



The cast and crew of Bye, Bye Birdie, who delivered three fantastic performances last week.

Thurston Middle School Update

Aim High ♦ Work Hard ♦ Help Someone Else ♦ Do the Right Thing

April 21, 2010

Dear Thurston Families,

Report cards were distributed last Friday, and signed copies are due back on Wednesday, April 28. In many cases, the report cards are two pages long, since students received grades in their core academic and rotating arts (drama, technology, art, life skills, health) classes, and comments from physical education and music classes. Please take some time to discuss your child's grades and written comments with him or her. Praising successes and strategizing about how to overcome challenges can have a real impact. If you have questions about certain grades or comments, please contact the teacher for that class. For overall academic concerns, call the team leader or guidance counselor.

I have good news for parents of bus students. The **bus registration** process has gone digital! As of April 15, the Westwood Public Schools is accepting **registrations and payments online** for Bus Transportation for next fall. Go to the Westwood Public Schools website and click on the Bus Transportation icon on the home page. From there you will navigate to an FAQ page that will allow you to register and pay for the bus.

When we return from April Vacation, students, staff and the wider community will have the chance to get involved in **Thurston Earth Day**. Our environmental committee, Thurston Goes Green, in conjunction with Thurston's science department, are organizing an environmental fair, encouraging carpooling, biking and walking to school, and hoping to inspire the whole community to think about ways to extend their Earth Day efforts beyond the school day. Please take a moment to review the flier posted in the Forms and Publications section of our web site. It reviews the many ways that students and families can get involved.

Our **6th grade band and chorus** students took their show on the road this past week, **visiting all five Westwood elementary schools!** 6 Red students visited Martha Jones and Downey on Thursday and 6 Blue students visited Sheehan, Hanlon and Deerfield on Friday. Reports from our music directors, Mrs. Leger and Mrs. Sanders, were excellent. Aside from providing a little pre-vacation entertainment, the 6th graders were recruiting potential singers and instrumentalists for next year's groups. Music course selection sheets were handed out to grade 5 classroom teachers and are due back by Monday, May 3.



Congratulations to the cast, crew, orchestra and directors of *Bye, Bye Birdie!* The show was a smashing success. Special thanks go to director Mr. Abate, choreographer Ms. Cosimini, music director Mrs. Legere, and costume designer Mrs. Costanza for their incredible work.

Thurston's April PTO newsletter will be available online by the end of this week and handed out in hard copy form next week. Please make sure you check the web site and your child's backpack!

Finally, this is just a reminder that the **Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center** will be holding a **forum for parents** on the topic of **cyber-bullying** next week. The event takes place on Wednesday evening, **April 28 at 7:00 PM** in the **Westwood High School Auditorium**. The presentation will be followed by a panel discussion.

I hope you are enjoying some extra time with your children this week!

Allison F. Borchers, Principal
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aborchers@westwood.k12.ma.us

School Announcements

Dress Code Reminder

With the warm weather, we are seeing an increase in **dress code** violations at school. Please remind your son or daughter not to wear the following at school:

- hats or other non-religious head-coverings
- sunglasses
- flip-flops; flimsy or ill-fitting footwear; shoes with wheels
- shirts that display obscene language, violence, or advertisements for alcohol and other types of drugs
- clothing that exposes midriffs or underwear; low-cut tops
- spaghetti-strap, halter or strapless tops
- short shorts or skirts; boxer-like shorts [*Note: We consider shorts/skirts that do not at least reach a student's fingertips when his or her arms are relaxed and hanging at his or her sides to be "too short".*]
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Thurston Events Calendar Online

I've received a number of requests to post an "events calendar" on the **Thurston web site**. The good news is that the calendar you are seeking already exists! Here's how to access it:

1. Go to our web site at <http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/index.cfm?pid=10207>.
2. Click on the "Upcoming Events" title in the upper left part of the page.

3. Right under the “View” button on the right hand side of the events title bar, there is a small button called “Calendar View.” Click it.
4. Use the arrows at the top on each side to navigate forward and backward through the calendar.

Locker Decorating Rules

We have instituted a few news rules about **locker decorating** at Thurston. The well-intentioned decorating craze has reached a point where it is disrupting after-school help sessions and professional development and violating fire safety rules. In addition, some approaches to decorating have led to jammed lockers. Students may still decorate friends’ lockers for birthdays, provided they adhere to the following **guidelines**:

- lockers may be decorated during the $\frac{1}{2}$ **hour before or immediately after school only**
- **no more than three decorators** per locker
- decorators should **check in** with the nearest classroom teacher
- **no balloons or other latex decorations** may be used
- decorations should appear **on the front of the locker only**—no tape or wrapping paper inside or around the sides of the locker door
- please **do not tape candy or gum** to the outside of lockers

If you have any questions about these guidelines, please contact me or Mr. Bernazzani in the office.

