

September 30, 2009

**Current Explorer West Middle School Family to Increase All Annual Fund Contributions - We need your help!**

Dear Explorer West Middle School Families:

**Great Traditions!** That is something everyone at Explorer West Middle School is proud of. And traditionally, this is the time of year when we ask you to support our **Annual Fund drive**. We are now in our 14<sup>th</sup> year and our goal this year is to raise \$55,000 and achieve 100% faculty, board and parent participation.

**Why do I and alumni love this school so much?**

- We have a rigorous academic program taught by highly qualified faculty who are dedicated to teaching young middle school students.
- We continue to keep tuition affordable for families from all income levels.
- Our board, faculty and staff are committed to attracting a diverse student body, while also offering more financial aid than most other schools.
- We have a great performing arts program.
- Our Outdoor Education program is world class and unsurpassed by other schools.
- We offer seven different sports with over 70% student participation rate.
- We have an award winning Sustainability Program.

**Why do we need to have an Annual Fund... isn't tuition enough?**

All private schools charge less in tuition than the full cost of running the school – with the anticipation that fundraising will bridge the gap. The benefit of lower tuition is twofold: first, more families are able to afford the cost of a private school education and, second, fundraising enables families to pay what they can, with the added benefit that any contributions may be tax deductible.

At Explorer West, tuition covers only about 85% of our costs. Explorer West provides your child with an outstanding education while at the same time keeping tuition considerably lower than other Seattle private schools. Here's just a sample of other middle school tuition costs for 2009-2010:

Explorer West Middle School - \$13,900 (three year average)  
Seattle Girls School - \$19,210  
Billings Middle School - \$20,750  
University Prep - \$23,310  
Northwest School - \$24,415

With tuition \$5,000 to \$10,000 less than these other schools, we feel that we are offering the most affordable private school education possible.

**Your donation will be matched**

One of our current families has generously offered to increase your donation by \$50 for all pledges made by October 10, 2009. This means that we need to have you bring your donation to Casino night for the school to be eligible. If you cannot attend, please feel free to drop it by the school before the 10<sup>th</sup>. Remember, you can also pledge to volunteer for a school event if you cannot afford to give, and the school will still be eligible for the \$50 match.

### **Staying competitive**

We need your support. To reach our goal of \$55,000 will take everyone's involvement. Our goal is to also have 100% participation by our board, faculty, staff and parents. In addition to the important programs and activities I have mentioned above, these funds also help support items such as:

- 1) Salaries – We can continue to pay competitive salaries so that we can retain our wonderful teachers.
- 2) Financial Aid – We can remain committed to economic diversity at our school through our financial aid program.
- 3) Facilities – With the age of our buildings, we can cover ongoing maintenance costs.

Our giving levels include:

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$5,000 and above (Trip Leader Status)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$2,500 - \$4,999 (Advisory Staff Status)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,500 – \$2,499 (Olympic Peninsula 20 mile Hike Leader)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 - \$1,499 (Mt. Rainier Hike Leader)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 – \$999 (Quilcene Hike Leader)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 - \$499 (Alpine Lakes Hike Leader)
- \_\_\_\_\_ < \$100 (Fort Warden Hike Leader)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*I am unable to contribute monetarily at this time; I would like to volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ hours to the school in lieu of a monetary gift.

Sincerely,

Evan Hundley  
Head of School

PS: The faculty and staff believe that every child is known and loved at Explorer West Middle School, so help us keep this dream alive.

If everyone pledges by October 10<sup>th</sup>, we can take advantage of the wonderful matching gift.