Thurston Middle School News

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Thurston Parent Teacher Organization

November 2010

Inspiring and Nurturing Creativity *by Allison Borchers, Principal*

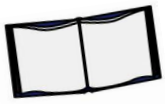
What skills and knowledge will our children need to be successful adults in 2025? The "21st Century Skills" movement in education proposes that students should leave school equipped with new types of knowledge and a different set of skills than their parents possessed. Plain old literacy has given way to global, economic and media literacy. In addition to reading, writing and arithmetic, students must be able to collaborate effectively, problem-solve efficiently and communicate clearly using an array of new technologies. Leaders and pundits in education and business have expressed concern about how our children will compete with their tech-savvy counterparts in India and China when the current generation of school-aged kids reaches adulthood.

At Thurston, we are looking beyond teaching discrete skills, skills that will enable our students to "keep up" (how to make a chart in Excel, for example), to the question of how we help kids become leaders and innovators. Learning to use Excel *is* important, but we can and should do more than that if we want our students to find happiness and success.

One of our school-wide goals this year is to inspire and nurture students' creativity. Creative thinking is an essential component of leadership and innovation. By tapping into kids' creativity, teachers will help students build the skills and experiences that future business leaders, designers and engineers need: children will learn to think flexibly and come up with novel approaches to persistent problems. As a side benefit, learning that draws on creativity is highly engaging for kids. It motivates them in a way that routine tasks do not.

On November 29, teachers will participate in workshops and activities related to inspiring and nurturing creativity in the classroom. They will explore new web 2.0 tools that promote creative thinking, learn about green screen technology, and get comfortable with animation software. Low-tech options include a drama workshop and a hands-on session during which teachers can enhance specific lessons. Workshops are offered by guest presenters and by a few of our own highly- creative staff members (Ms. Cosimini, Ms. Kinsman, and Mr. Kulick).

These are exciting times to be working in the field of education. There is a remarkable ease of access to information, a spirit of collaboration among professionals and a genuine public interest in figuring out how schools can provide a substantial foundation for kids' futures. No one can say for sure what 2025 will look like, but we are all doing are best to make sure that whatever may come, your children will be ready for it.



Magazine Drive!

We met our goal and raised over $12,000!!! Many thanks to parent volunteers headed by Mrs. DiMaria and Mrs. Haney! Orders take 6-10 weeks. If they do not arrive please call Great American at (800) 251-1542. If you would still like to order magazines, you may do so online at www.gafundraising.com using the School ID # 1866235. We receive 40% of the sales all year long.

- Congratulations to all who earned the BMX bike show and especially those who participated enough to meet the BMX riders.
- Good luck to Block 1 rooms 201, 210 205, 111, 215 odd, 116, 105, and 120 in the annual pig race! May the best pig win a pizza party!!

American Math Challenge!

Congratulations to 8th grader **Abi Gowda** who placed **1st** amongst all Massachusetts students participating in the American Math Challenge! He racked up 30,812 points in this 2 day, online competition. Congratulations also to all participating Thurston students! You helped secure 47th place for the Thurston School amongst all participating MATH-COUNTS schools. Students, parents and teachers alike really enjoyed this event and look forward to participating again next year. See www. americanmathchallenge.com for more details.

Project Art Helps Project Bread!

This Fall 8th Grade "Project Art" students have been decorating wooden spoons to be sold for $10 each at the Chorus and Band Evening Holiday Concerts in December. The proceeds will be donated to "Project Bread/Walk for Hunger" which provides food for soup kitchens, school lunch programs, and homeless shelters. The spoon represents feeding and is symbolic of the many people who do not have enough money to provide for this most basic need. If you purchase a decorative spoon, you can feel good that you are helping support the hungry during this holiday season. The spoons are unique! They come in a variety of decorative styles. There is a spoon for everyone's taste!

