



JSIS PTSA
2009-2010
Handbook

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We hope that you find the information in this handbook useful as we move through the school year together. JSIS is very fortunate to have so many talented and dedicated families working together to make our school the best it can be. We encourage you to think about how you can best contribute your particular talents and time to this effort. We are always looking for better ways to communicate with our families, build our community, enhance our curriculum, and fund our dreams. This is your school – make it what **you** want it to be!

Sincerely,

The JSIS PTSA Board

2009-2010 BOARD MEMBERS

President – Ann Weber

Vice President – *Position available.*

Treasurer – Melanie Sheets

Assistant Treasurer – Christa Woodward

Secretary – Mandy Behrens

Staff Representatives – Chris Nielsen and Katie Raschko

Director of Communications – Arlene Murray

Directors of Community Building – Bambi Chavez & Sarah Suhadolnik

Director of Curriculum Enhancement – Alison Parsons

Directors of Fundraising – Kelli Black & Susan Schudie

Director of Sustainability – Barb Burrill

Director of Japanese Affairs – Rachelle Blaire

Director of Latino Affairs – *Position available.*

Legislative Chair – *Position available.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMMUNICATIONS

All-School E-mail.....	4
Building Leadership Team	4
K-Buddies	4
Our World Newsletter.....	4
“Powered By You” Bulletin Boards.....	4
PTSA General Meetings	4
PTSA Legislative Chair	4
Room Representatives	4
School Tours.....	5
Student Directory	5
Website.....	5
Wednesday Weekly Packets.....	5

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Clothing Bank.....	6
End-of-Year Potluck.....	6
First Day Doughnuts	6
Friday Coffee Hour.....	6
Giving Tree	6
Ice Skating Party.....	6
International Dinner.....	6
Japan Night.....	6
La Fiesta Latina	7
Monster Mash	7
Playground Renovation Project.....	7
Safety Committee	7
Staff Appreciation Week	7
Volunteer Appreciation Reception.....	7

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT

Adult Language Classes	8
After School Activities	8

Chess Night 8

Curriculum Night 8

Día de los Muertos 8

Education Exchange 9

Egg Drop..... 9

Fifth Grade – Camp Kirby, 5th Grade Play, 5th Grade Gift, Graduation 9

Health and Wellness 9

In Classroom Volunteering..... 9

International Arts Consortium (Artist in Residence, Ceramics, Music, Poetry Aloud)..... 10

Landscaping..... 10

Library Support 10

Literacy Night 10

Lunar New Year Assembly..... 10

Math Night..... 10

Parent-Teacher Conferences..... 10

Scholarship Fund 11

Science Fair 11

Spirit Week & Field Day 11

Teacher Grants and Stipends 11

Young Author’s Day 11

FUNDRAISING

Annual Fund..... 12

Book Fairs..... 12

Box Tops for Education..... 12

Bunko Night, Progressive Dinners, and Cooking Classes 12

Grant Writing..... 12

Kindergarten Plant Sale 12

Logo Wear Sales 12

Move-A-Thon 13

PTSA Membership..... 13

Pre-paid Grocery and Gift Cards & E-Scrip..... 13

Wallingford Yard Sale Tour 13

COMMUNICATIONS

All-School Email

All-school email announcements are sent about once a week by a parent volunteer who maintains an all-school email list. The announcements are used to highlight important school information and events, and to alert families to closures, etc.

Building Leadership Team

The principal, staff representatives, and four parent representatives make up the Building Leadership Team (BLT). The BLT is an advisory committee that considers issues relating to the school budget, staffing priorities and other important school functions.

K-Buddies

First grade families sign up to be buddy families for our incoming kindergarten families. K-Buddies can take their incoming K family on a tour of the school, answer any questions they may have, and arrange a summer play date or a first day of school meet-up so the kids can walk to school together.

Our World Newsletter

Our World is the JSIS community newsletter. In the past it has been published bi-weekly and put in the children's Wednesday Packets. We are considering the more environmentally-friendly alternative of sending it via email or only posting it on the JSIS website. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to submit articles and suggest topics to the *Our World* mailbox in the office, or via the email address ourworldnews@gmail.com.

