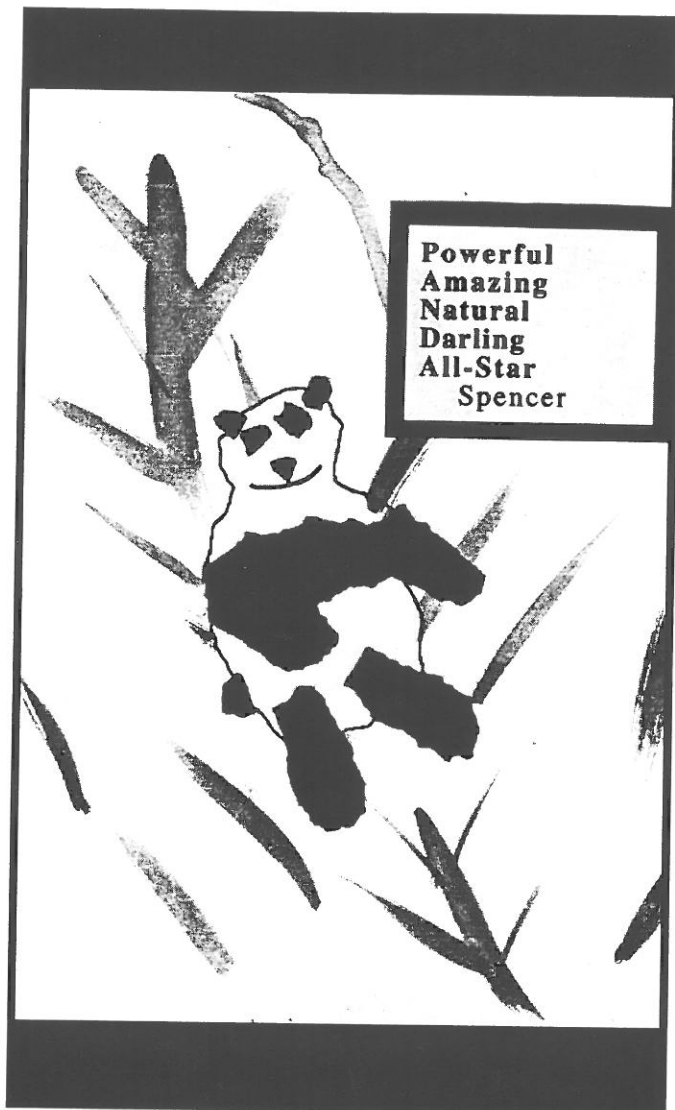
by Brenda Cram

For the past eight years, the two Bertschi kindergarten classes have worked in close collaboration for their study of the Chinese New Year. The idea of creating a dragon first came to mind during the second year, and a Chinese New Year parade soon became the tradition.

Work on the dragon begins in Art class, four or five weeks prior to the parade. Meanwhile, the children study traditions centered around this important Chinese holiday in their classrooms. The classes work together, making paper lanterns and noisemakers to use in the parade. On the day of the parade, each child receives

Chinese Humber (lucky money) in red envelopes. This year, banners and headbands proclaimed the year of the ox and the years in which the children were born. (This year, everyone, including the teachers, was born in either the year of the horse or the year of the ram).

On the day of the parade, the entire school turns out to witness the event on the playground. The audience includes parents, administrators, teachers, staff, and students. Each Kindergarten class has a turn to "dance" underneath the dragon while the others chant, "Gung Hey Fat Choy!" or "Happy New Year" in Chinese. This year, the dragon followed a glittering orb representing the sun and symbolizing the coming of Spring.



Friendship

by Andrea

Andrea February 5, 1992
Friendship is
two beautiful people
joining together.
Friendship is peace.
Friendship is
laughter.
Friendship is
sometimes frustrating.
Friendship is shared.
Friendship is true.

Parent Council News

by Jayne Hulsey, President

The Bertschi Parent Council thanks all the parents and students who volunteered their time for the Open House in January. The support we've had for this and all Parent Council events has been truly outstanding. Thanks to all who participated!

Upcoming Events - Laura Kastner to Speak on March 18

The Bertschi Parent Council is proud to present guest speaker, Laura Kastner, Ph.D., on Tuesday, March 18, from 7:00 to 8:30 P.M.

Dr. Kastner has always been one of the most popular speakers the Parent Council has sponsored, and at this upcoming meeting, she will be speaking on a topic that will soon have a great deal of meaning for all of us: "Enhancing Emotional Intelligence and Preparing for Adolescence." Some of the issues she will address include:

- What does it mean to be emotionally intelligent? (Can we take this feeling stuff too far?)
- What are the skills parents can practice to enhance empathy, social skills, and self-awareness in their child?
- Should parents intervene when they are uncomfortable with their child's friend choices?
- Can a parent help a first to fifth grader become more resilient to adolescent stressors and pressures?
- What should parents do if they think their child lacks zeal and passion for healthy pursuits like school achievement and athletics?

Please join us for what promises to be another inspirational evening with Dr. Kastner!

All School Celebration!!!

**Thursday, May 29
7:00 - 8:30 P.M.**

**Art Exhibits
Singing
Performances
Refreshments**

***Mark Your Calendars!
Don't Miss this Exciting Event!!***

Bertschi Parents Gearing Up for 1997/98 Auction!

Spring is in the air, and that means that plans for the 1997/98 Bertschi School Auction are well underway. The 1997/98 auction is scheduled for Saturday, November 15, at Union Station.

Lyn Lacher has agreed to head up the acquisitions effort for one more year, but is looking for an Acquisitions leader-in-training. Julie Koler and Erin Younger have agreed to co-chair the class projects; Debbie Phillimore will chair the reservations team. We still need volunteers to fill the following positions:

- Co-chairman for Reservations
- Chairman for Catering, Centerpieces, and Backdrop
- Chairman for Invitations

In addition, we'll need our usual "cast of thousands" for transport and setup. If you'd like to volunteer or if you'd like to see a job description for any of these positions, please call the Development Office at 324-2150. And, don't forget to mark your calendars for November 15!

March

- 3 - 7** Foreign Language Week
- 7** Foreign Language Market Place
- 14** Re-enrollment Contracts Due
Electives for Grades 3 - 5
- 17 - 21** All School Community Service
- 21** Electives for Grades 3 - 5
- 25** Board of Trustees Meeting, 5:30 P.M.
- 28** Salmon Release at Thornton Creek
Early Dismissal, 1:30 P.M.
Last Day of Winter Quarter
No Extended Day Available

April

- 3/31 -**
- 4/13** NO SCHOOL - Spring Break
Extended Day Camp 3/31 - 4/4
- 14** First Day of Spring Quarter
- 18** Northwest Opera in the Schools
1:30 - 2:30 P.M.
- 25** NO SCHOOL
Teacher Inservice Day
Extended Day Available
- 4/28 -**
- 5/2** CAT Tests

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