

2011 – 2012 TOPS Lending Kit Program Memorandum of Understanding

School Name: _____ Phone # _____

Teacher Name: _____ Email: _____

TOPS is a community of science educators that share a set of common resources and activities that when coupled with effective pedagogy provide innovative standards-based learning experiences for your students.

Since 1991 the TOPS Program has been administered and managed at Occidental College in Los Angeles. To ensure that the TOPS community member(s) at your school can fully partake in the benefits of the TOPS experience, the following set of community guidelines and expectations have been developed by the teacher-led TOPS Steering Committee.

By signing this memorandum of understanding you agree to abide by the Guidelines for TOPS Lending Kits. You will be participating in the TOPS Lending Kit Program for the 2011 – 2012 school year. Please review the guidelines on the next page.

Benefits of Participation in TOPS:

- Participating teachers may request up to five TOPS Lending Kits per year.
- Materials will be supplied to support eight to ten lab groups per class (up to five classes per teacher).
- Participating teachers will be invited to participate in special programs, lectures, and other activities hosted by the TOPS program.
- TOPS Lending Kits are only available to trained TOPS teachers. This service allows participating teachers to receive all of the benefits of the TOPS program at a modest subscription fee of \$700 per year.
- Access to the online tools and resources on the TOPS website including an online reservation service. Teachers may request kits and view their confirmed reservations on an online calendar which is located on the TOPS website: <http://departments.oxy.edu/tops>
- An opportunity to participate in the TOPS evaluation program.

Before signing please review the Guidelines for TOPS Lending Kits (see reverse). Please keep a copy of this document for your records. Do not hesitate to contact the TOPS office should you have any questions about this document or TOPS (email: tops@oxy.edu phone: 323-259-2892). The TOPS Lending Kit subscription at your school for 2011 – 2012 will commence when this signed document is on file in the TOPS office at Occidental College.

Principal (signature): _____ Principal name (print): _____

Teacher (signature): _____

Guidelines for the TOPS Lending Kit Program

To participate in the TOPS Lending Kit Program for the 2011 – 2012 academic year (15 August 2011 – 15 June 2012), we understand and agree to abide by the following guidelines developed by the TOPS Steering Committee.

1. As a prerequisite for participation in the TOPS Lending Kit program, (1) teachers must attend a one-week intensive workshop where teachers expand their science content knowledge, sharpen their lab technique, and gain skills on the high-technology instruments that will be a part of the TOPS experience for your students. Additionally, (2) all participating teachers must participate in the one-year TOPS Van Visit Program. Teachers may only use TOPS Lending Kits for the discipline (s) for which they have completed (1) and (2) above, no exceptions. **Only those classes under the direct supervision of the trained TOPS teacher are eligible to participate.**

2. The participating teacher(s) may schedule up to five TOPS Lending Kits during the 2011 – 2012 academic year. Sufficient materials will be supplied to permit eight to ten lab groups per class and up to five classes per teacher to carry out the labs. Every TOPS Lending Kit comes with a list of materials provided by TOPS and the materials that must be provided by the teacher. The materials on the teacher list are common laboratory items. If any teacher lacks these common materials they may request, but are not necessarily guaranteed, access to these items from the TOPS inventory. **TOPS considers special requests on a case-by-case basis and any request should be made at least two weeks before the delivery of the kit.**

3. Reservations for TOPS Lending Kits must be made in advance using the online reservation form located on the TOPS website - <http://departments.oxy.edu/tops>. Teachers will receive confirmation of dates by email and all reservations can be viewed online. Changes to the established schedule can only be made by mutual agreement with the TOPS resource teacher. At least two weeks notice is recommended to make a change.

4. TOPS Lending Kits will be delivered to and picked up from your school site by the TOPS resource teacher or other TOPS staff member. Depending on the lab activity and the schedule, the TOPS resource teacher might need to deliver equipment the day before the kit is used. TOPS Lending Kit teachers are expected to assist in the delivery process and must be flexible with delivery times due to the unpredictable nature of freeway traffic.

5. The TOPS Lending Kit teacher is responsible for supervising the proper and safe use of TOPS equipment. Proper and safe use includes the correct repacking of all equipment in their assigned tubs in advance of the pickup time by TOPS. The rule of thumb is to return equipment in the same container and condition that you received it. Accidental breakage or damage to TOPS equipment is covered by the program. However, equipment loss or damage due to negligence or carelessness on the part of the TOPS Lending Kit teacher or his/her students could result in revocation of TOPS lending kits for the remainder of the year. In the most extreme cases, TOPS services would not be restored unless the school agrees to replace or repair the equipment in question.

6. The TOPS Lending Kit teacher is responsible for assuring that all students follow the appropriate safety procedures and provisions. **The safety of the student is of paramount concern to the TOPS program.** The TOPS Lending Kit teacher will instruct students in the proper use and care of the equipment and the proper precautions to be taken with chemicals and equipment. The TOPS Program, TOPS staff, Occidental College, and/or Howard Hughes Medical Institute cannot be held responsible for, and expressly disclaims all liability for damages, or injury of any kind arising out of negligence on the part of the TOPS Lending Kit teacher or the administration at the school in question.

**Return completed forms by 15 September 2011* to:
Occidental College
TOPS Program (M-5)
1600 Campus Road
Los Angeles, CA 90041**

* If delivery of the first TOPS Lending Kit to your school is scheduled before 15 September 2011 you must return this form at least one week before the delivery of the kit.