“Powered By You” Bulletin Boards

Get in the habit of checking the bulletin boards outside the office and at the North entrance to the school as they will include all the latest information about school news, events, and volunteer needs.

PTSA General Meetings

Three times per year the PTSA holds general meetings that explore various topics of interest to the community. Last year we talked about our compassion curriculum, had our English teachers lead us through a Writer's Workshop lesson, learned to communicate with our children about their sexual health, and had a special school district guest. This year's meetings will be held in the library on October 6th, January 26th, and April 13th. Complimentary childcare is provided and we are always open to suggestions for topics.

PTSA Legislative Chair

The PTSA Legislative Chair is a member of the PTSA Board who keeps abreast of legislative activity that affects our JSIS families on the local, district, and state levels. The Chair communicates relevant items and opportunities for action to the Board, which then passes the information along to the JSIS community. Past Chairs have been involved in school levy campaigns and statewide legislative meetings. If you enjoy keeping up on politics and have a passion for creating change from the ground up, this position is for you!

Room Representatives

Every class at JSIS has one or two parents who have volunteered to be “Room Reps” for their class. Room Reps facilitate classroom communication between parents, teachers, staff, the PTSA, and the larger school community through weekly class emails and personal communication. Room Reps are an integral part of our success here at JSIS as they help every family feel connected to the school, build a strong classroom community, and encourage volunteerism and participation in school events.

COMMUNICATIONS CONTINUED

School Tours

As part of the Seattle Public Schools Enrollment process prospective parents are welcome to a tour our school on Wednesday mornings during the enrollment period (usually January and February). These tours are organized and led by parent volunteers.

Student Directory

Each year the PTSA publishes a directory that lists students by classrooms with all or some of the following information: parents'/guardians' names, email addresses, home addresses, and phone numbers. The directory also contains a staff list and other helpful info you'll want to keep at your fingertips. It's great for setting up playdates, arranging carpools, sending invitations, and communicating with other school families.

Website

www.jsisweb.com is our school website. The site is created and maintained by parent volunteers and includes the most up to date information available. Please check it frequently.

Wednesday Weekly Packets

A crew of parent volunteers assembles and distributes information to go out to families each Wednesday morning. One parent is the Wednesday Packet Coordinator and 3-4 other parents help get the work done. Anyone is welcome to join the packet team on any Wednesday morning they are available by just showing up in the PTSA Volunteer Room where the packets are assembled.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Clothing Bank

The PTSA maintains a closet full of emergency clothing and shoes in a variety of sizes for those times when our children need to change because of a spill or a personal accident. We also provide some of our families in need with items if requested. The closet is maintained by a parent volunteer who will call for donations when the stock on hand gets low.

End-of-Year Potluck

This is a fun get together that takes place on the JSIS playground near the end of the year when the weather's (hopefully) warm. Potluck items are provided by JSIS families and entertainment is provided by our school choir.

First Day Donuts

The PTSA welcomes all parents/guardians to complimentary donuts and coffee in the cafeteria after the first day's school bell rings at 9:20am. Come and catch up with those you missed over the summer or make some new connections. Sibs welcome.

Friday Coffee Hour

The PTSA hosts a "Coffee Hour" in the Volunteer Room each Friday morning at 9:20am to give parents a chance to socialize and get to know one another. The Coffee Hour Coordinator makes sure the coffee is ready and parents sign up to bring baked goods each week. Sibs are welcome and can play in our "Kid Corner" while their parents chat.

Giving Tree

Every December parent volunteers ask our families in need if they would like to participate in our Giving Tree. The age and sex of a child is listed on a leaf that is posted on the Giving Tree in the Volunteer Room and families are asked to select leaves and buy gifts for those children. Money donations are also collected to purchase paid grocery cards for each family.

Ice Skating Party

Every December parent volunteers coordinate a private ice skating party on a Saturday morning at the Seattle Center's Fisher Pavilion. A small fee is collected for each skater. Don't forget your gloves!

International Dinner

This all-school dinner potluck and performance night occurs in the spring. JSIS families bring a potluck item reflecting their ethnic heritage and wear ethnic dress. Students perform with their classes and participate in sing-a-longs. The evening is filmed and a DVD is produced for sale. This is one of our most attended events and it's great fun with 800 or so of your closest friends!

