Thurston Middle School Update

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July 10, 2010

Dear Thurston Families,

It seems very quiet in town these days, but things are definitely hopping at the middle school. Yesterday, for example, I had the chance today to see some of the **Westwood Summer Enrichment** program courses in action. Kids in the **hip hop class** showed off their moves to a song by Ke$ha, **scrap-bookers** put beautiful work on display, the **musical theater class** presented "Fractured Fairy Tales" (creative retellings of some classic stories), and future rock stars in the **rock band class** presented an inspired rendition of "Dirty Water." Kudos to **Director Sue Costanza** and the wonderful program staff, for their creativity, enthusiasm and commitment to helping kids stay active and engaged during the summertime! There is more excitement to look forward to next week, when Session B of the enrichment program begins.

I am very pleased to announce that **Marie Alan** has accepted the position of **Department Head of Student Services** at Thurston. Marie comes to us from the Northborough/Southborough district, where she was a district inclusion coordinator working with five different schools. Marie is a self-described "middle school person" and is looking forward to focusing her energies on working with Thurston's students, staff and families. She will be hosting a coffee later this summer, so interested parents can drop in and meet the newest member of our leadership team. Watch your inboxes next week for a special invitation sent via listserv.

We are seeking **student volunteers** to help with finalist interviews for part-time drama and math positions. Students will participate while candidates teach sample lessons and then have the opportunity to provide feedback about each candidate. Specific dates have not yet been set, but all interviews will take place on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday afternoons. Interested soon-to-be 7th and 8th graders can sign up by emailing or calling me.

Academic summer school information was mailed out this past week. Thurston runs a three-week, low-cost "**Ready for Success**" program in August to help students gear up for the fall. Summer school is required for those students who earned unsatisfactory final grades in English or math classes. It is also offered to students whose MCAS scores from the previous year were in the "Warning" or "Needs Improvement" categories. If you have questions about our Ready for Success Program, please contact me.

We are seeking **host families** for new 6th, 7th and 8th grade **Metco students** coming to Thurston next fall. For more details, please see the announcement from Carol Beane, our host program coordinator, below.

I have some news to share on the building front. Old **lockers** in the upstairs 8th grade science hallway were replaced, giving us more elbow room for next year's 8th grade class. In the weeks ahead, the **grounds** in front of Thurston will be undergoing a major change. The driveway in front of the school will be graded and paved and the hillside running down to route 109 will be landscaped.

Look for the next update in two weeks time. Until then, enjoy this beautiful summer weather!

Allison F. Borchers, Principal
(781) 326-7500 x2398
aborchers@westwood.k12.ma.us

School Announcements

Calling All Families

We are looking for a few families who would be interested in hosting a 6th, 7th or 8th grade Metco* student attending Thurston Middle School starting in August 2010. The main goal of our Metco Host Family Program is to give our Boston students a "home away from home": a welcoming place they can go before school-sponsored evening events. Another goal is to help provide support to the family and the student as they learn the ins and outs of the Westwood Public Schools.

We would like the host student be available to attend the open house on August 26th and invite the new student to sit with them at lunch the first few days of school. In the fall, we usually attend a Celtics pre-season game that we hope that all can attend.

If you are interested in becoming a host family, or want to learn more about this wonderful opportunity, please contact Carol Beane, Parent Coordinator for the TMS Metco program at cabeane@verizon.net or (781) 251-9134.

**The Metco Program is a grant program funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is a voluntary program intended to expand educational opportunities, increase diversity, and reduce racial isolation, by permitting students in certain cities to attend public schools in other communities that have agreed to participate. The Program has been in existence since 1966. (From the Metco website http://www.doe.mass.edu/metco)*

Calendar of Events

Important dates and upcoming events:

Mon	**8/2**	Ready for Success Summer School Program Begins
Tue	**8/24**	Running Start Program for new Metco students begins
Thu	**8/26**	10-12 Open House: drop in to pick up schedules, tour the building and practice opening lockers
Tue	**9/7**	Students first day
Thu	**9/9**	Rosh Hashanah—No School
Mon	**9/20**	2:30-3:30 WOSC Meeting (8th grade)

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