Upcoming 8th Grade Events

I have some information specifically for **parents of 8th graders**:

- Thurston’s annual **WOSC barbecue and parents’ information meeting** is coming up soon! Join us on **Tuesday, May 4th from 5:30 – 6:30 PM** for burgers, dogs, drinks, desserts and watermelon. Parents and siblings of WOSC members are all invited! All students must have a chaperone accompany them. Tickets are \$8 each or \$32 per family. Be sure to RSVP so we can order enough food. (Forms are available on our web site in the Forms and publications section: <http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/index.cfm?cdid=23986&pid=10338>). The Barbecue will be followed by an important information meeting for the parents of all students going on the WOSC trip to New York.
- Thurston’s **semi-formal** committee is putting together a **slideshow** that will run at the dance. If your child would like to be included in the show, please send up to 3 pictures of your 8th grader, alone or with friends, to: kellygharrington@hotmail.com . Pictures must be received by May 21. Thank you!
- **2010-2011 Westwood High School course assignments** were mailed out Monday to **8th grade families**. If you have questions or concerns about your child’s placement in a particular course or level, please contact the high school department chairperson for that course. For general questions about 9th grade at WHS, contact the WHS guidance department.

PTO Help Needed

There are only **three positions left to fill for next year’s THURSTON PTO board & chairs!**

Chair of the 8th Grade Semiformal

An 8th grade parent, in charge putting on the annual spring semi-formal for our 8th graders.

Chair of Speakers

Schedule and publicize speakers and events related to teaching and parenting middle-schoolers.

PTO Co-President

A 6th or 7th grade parent, acting as a resource for committee chairs and chairing monthly board meetings (a two-year position).

From Kathy Whelan, out-going Co-President, here’s some great insight into the Co-President’s role:

I realize that taking on the job of Thurston PTO president is a little scary. I was petrified! But the commitment is not as time-consuming as you think it might be, and your work can really make a difference.

The term is for two years, but through most of the first year, you will be learning the ropes. Most PTO-sponsored programs are done by committees and their chairs - over 90 parents currently serve on our Thurston committees! The Co-President's role is to guide the chairmen, advise them, and make sure they get appropriate direction and funding. Monthly Board meetings will give you the "inside scoop" on what's happening at the middle school.

If you take the Co-President's job, you'll need to commit to attending two meetings a month. The first is the monthly PTO Board meeting, which usually lasts for an hour during the school day. The second meeting is either the Thurston School Council or the PTO President's Council, both of which meet once a month. Currently, Archana Sharma and I split that duty. In addition, I spend 3-4 hours a week answering emails, prepping for meetings, and so on.

We've been very fortunate at Thurston to have a team of dedicated, insightful and compassionate parents helping us to build a vibrant school culture and maintain strong connections with students' families and the wider community. I hope you'll consider signing on for one of these crucial roles!

Grade 8 Semi-Formal Committee Seeking Donations

The **8th Grade Semi-Formal Dance Committee** want to pass along a thank you to everyone who has donated money, goods, food, time or talent to making the 8th Grade Semi-Formal a success! There is still time to make donations and they would be greatly appreciated! If you are interested in making a financial donation, please make checks out to Thurston PTO, and mail to Kelly Harrington, 74 Stanford Drive or drop in the PTO mailbox. If you are interested in making a donation of some fun food please contact Debbie Morgan at dgreenberglicsw@comcast.net or Trish Conway at trishconway@yahoo.com . If you are interested in lending a Foosball table or an Air Hockey table for the evening, that would greatly help out the entertainment committee. Please contact Debbie Freedman at dgfeldman@verizon.net or Debbie Ellis at thehomedecorator@aol.com.

Westwood Summer Enrichment Program

The Westwood Summer Enrichment Program is pleased to announce the 2010 summer program. We will not be sending out brochures this year – all the information is on the web! The Westwood Summer Enrichment Program offers many opportunities for students entering grades K – 8 to have fun while expanding their educational and personal horizons for up to four weeks from June 28 – July 23. Please visit us on the web at <http://summerenrichment.westwood.wikispaces.net/> for more information, classes and registration forms. This site can also be found under “Quick Links” on the Westwood Schools home page. Questions may be directed to Susan Costanza at scostanza@westwood.k12.ma.us .

Calendar of Events

Important dates and upcoming events:

Tue	4/27	X-Block—Student Council Meeting
Wed	4/28	1:10—Early Dismissal 7:00—MARC Cyber-Bullying Presentation (WHS Auditorium)
Thu	4/29	Thurston Earth Day
Fri	4/30	Grade 6 Field Trip (Museum of Science)
Mon	5/3	2:30—WOSC Meeting

Tue	5/4	5:30—WOSC Family Cookout 6:30—WOSC Parent Meeting
Wed	5/5	1:10—Early Release
Fri	5/7	5:00 AM—WOSC Trip Departure

Thurston Middle School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.