Japan Night

This all-school event celebrates Japanese culture through informational and activity tables as well as performances and food and drink offerings. Past events have included Taiko Drumming, Aikido and Kendo demonstrations, and Japanese storytelling accompanied by live music. Not to be missed!

COMMUNITY BUILDING CONTINUED

La Fiesta Latina

This all-school event celebrates Latino culture with a dinner potluck followed by folkloric dance performances and a salsa dance party. Come join the fun - es una pachanga!

Monster Mash

This all-school Halloween party happens on a Saturday evening the week before Halloween. Kids (and parents and staff too!) come in costume to play games like the eyeball toss and the skull throw, eat baked goods, and dance. Admission wristbands are sold prior to, and during, the event. Let's do the mash!

Playground Renovation Project

Last year JSIS received a City Of Seattle Neighborhood Matching Grant to have a landscape architecture firm do a master plan for our school grounds. We have a fantastic "Global Playground" plan and now we need to work together to make it happen. The Playground Renovation Committee is always looking for great funding ideas and good helpers.

Safety Committee

This committee of parent volunteers makes sure we are prepared in the event of an emergency or natural disaster. They keep our emergency supplies well stocked and liaise with the staff about how to respond in an emergency situation.

Staff Appreciation Week

During one week in spring we show our appreciation for our wonderful staff by having parents contribute to a week of lunch buffets in the staff lunchroom, distribute flower bouquets to each staff member, and donate raffle items. Every year is different – some years we've had parents bring in their espresso machines and provide coffee all day, other years we've had mini massages available by licensed massage therapists. This committee is always open to suggestions *and connections!*

Volunteer Appreciation Reception

Every June the staff of JSIS shows their appreciation for all of the hard work that our parents and guardians do every day. They hold a breakfast reception in the library featuring pastries, fruit, and beverages, and provide entertainment by singing a song of appreciation written anew each year.

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT

Adult Language Classes

In the fall JSIS Instructional Assistants offer classes in Beginning Spanish/Japanese to interested parents. The classes are at the school and are usually 1-2 hours in length, one evening per week. The classes are very reasonably priced and parents are encouraged to attend if possible. Parents gain a better understanding of the language their child is learning and a greater appreciation for the challenges inherent to an immersion setting.

After School Activities

As part of our commitment to art enrichment, JSIS offers many after school activities that allow our children to explore their creative side in a safe and convenient setting. Classes can be offered by parents, businesses, or organizations as long as a parent volunteers to be the class coordinator. Coordinators ensure that the room for the activity is booked in advance through the school secretary, that all children are accounted for each day the class is held, and that all fees are paid in a timely manner. Past classes have included: Peruvian dance, Modern dance, Art Wizards, Aikido, SPT drama classes, Moonpaper Tent drama and dress-up classes, Chess Club, Sewing, Woodworking, and many others. New classes are always welcome – share your talent with some eager learners!

Chess Night

The Chess Club organizes an all-school Chess Night once a year to encourage enthusiasm for this classic game. The coordinators provide refreshments, chess sets, and willing chess partners from the Chess Club. Look for flyers around the school closer to the event date and come and play!

Curriculum Night

The entire school staff attends this event and presents the curriculum plan for the school year. After the presentation parents are welcome to visit the classrooms and speak with the teachers about any questions they may have. Because the teachers will be speaking in English, this is a PARENT/GUARDIAN-ONLY event and your children cannot attend. To maintain the integrity of the immersion classrooms it is best that the children do not hear their teachers speak in English. Please make your own childcare arrangements as childcare is not provided.

Día de los Muertos & O Bon Festival

November 1st is the “Day of the Dead” in Mexico. Families gather at the graves of their loved ones for nightlong vigils where they make offerings of food and drink on altars they decorate with marigolds, photographs, and candy skulls. The spirits are believed to visit the altars and partake of the offerings. O Bon is a similar holiday in Japan that happens in the summer. It originated as a Japanese Buddhist custom to honor the departed spirits of one’s ancestors and has evolved into a family reunion holiday during which people return to ancestral family places and visit and clean their ancestors’ graves, and when the spirits of ancestors are supposed to revisit the household altars. Our students learn about both of these traditions and do crafts and activities to celebrate them. There is a story reading and altars are erected. Students are encouraged to bring photos of their departed ancestors and share their stories. All families are welcome to attend this event that usually occurs in the morning the Friday before November 1st.

