

PUP PRESS



Brought to you by the Thurgood Marshall Elementary PTA

JANUARY 30, 2014

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EVENTS CALENDAR

No School Tomorrow!

Jan. 31, Friday

Day Between Semesters

Feb. 7, Friday

Lunar New Year Celebration at 5:30 pm in the Cafeteria

Feb. 7, Friday

Spirit Day: "Pajama Day"

TUTU'S PANTRY CALENDAR

Non-perishable food donations can be placed in the large red bins inside school entrance. Grade levels may donate by week (see below).

Feb. 3: Kindergarten/PEACE

Feb. 10: 1st Grade

Feb. 24: 2nd Grade

Mar. 3: 3rd Grade

Mar. 10: 4th Grade

Mar. 17: 5th Grade



THE THURSDAY NOTE:

As I complete my last official workday at Thurgood Marshall, I want to let you know that you will still see me around occasionally. I'll be helping Ms. Helm with the spring tours and the budgeting process, and I still have many loose ends to tie up. And I definitely will be here for 5th Grade Promotion as my sister's child will be part of that promotion group.

Although next Monday morning is going to feel strange because I won't be coming to school for the first time since kindergarten, I need to take the next step in my professional journey. I'll have a cubicle at the District's headquarters and will spend the next six to seven months preparing to turn a school building into a place where students, staff and the community can learn and thrive.

Thurgood Marshall will always have a special place in my heart. Watching this school double in size these past five years has been a tremendous challenge, and yet a gratifying one. I know I'm leaving your children in the best possible professional hands. Your children are also fortunate to have a parent group committed to do whatever it takes to make this school an enriching experience for all.

Continue on with your advocacy for your children and this school. Take good care of this school and all the wonderful children that it serves!

- Principal Breidenbach

Box Tops by Feb. 3

Please have your student bring in your Box Tops to his/her classroom or to the main office by Feb. 3. Do these things make a difference? You bet they do - Thurgood Marshall PTA just got a check for \$570.60! Box Tops all have expiration dates and are no good if they expire, so bring them in now and benefit our school!



It's Taco Time

Get your Taco Time coupon booklet at our Lunar New Year celebration on Feb. 7. Each booklet includes the following coupons: \$1 off any platter item; \$1 off any menu item; \$1 off any beef or chicken taco; \$1 off any tostado salad; Buy 2 crisp tacos, get one free.

Booklets are available for a \$1 donation each. Coupons expire April 30, 2014.

Potluck for Lunar New Year on Feb. 7

Friday, Feb. 7, 5:30-7:30 pm, in the Cafeteria

Join us to celebrate the Year of the Horse. Arts and crafts activities, delicious food and entertainment will be provided! Please also bring a family favorite dish to share.

Photos Needed for Yearbook

Please take a moment to upload your photos of our wonderful Winter Concert at http://dbinbox.com/Thurgood_Marshall_Yearbook. If you have any questions, please email yearbook coordinator Kathryn Saxer at katesaxer@gmail.com. Thank you!

Nominees for APP Task Force

The Seattle Public Schools Advanced Learning Office is seeking nominations for the second Task Force related to Highly Capable students. The Task Force will begin in February, and recommendations should be made no later than April. For more details please visit our PTA website at www.tmlink.org. Nominations due Feb. 7.



TONIGHT: For Parents "Positive Discipline" Class

Is your child's behavior bugging you? Do you experience whining, power struggles, bedtime hassles, dawdling, ignoring?

Join us tonight, **Jan. 30, 6:30-8:30 pm in the school Library** for the Sound Discipline presentation "Parenting with Courage and Conviction."

Using the positive discipline model you can: 1) Reduce power struggles; 2) Discipline with kindness and firmness; 3) Help children become responsible problem solvers, and much more!

Sound Discipline is a non-profit organization based in Seattle. Visit them online at www.sounddiscipline.org

Farewell to Principal Julie Breidenbach from Parents

Julie Breidenbach has had a tremendous positive impact on the culture at Thurgood Marshall Elementary. We were one of the families that moved from Lowell Elementary to Thurgood Marshall five years ago. Since then Julie has accomplished what the naysayers said couldn't be done, which is to create a cohesive school community from several different populations. Five years ago our school population included existing families who resented the new people "taking over" their school, and reassigned families who resented being removed from their school, teachers, and friends. Unhappy families were reluctant to open their pocketbooks for fund raisers, did not participate at school evening events and would tell their friends not to send their kids to our school. That first year we only raised \$48,000 in contributions to the Annual Fund. Now consider that we've already raised more than \$100,000 for the 2013-2014 school year.

Thankfully during Julie's second year the communities within Thurgood Marshall started to believe in her vision and her ability to deliver. You could sense the staff worked well together, the students seemed happier at school, and our community events, such as the pancake breakfast and Lunar New Year celebration, were well attended by a cross section of school families. Our Annual Fund contributions more than doubled and the negative postings on the Seattle School blog dropped significantly.

Fast forward to the present and it's easy to forget the challenges it took to make Thurgood Marshall the great school it is today. Julie didn't do the magic all by herself, but as a leader she knew how to set the positive tone of our school. She assembled an awesome staff and taught families the importance of working together to build a strong community. We will miss her daily presence at our school. - Perry Lee, 5th Grade Parent

I first met Julie at Lowell Elementary where many parents considered her a "treasured" principal. At Lowell I appreciated how seamlessly Julie combined the two groups of students. One of my daughter's fondest memories was cooking classes spent with the special needs students. Our first year at Thurgood Marshall was a difficult transition for my family. We thought Julie had a hard road ahead of her because the new blended family at Thurgood Marshall was not on the same page. But Julie had a plan: excellence for all students; respect for ourselves and others; and above all, a good education for everyone.

