WELCOME
Thurston Middle School
Class of 2012!

Introduction to Thurston

From Elementary to Middle	*Ms. Borchers*
First Day & Grade 6 Schedule	*Mr. Lawlor*
Homework & Extra Help	*Ms. Lund*
Attendance and School Safety	*Mr. Bernazzani*
Introduction to Student Services	*Mrs. Raymond*
Guidance	*Mrs. Riley*
Health Office	*Mrs. Sweeney*
Parent Teacher Organization	*Mrs. Whelan*
Summer Reading & Math	*Mrs. Gudaitis, Ms. Marck, Ms. Palermo & Mrs. Yetman*
Student Activities	*Mr. Bernazzani*
News, Important Dates & Communication	*Ms. Borchers*

In Elementary School…

- Classroom is hub of school experience
- One or two core academic teachers
- Parent volunteers in classrooms
- Standards-based reporting 3 x year
- Conferences in fall and spring
- Goals: skill development, socialization, foundation knowledge

Welcome to Middle School!

- A new class every 42 minutes
- 5+ teachers for most students
- Parents volunteer on committees/for special events
- Progress reports and report cards quarterly
- Fall conferences
- Goals: strong habits, sense of responsibility, independent identity, additional content knowledge

ACADEMIC TEAMS

- Teams provide a “school within a school”
- Students are taught by six teachers on a team
- Students remain with their teams throughout the year
- Teams recognize student achievement through quarterly celebrations and awards
- For many activities and trips, teams are combined

ACADEMIC TEAMS

- Team assignment based upon:
  - academic strengths
  - gender
  - special needs
  - social dynamics
  - recommendations from elementary school
  - balance of students from different schools
- Please contact Ms. Borchers or Mr. Bernazzani by **June 10** with placement questions or concerns.

THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

An extended homeroom along with X-Block gives teachers time to help students…

- understand their schedules.
- get lockers organized.
- navigate the hallways.
- find seats at lunch.
- learn about school rules.

Teachers also dispel common “myths” of middle school.

6TH GRADE SCHEDULE

Auditorium	7:35
Advisory	7:50
Block 1	7:58-8:40
Block 2	8:43-9:25
Block 3	9:28-10:10
Block 4	10:13-10:55
Lunch	10:55-11:25
Block 5	11:28-12:10
Block 6	12:13-12:55
Block 7	12:58-1:40
X-Block	1:43-2:25
Dismissal	2:25 regular/1:10 early release

SAMPLE DAY

Block 1	Math
Block 2	Social Studies
Block 3	Technology
Block 4	Language Arts
Lunch	
Block 5	Science
Block 6	Band
Block 7	Reading
X-Block	20/20 reading and homework

Homework

- Expect 45-75 minutes per night
  - Includes long-term assignments/projects
  - Less during MCAS, school vacations, religious holidays, etc.
- Assignments vary by teacher
- Assignments should be recorded in agenda book (sold on 1st day of school)
- Teacher websites
- Coming in 2009-2010: team homework web sites

Extra Help

- X-Block help is always available
- Students develop increasing independence
- Please contact:
  - Teachers with specific assignment questions
  - Team leader or guidance counselor if you have a broader concern
- Email or phone contact info on web
- After School Study (A.K.A. “Homework Club”)
- Mission: Organization
- Open Library
- Computer Club
- Community Resources
  - Westwood Youth & Family Services “The Basement”
  - Westwood Public Library

ATTENDANCE

- 24 Hour Hotline - Report your child's absence **781-326-7500 x2394 by 8:30 AM**
- After 7:50 A.M., child checks in at the office for a late pass to class
- Whenever possible, please schedule appointments and vacations so they don't conflict with school
- New absence/tardy policy beginning this year
- Early pick-up - Child brings written note from parent/guardian to office in the morning and receives a pass
- <u>Parent/guardian must pick up child in person in the office</u>

SCHOOL SAFETY

- All doors locked after 8:00 A.M., except front door by office
- **All visitors** (including parents, substitute teachers, personnel from other buildings) report to the main office to sign in and receive a visitor's badge
- Comprehensive evacuation and lockdown procedure
- Incident Management Team (IMT) meets regularly to review/update procedures
- Each teacher carries emergency plans
- Quarterly fire and lockdown drills
- Positive school climate initiatives

STUDENT SERVICES

Special Education

Students held to high standards

- Self-contained classes
- Learning center
- Co-taught inclusion classes
- Specialized Instruction and related services
- Specialized Resource Programs

- Related Services- OT, PT, SLP

STUDENT SERVICES

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST and GUIDANCE COUNSELORS

BEHAVIOR SPECIALIST

- Social-emotional-behavioral support
- Counseling and Assessments
- Referrals for community resources, counseling, educational resources
- Guidance- Teaching component:
  - Curriculum focus on transition to middle school
  - Complement to grade 7/8 health program

STUDENT SERVICES

- ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION
  Services for English Language Learners

- CHILD SUPPORT TEAMS (CST)
  Meeting student needs through Team collaboration
    Differentiating instruction
    Accommodations based upon student’s needs
    Regular education supports

HEALTH OFFICE

Purpose of the Health Room

- emergency/advisory care for in school illnesses and injuries
- not a diagnostic clinic

Medications

- regulations: doctor's orders and written parental consent required for all medications, including over the counter
- parents supply medication
- students may carry epi-pens, inhalers, eye drops and pancreatic enzymes

Information sharing and confidentiality

- medical information kept strictly confidential
- parents decide what information can be shared with the staff
- sharing has benefits

HEALTH OFFICE, cont.