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT CONTINUED

Education Exchange

Students have the opportunity to travel to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico with their family during Mid-Winter Break to attend school at our sister school – Juan de la Barrera. Students attend classes and parents help with school maintenance during the morning hours, and then afternoons are open for beach time. Miss Margretta is our staff chaperone for this trip. At the end of June, 5th Grade Japanese students can participate in a 10 day trip to Tokyo, Japan. Students stay with host families and attend school while chaperones sight-see. Takako Sensei is our staff chaperone for this trip.

Egg Drop

What does a chicken suit and rotten eggs have to do with science? Everything. The Egg Drop is an all-school science experiment that is a long-standing Latona School tradition - it's been done for decades! Children are encouraged to think about how they can protect a single egg from breaking when it is thrown down from the top of the school and then submit their creation. The children can only use recycled and household materials to protect their egg and they must do their work on this project at home. Children sit at the back playground and cheer while Mr. Aramaki and his accomplices throw down the submissions while dressed up in chicken suits. The creative solutions the kids come up with get crazier every year, but no matter what jello always seems to make an appearance. Parents are welcome to attend and lose their voices laughing and screaming.

Fifth Grade – Camp Kirby, 5th Grade Play, 5th Grade Gift, Graduation

Fifth Grade is a big year at JSIS. At the beginning of the school year the class goes to Camp Kirby together to bond and at the end of the year they put on a play for the entire school and plan a service project for the community as their 5th Grade Gift. Graduation is the big culmination of all of their hard work and there isn't a dry eye in the house as parents look on at their children who seem to have grown up out of nowhere. On to Hamilton they go.

Health and Wellness

The Health and Wellness Chair works with the School Nurse, the PTSA Board, and parent volunteers to bring health and wellness topics to the attention of the school community.

In-Classroom Volunteering

Volunteering in your child's classroom is a very rewarding and important job! Classes at JSIS typically have 28 children, so classroom volunteers are essential. Teachers need your help to read with students, photocopy and prepare materials, help with spelling and math, grade papers, assist kids on the computer, and other jobs that vary with each teacher's (and volunteer's) preference. Classroom volunteers must be reliable, as the teachers consider the volunteer schedule in their planning. Volunteering typically begins in October and is organized by your Room Rep.

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT CONTINUED

International Arts Consortium (Artist in Residence, Ceramics, Music, Poetry Aloud)

JSIS facilitates international art awareness through our Artist in Residence, Ceramics, Music, and Poetry Aloud programs. We receive funding through the International Children's Festival (now the Giant Magnet Festival) to sponsor an Artist in Residence who visits each classroom and does art projects with the students. Every class also attends the festival in May. A parent volunteer acts as our Ceramics Chair and keeps our Ceramics program going by running/servicing the school kiln and coordinating other volunteers to assist with two ceramics projects for each classroom each year. Our Music teacher Miss Katie offers a before school choir class for 3rd through 5th graders and coordinates a fall and spring music concert. A parent volunteer acts as our Poetry Aloud Chair and coordinates with the teachers to ensure that every classroom has two opportunities to recite poetry over the PA on Friday mornings. Students also perform at the International Arts Celebration at Hamilton Middle School in the spring. The Celebration provides both schools an opportunity to display the knowledge gained from their respective Artists in Residence.

Landscaping

The Landscaping Committee gathers several times each year to spruce up the school grounds. There is a parent volunteer who acts as the Committee Chair and organizes planning meetings and advertises events.

Library Support

The Library Support Chair assists the librarian with her volunteer needs. The library can always use help with re-shelving, mending, and processing books. Feel free to stop by and lend a hand anytime!