After a couple of years the environment at Thurgood Marshall was remarkably improved. Students were playing on the playground instead of fighting. Children were working together across the different programs. Everyone had access to becoming a better reader and writer. Students found true friendship and happiness. Julie had worked her magic again.

It is with a sad heart that we see Julie go to another school, but we are proud of the legacy she leaves us. We know she will create another successful school with her magic. Thank you, Julie, for touching all of our lives and those of our children. - Stephanie Barnett, 5th Grade Parent

Annual Giving Fund: Opportunity Grants and February Match Challenge



Total Raised to Date: \$104,418

Opportunity Grants for teachers are another important way your Annual Giving Fund dollars are being used. This week, our music teacher Mr. Ken Pendergrass shares how an Opportunity Grant helped his students and instruction at Thurgood Marshall.

Q. What did you use the Opportunity Grant funds for?

A. I used Opportunity Grant funds to purchase a CD burner for choir and band students, and a new carpet for my classroom. The PTA also generously funded the purchase of 250 chairs for our concerts and Friday Assemblies.

Q. How have these items helped Thurgood Marshall students, staff and community?

A. The CD burner allows me make practice CDs for choir members to take home and learn music. The rug has helped the Kindergarteners stay much more focused when I teach them. Prior to the PTA purchasing our new chairs for our well attended choir and instrumental concerts, we asked students to bring chairs down from the classrooms. It was a huge distraction to teachers and students. We called it the "great chair migration" and it was quite a scene to have students drag chairs from upstairs to the lunchroom to accommodate our audience.

Q. Would you like the PTA to continue funding Opportunity Grants?

A. Opportunity grants are a generous, tangible way for teachers to get the extra supplies needed to allow them to teach effectively. It can be as simple as a few more books, or as substantial as a new computer. Either way, Opportunity Grants empower teachers to apply for things they know they need in their classroom. I am grateful for the Opportunity Grants I've received from the PTA in the past and hope they will continue into the future.

During our February Challenge Match we can double our donations thanks to three generous TM families who have agreed to match \$4,000 in donations. Your donation to the Annual Giving Fund helps fund future Opportunity Grants for our teachers.

Make checks payable to "Thurgood Marshall PTA." Mail donations to TM Annual Giving Fund, PO Box 22305, Seattle, WA 98122, send it into school with your student, or donate online at www.tmlink.org. Thank you!

Have an article for Pup Press? Send it to Julia Janak at juliajanak@gmail.com. If your e-mail submission is not acknowledged within 24 hours, please call or text to confirm receipt at 206-473-0980.

Principal Transition Q & A

Hosted by the Thurgood Marshall PTA for families and community members
January 22, 2014, 6:30-8:30 pm in the Library

Principal Julie Breidenbach welcomed the group, and introduced Sarah Pritchett, Executive Director of the Central Region for Seattle Public Schools, and our current Assistant Principal Christine Helm.

Why is Principal Julie Breidenbach leaving mid-year?

Julie explained that although the timing is not ideal, the reality is Fairmount Park Elementary School needs an experienced principal to immediately take on the job, and Julie is excited for the opportunity.

Since current Assistant Principal Christine Helm is stepping into the Interim Principal role, who will be our new Assistant Principal?

We are working on getting an Interim AP in place, however we do not yet have any candidates.

Will the Interim Assistant Principal be a permanent hire?

The district has not decided if they will fund Assistant Principals at elementary schools next year. A decision will be made during budget planning in the spring.

Does Christine plan to apply for the permanent Principal position?

Christine will step in as Interim Principal and will apply for the permanent position for next year and beyond.

What is the hiring process for the permanent principal position?

An interview committee will be assembled consisting of teachers, administrators and parents. The committee chair will be Sarah Pritchett, Executive Director of the Central Region for Seattle Public Schools. Parents may apply for spots and will be chosen by lottery. In order to serve on the interview committee, parents must complete a one-hour interview training class* offered by the district. The assembled team will make recommendations to Superintendent José Banda.

Will Julie be taking teachers from Thurgood Marshall?

Fairmount Park is an OPTION school, not a mandated APP program. Therefore teachers who wish to go with Julie must apply for an open spots and go through the application process. No staff will be mandated to relocate. This is not a repeat of what happened five years ago when the District split the APP program at Lowell Elementary School. Back then the District mandated the staff split up between Thurgood Marshall and Lincoln Elementary to ensure equal staffing at both APP programs. Because Fairmount Park is an OPTION school teachers may choose to relocate, but will not be mandated to do so.

Is Fairmount Park hiring teachers right now as well?

Four planning positions for teachers are open right now and will be hired the second week of February so they can help get the school ready. Applicants can be teachers from anywhere within the Seattle school district. The teachers chosen will take on the additional work at night and on weekends rather than leave their current posts.

Will students leave Thurgood Marshall for Fairmount Park?

Julie thinks it will have more of an impact on the younger students rather than the older students who are already quite settled at Thurgood Marshall. Julie thinks a maximum of 30 kids may move but is not sure who will choose to go.

When is Ms. Breidenbach's last day?

Julie's last day is Thursday, January 30th.

* Details on the one-hour training class can be found online here: <http://www.seattleschools.org/modules/groups/homepagefiles/cms/1583136/File/Departmental%20Content/human%20resources/Site%20Based%20Interview%20Training%20Schedule%202013-14.pdf>