Infectious diseases

- all infectious diseases should be reported directly to the health room
- reports are confidential
- reporting helps us determine if we need to let other parents know of emerging health issues

Paperwork

- always submit a physical as soon as you get one.
  - required in grade 6
  - required to participate in interscholastic sports (Cross Country)
  - required in grade 7 with immunization boosters
  - required again for grade 9
- grade 6 students must have a physical exam done after Feb. 1, 2009 in the health room by Feb. 1, 2010.
- Students who do not have the physical in by deadline will be excluded from school

HEALTH OFFICE, cont.

Emergency cards

- please provide all the information we ask for on the card
- choose emergency contacts carefully

When to keep your child home

- attendance is a very important component to academic success
- your child should stay home if:
  - he/she has been up most of the night
  - he/she cannot participate in each class
- please be available to pick up your child if he/she comes in sick
- if uncertain, please call the health room in the morning

THURSTON PTO

Involved parents building a safe and vibrant learning community

- Similar to K-5 PTO, with events targeted to middle-schoolers
- Parent meetings in fall & spring, board makes day-to-day decisions
- Dues
  - $30 per child
  - payable at Aug 31 Open House and through early fall
  - Help offset cost of field trips, special events, guest speakers
- Info in weekly email, website, FAQ's, homework page
- List serve signup, summer reading books available in Cafeteria
- Volunteer this evening, at Open House, Curriculum Night, through Principal's email

Summer Reading

Students are required to read a minimum of two books before the start of school.

- All students will read:

  Rules, by Cynthia Lord

- In addition, students should read at least one of the following two books:

  Loser, by Jerry Spinelli

  Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key, by Jack Gantos

Additional reading resources

Westwood Public Library

"100 Books to Read Before Leaving Middle School" list

Books are on sale this evening courtesy of the Thurston PTO.

Summer Math

- **Goal: Keep arithmetic and problem-solving skills sharp during the summer months**
- **5 hours of independent work time**
- **Recommended books or web-based resources**
- **Range of options to suit different students**
- **Hand-outs available in the Cafeteria after the presentation**

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Many curricular and co-curricular activities and events, including:

- Cross Country and track teams
- Friday activities
- Field trips to Hale and Boston
- End-of-year social
- Greek Olympics and the science challenge
- Intramural sports (e.g., floor hockey)
- More after school activities, like…
    - *Great Chefs of Thurston*
    - *The Bulldog Press*
    - *Science Club*

Thurston News

- Construction update
- New in 2009-2010:
  - New student information system
  - Clearer attendance policy
  - Behavior rubric pilot
  - Homework web sites for all teams
- PTO speaker series presents: Joani Geltman (October 28th @ 7:00)

IMPORTANT DATES

Open House
Monday, August 31st 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

First Day of School
Thursday, September 3

First Early Release Wednesday,
September 16, dismissal at 1:10 PM

Curriculum Night *(**tentative** date)*
Thursday, September 24

PTO Speaker Series: Joani Geltman
October 28

Parent Conferences
November 4, November 18, December 2

Student Open House

Monday, August 31st

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

- Drop in any time
- Student schedules available
- Building tours available for students and parents

COMMUNICATION

- Summer letter with team assignment and supply list
- Weekly e-mail updates
  - To subscribe to the Thurston e-mail list, visit http://lists.town.westwood.ma.us/mailman/listinfo/thurston
- PTO quarterly newsletters, semi-annual meetings
- Website
- ConnectEd phone calls
- Quarterly report cards
- Mid-term progress reports
- Annual parent-teacher conferences (fall)

COMMUNICATION, cont.

Whom should I contact about…

Q: a specific assignment or class grade?

A: the teacher who gave the assignment/grade

Q: my child's IEP?

A: your child's special education liaison

Q: my child's overall academic performance?

A: the team leader

Q: a social, emotional or family concern?

A: the team leader, guidance counselor or school psychologist

Q: a discipline/behavior issue?

A: the team leader, assistant principal or principal

Q: volunteer opportunities?

A: a PTO board member

Q: the METCO program?

A: the METCO Liaison (Chanel Taylor) or Director (Sheryl Goodloe x3388)

Q: a bus or lunch card problem?

A: the Bus Coordinator (Peter Howard x1338) or WPS Operations Secretary (Janis Meany x1301)

Additional Questions?

- Ask your tour guide
- Principal, assistant principal, team leaders, guidance counselor available to answer questions now and following tours
- Contact us by phone or e-mail

Thank you!

Please join us in the Cafeteria for…

ListServ Sign-Up

Summer Reading Book Sales

Thurston PTO Information

Volunteer Opportunities

Coffee and Cookies

Q&A