Literacy Night

Literacy Night is held once a year in the cafeteria/gym. Children go from one activity station to another completing literacy activities for raffle tickets. The tickets give them a chance to win books during the many raffle drawings held throughout the evening. The school staff runs most activities, but the Literacy Night Chair enlists and organizes volunteer support.

Lunar New Year Assembly

Parents are welcome to attend this all-school assembly featuring our very own John Stanford Ribbon Dancers and the Chinese Dragon Dance.

Math Night

Math Night is held in the spring in the cafeteria/gym. Families are invited to come to the school and play board games to foster mathematical skills in a fun and informal setting. The Math Night Chair maintains the game inventory, plans for replacement items, and organizes parent volunteers to help pull off the evening.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Because of the structure of our immersion program, our teachers each teach 56, rather than 28 students. The district gives each school 3 days for parent-teacher conferences. That is not enough time to allow for both of your child's teachers to be present at your conference. The district-set conference dates are not your one and only opportunity to meet with your child's teachers. Our teachers are always available to communicate with parents about their children, whether through email or personal meetings scheduled at a mutually beneficial time, so don't be shy – reach out!

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT CONTINUED

Scholarship Fund

The PTSA Director of Curriculum Enhancement oversees a PTSA Scholarship Fund for times when families need a scholarship for pictures on Picture Day, language camp fees, afterschool activity fees, lice combs, etc. The money for this fund comes from parents who provide additional scholarship money when they pay for a class fee, as well as from PTSA fundraising.

Science Fair

A new event to JSIS, the Science Fair will take place in the spring. The Science Fair will help introduce students to the scientific method in a fun and non-competitive way. As they work on their projects, students will learn to come up with a question, formulate a hypothesis, and test their hypothesis through observation and experimentation. The Science Fair will be a great opportunity for students to gain a comfort level with the scientific process and get excited about science.

Spirit Week & Field Day

The last week of school, Spirit Week, is more fun than a barrel of monkeys, with every day a different theme: Crazy Hair Day, Opposite Day, Dress-Up Day, etc. On the eagerly anticipated Field Day the entire school walks to Gasworks Park where the Red team faces the White team in the ultimate showdown over who can win the shoe throw, the tug of war, the moving basket throw, the hula hoop chain, and many other great contests. After the fun is over everyone walks back to school to get a much deserved popsicle and the contest winners are announced the next day. A great time is had by all and parents are very welcome to attend and cheer on their favorite team!

Teacher Grants and Stipends

Each year the JSIS PTSA Board budgets a Teacher Stipend of around \$100 per classroom for teachers to use at their discretion for curriculum enhancement. The Board also provides a larger Teacher Grant (\$1000-\$3000) that teachers can use on a grade band level (K-2 & 3-5) for larger expenses related to special projects or the coordination of a special workshop or visit from an outside performer/educator. The money for the Teacher Stipends and Grants comes from PTSA fundraisers and are a great asset to the school.

Young Author's Day

Book It Theater performs on the stage in the morning and then after a short all-school recess students head to their assigned reading spot in the school (classrooms, hallway nooks, conference rooms, etc.) and have the opportunity to read their published books and hear others read their published books. The reading groups are facilitated by parent volunteers and each consists of a mix of kids from K-5: Japanese, Spanish, and BOC. Families are welcome to attend the morning performance and the reading group. If you can make it to see your young author you'll be very pleased. The readings are so precious from the little ones and the older kids are so sweet and supportive. Everyone works so hard on their books, so it's great to see them get full recognition.

FUNDRAISING

Annual Fund

The Annual Fund is a simple, direct appeal to JSIS families and friends for support. In order to have Instructional Assistants in the immersion classrooms we must raise a large portion of their salaries. The Annual Fund Committee sets a monetary goal and then publishes a brochure and letter, and handles publicity and accounting during the donation period.

Book Fairs

JSIS hosts Book Fairs two times per year to support our library. The Scholastic sale occurs during the Monster Mash and the Santorno Bookstore sale occurs during Literacy Night. A portion of the proceeds from the sales are donated to JSIS.

Box Tops for Education

Bring in your Box Tops from boxes and cartons from products that participate in the program and earn dollars for JSIS. A Box Top collection box is available year round near the Volunteer Room.

