

After a thorough and rigorous search process, I am pleased to announce that **Michael Redmon** has accepted my offer to become the next principal of Thurston Middle School. Mr. Redmon is currently the principal of the St. Johnsbury School in Vermont where he is highly respected by the faculty, his colleagues, and the school community. Everyone we spoke with in his current school community emphasized how much they will miss his leadership when he departs.

During the search process, I had many opportunities to talk with Mr. Redmon and to observe him in multiple contexts. Throughout the process, he exhibited a strong knowledge of effective teaching and learning, a reflective and insightful approach to his practice, and a deep understanding of and appreciation for middle school age learners. Having reviewed the feedback that I received from all of the constituent groups who interacted with him during the interview process, considered the information that we gleaned from conversations with people familiar with his work, and reflected on Mr. Redmon's skills and qualities as an educator, I am confident that he will be an outstanding leader for Thurston. I believe that his excellent communication skills, his ability to form authentic relationships, and his demonstrated ability to implement thoughtful change will facilitate his success in this position.

With family ties to Westwood (his wife is a Westwood High School graduate), Mr. Redmon made clear during the search process that he knows the Westwood community well, understands our commitment to excellence and serving all students, and that he is eager to dedicate his full attention and energy to Thurston. Though Mr. Redmon does not officially begin until July 1st, we will be working with Mr. Redmon to formulate a transition plan this spring and hope to provide opportunities to meet him before the end of the school year.

We were fortunate to have many highly-qualified candidates for this position, including two impressive finalists. My thanks to everyone who participated in this process. Your input was valuable as I made my decision. In particular, thanks to the TMS students who asked great questions and provided insightful feedback, and thanks and to the members of the search committee who committed a great deal of their time and engaged in a thoughtful process: Kathy Whelan (TMS Faculty), Jesse Murphy (TMS Faculty), Dee Graichen (TMS Faculty), Donna Tobin (MJ Principal), Sean Bevan (WHS Principal), Abigail Hanscom (District Administration), Tony Mullin (Westwood School Committee), Jane O'Donnell (Parent), Michelle Miller-Peck (Parent), and Liz Williamson (Parent).

I know that you will join me in welcoming Mr. Redmon to the Westwood Public Schools!