Thurston PTO Meeting

September 16, 2010

Present

Allison Borchers

Archana Sharma, Co-President

Joanne Ouellette, Co-President

Chris Giovino, Treasurer

Kelly Harrington, Secretary

Directory – The form distributed for the directory was discussed. Parent information sheets will be cross- checked with the X2 database to be sure that everyone is included with correct information.

Library – Ms. Borchers was delighted to announce that Kathy Whelan has been hired to be a ½ time assistant to help Mrs. Bolger. This will free up Mrs. Bolger to work directly with students and address reading needs.

Internet Safety - Katie LeClerc has been contacted to conduct another internet safety demonstration. Ideally, this demonstration will focus on the issues surrounding Internet bullying.

Technology News - The auditorium will soon be hard wired! This will help bring the auditorium up to date with sound, projectors, and a docking station.

MCAS MCAS scores have arrived and will be mailed out 9/17.

There was new information included with the scores with regard to the school districts and their student's growth in the various areas. Graphs were made showing how the students fared on both performance and their growth from the previous year. Student Growth Potential or SGP is the term for this new information.

Thurston did very well, showing high performance in English, improved Math scores and growth in all areas.

Homework - Thurston staff is attempting to take a new, faster approach to students missing work. Staff will intervene immediately if work is missing.

1st miss – the teacher will phone the student's home

2nd miss – the teacher will notify the team leader so that the team can assess whether this is a single class issue, or a problem in multiple classes.

3rd miss – Mr. Bernazzani and/or Ms. Borchers will step in and see what steps need to be taken to help the student get the necessary assignments in.

Homework Mentors - A peer mentor program to help with homework was also discussed. This program is lead by Tracy Gabriel and involves H.S. students volunteering to work with Middle School students. Peers will model good homework practices and lend a helping hand where needed.

After School Programs - After school programs will begin in September. Students will receive descriptions and sign up information shortly.

One exciting new offering will be from parent, Mrs. Krizer, who will offer a program on investments.

8th Grade Parent Volunteers - Mrs. Peterson is in need of 8th grade parent volunteers for the Hale Reservation and Museum of Science field trips.

Parent/Teacher Conferences - The Thurston has exciting new software that will help with scheduling parent/teacher conferences. More information on scheduling parent/teacher conferences will come out in mid October. Conferences take place in November.

An arrangement will be made for parents without access to the Internet, to phone in and arrange conference dates and times.

METCO – Progress has been made with finding METCO host families. The 6th grade class is all set, but families are still needed to host a few 7th and 8th grade students. Carol Beane spearheads that program.

There is a pre-season Celtics game for all METCO families on Sunday October 10 at 6pm.

Magazine Drive – The magazine drive begins on September 21st. Tiffany Marchbanks will be leading this fundraising program.

8th Grade Semi-Formal – We are still in need of a chair for the 8th grade Semi-Formal. Volunteers are welcome to sign up with a friend as co-chair. Ms. Borchers will assist the PTO by contacting a few Thurston parents.

Thurston Apparel – Joanne Ouellette will be making samples available on curriculum night so that parents can place apparel orders. Parents will be reminded both in the newsletter and in a reminder call to bring their checkbooks and keep their eyes out for the apparel table.

Items available for sale this year will include: PJ pants, yoga pants, leggings, sport pants, lined sport shirts and lined sweatshirts. GREAT STUFF!!!

Additionally, Joanne Ouellette will be contacting Mark Walter and Linda Bates to review the per shirt cost and # of shirts ordered last year. It was suggested that we

might limit the number of shirts ordered this year so that the PTO is not left with a surplus.

Speaker – Michael Thompson may come to spend up to 10 hours working with students and parents on the issue of student anxiety. This may take the form of a 7th grade presentation, teacher training, or a separate presentation for the parents. We hope to fund this program as a three way split between the ongoing student account, grant dollars, and the PTO.

Curriculum Night – A letter will go out the week of 9/20 informing parents about this year's curriculum night. It will be held on October 7. Directories will be available for pick up that night. There will also be tables staffed to collect PTO dues and to order Thurston apparel. It was discussed that the assembly portion of the evening will take place first this year from 6:30-7, followed by the parents moving through their student's schedule.

Ms. Borchers will phone homes with a reminder of Curriculum night on October 6.

Site Council – Site council is a 2-year term. Some serve for 3 years to accommodate the 3 year duration of Middle School.

Returning to the Thurston Site Council this year is Christine Talcott, John Craine, Susan McIntyre, and Helen Gee.

The Site Council is in need of 2 more representatives.

Newsletter - The Newsletter will once again be put together by Robin Ostrander.

Class Trips – Trips scheduled for each grade to date are…

8th – Hale Reservation and Museum of Science

7th – Boston "City Treasures" Field Trip

6th – Hale Reservation

Photography – It was raised that next year a Photo Chair would be a helpful position to have. This person would organize volunteers to photograph various events and field trips throughout the school year.

Treasurer's Report – Chris Giovino went over the budget from 2009-2010 and the proposed budget for 2010-2011. The board discussed the pros and cons of incorporating.

Upcoming PTO meetings

October 14 –9am to 10 am

November 18 – PTO Board Meeting