Bunko Nights, Progressive Dinners, and Cooking Classes

Bunko Night is a night of fun, food, and drink where you play a fast paced dice game and enjoy the company of other JSIS parents. Bunko takes place at a parent volunteer's home and all attendees pay an attendance fee that is then donated to the school, minus the expenses. Progressive Dinners are another night of fun, food, and drink where parents go from one host's house to another host's house for the different courses of their meal (aperitifs and appetizers, first course, main course, and dessert and drinks). An attendance fee is paid and then donated to the school as the hosts donate the food and drink. Cooking Classes are held in a parent volunteer's home and consists of a cooking class followed by a group meal. An attendance fee is paid and then donated to the school as the hosts donate the food and drink and their cooking expertise. We are always looking for families who want to host/attend these enjoyable community building fundraisers.

Grant Writing

If you enjoy research or writing, we need you to help find/apply for grants to support our program. Work with Mr. Aramaki to prioritize and complete grants. We need all the help we can get!

Kindergarten Plant Sale

Every year our kindergarteners work hard growing seedlings in our greenhouse to raise money for our sister school in Mexico – Juan de la Barrera. Most of the seeds are organic and have been donated by the Seed Exchange. Edibles and ornamentals are offered.

Logo Wear Sales

When you purchase a JSIS logo t-shirt you are supporting the school and advertising our program wherever you go. Shirt orders are usually taken in the fall so don't miss your opportunity. This year other items such as aluminum/steel water bottles and reusable grocery totes may be offered.

FUNDRAISING CONTINUED

Move-A-Thon

This first all-school event of the year happens in October and is a very successful fundraiser for JSIS. Families get pledges from their friends, family, and neighbors (such as \$1/mile, \$1/half mile, or a flat donation amount) for the number of miles their child runs, walks, bikes, scooters, skates, skateboards, unicycles, or pogo stick jumps along the Burke Gilman trail. A closed loop on the portion of the trail by Gasworks Park is supervised by parents, and every student who participates receives a free Move-A-Thon t-shirt and is entered into a raffle for a new bike. The classroom that raises the most money wins a pizza party. Helmet and bike adjustments are provided by Cascade Bicycle Club.

PTSA Membership

PTSA membership is offered to every family at the beginning of the school year in their first day packet; however, parents/guardians may join at any time as membership envelopes are always available on the "Powered By You" bulletin boards. The fee supports the services and programs that the PTSA is able to offer and also contributes to the work done on the local as well as state level by the larger PTSA organization.

Pre-paid Grocery and Gift Cards & E-Scrip

Do you shop at QFC, Starbucks, or PCC (or a long list of others)? Then you can purchase a pre-paid card and these businesses will donate 1-15% of your purchase to JSIS. Card sales occur at the office reception desk most mornings or you can fill out an order form and send it in. Great for holiday gift giving and keeping track of your grocery spending. With E-Scrip you register a credit card online, and a long list of businesses will donate a percentage of your purchases to JSIS.

Wallingford Yard Sale Tour

Go through your stuff and donate your gently used items to our annual Wallingford Yard Sale Tour. A handful of families host the sale in their yards and a map is produced to guide visitors from one house to another. Parents drop their items off and help with set up, sales, and clean up. Refreshments are provided and everyone has a good time either volunteering during the sale or finding great treasures and bargains. This is a great fundraiser because the larger Wallingford community gets a chance to support their local school and interact with school families. A win-win for everyone - fundraising and community building achieved simultaneously!

IS THERE AN EVENT MISSING FROM THIS LIST THAT YOU'D LOVE TO SEE HAPPEN? DO YOU HAVE A GREAT IDEA ABOUT HOW TO IMPROVE OUR PROGRAM OR CREATE A BETTER SENSE OF COMMUNITY? IF SO, PLEASE LET US KNOW! JSIS IS CONSTANTLY EVOLVING AND IMPROVING WITH YOUR HELP AND SUGGESTIONS!! YOU CAN FIND THE EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR ANY MEMBER OF THE PTSA BOARD OR FOR ANY COMMITTEE CHAIR ON OUR JSIS WEBSITE – WWW.JSISWEB.COM