Additionally, upon request, a tax deductible receipt will be sent to you from "Project Bread." Out right donations are also accepted. Students worked hard decorating these spoons and appreciate your support of their efforts!

PTO UPDATE

→ Membership is over 82%! Thank you to all who have contributed. It is not too late to join!! Simply send your $30 check in with your child. Please make check out to Thurston PTO and mark PTO Dues on the envelope.

→ Apparel/merchandise fundraiser grossed over $7200! Thank you to all Thurston families who participated. Orders will be sent home (unless otherwise specified) on or before Friday, December 3. Watch for the next Apparel Fundraiser coming in Spring!

8th Grade Trip to Hale!

Fall Sports!

SAVE THESE DATES!

- ***Thursday, December 9 - Thurston Day/Night at the Chateau***
- ***Thursday, January 27 - Thurston Night at Jake 'N Joes***
- ***Wednesday, March 2 - Parent Presentation, 7:00-8:30pm, "The Pressured Child: Helping Your Child Find Success in School and Life" by author, psychologist and consultant Michael Thompson***
- ***Friday, March 11 - Thurston PTO Night at The Providence Bruins***
- ***Tuesday, April 5 - Thurston PTO Night at The Boston Celtics****

**** Great Holiday Gift idea!! Orders must be placed by 12/17. Watch for detailed flyer coming home soon!***

CALENDAR

Friday, November 19th .....Term 1 Report Cards Distributed
Wednesday, November 24th .....Early Release, Thanksgiving Break, 11:10pm
Monday, November 29th .....No School; All Day Professional Development
Monday, December 6th .....Chorus Concert, 7pm
Thursday, December 9th .....PTO Board Meeting, 9am
.....PTO Day/Night at the Chateau Restaurant
.....Site Council Meeting, 4pm
Friday, December 10th .....WOSC Dance, 7:30pm
Monday, December 13th.....WOSC Meeting, 2:30pm
.....Band Concert, 7pm
Friday, December 17th .....Term 2 Progress Reports Distributed
Friday, December 24th .....No School, Winter Break Begins
Monday, January 3rd.....School Resumes
Monday, January 10th .....WOSC Meeting, 2:30pm
Thursday, January 13th .....PTO Board Meeting, 9am
.....Site Council Meeting, 4pm
Monday, January 17th .....No School; Martin Luther King Day
Wednesday, January 19th .....6th Grade Red Team Drama Performance, 6:30pm
Thursday, January 20th .....6th Grade Red Team Drama Performance, 6:30pm
Friday, January 21st .....WOSC Dance, 7:30pm
Mon.—Fri., January 24th—28th .....Spring Musical Auditions
Wednesday, January 26th .....Spelling Bee Competition (Snow Day—Wed., Feb. 9th)
Thursday, January 27th .....PTO Night at Jake 'n Joes
Monday, January 31st.....Term 3 Begins
Friday, February 4th.....Term 2 Report Cards Distributed

THURSTON PTO "WOOHOO— I'M NOT COOKING" FUNDRAISERS!!!!!!!!!!!

DAY/NIGHT AT THE CHATEAU!

Join us Thursday, December 9th for "Thurston Day at the Chateau Restaurant" in Norwood! Take a break from cooking, holiday shopping, and driving to activities to take out a delicious lunch or dinner for the family or get together with friends to dine in at the Chateau. 20% of all purchases (food and beverage, lunch and dinner, dine in or take-out,) will benefit our PTO. Thank you to the Chateau for this wonderful opportunity to raise money for our school!

JAKE 'N JOES SPORTS GRILLE NIGHT!

Give the cook in your house a break! Take out dinner for the family or get together with friends to dine in at "Thurston Night at Jake 'N Joes Sports Grille" in Norwood! On Thursday, January 27th, 20% of all dinner purchases (food and beverages, both dine in and take-out) beginning at 5:00 p.m. will benefit our PTO. Thank you to Jake 'N Joes for this wonderful opportunity to raise money for our school!