



THE THURSDAY NOTE:



Thank you to all the families and teachers who turned out for Bingo Night last Friday. It was a fantastic reminder of the amazing community we have at Thurgood Marshall, and it was so much fun to spend the evening with you. I'm looking forward to the other exciting events we have planned this spring: the Mariners Game Day, the Blue Highway Game Night, Music Concerts and the Summer Picnics.

Before we leave for spring break, I want to recap the activity of these last few months and answer some of the most common questions I've been hearing.

What's the latest on finding the new principal?

Staff and parent volunteers interviewed candidates on March 23. Recommendations were forwarded to Superintendent Banda, who will announce his decision any time now.

Ms. Helm, what are your plans for next year?

Although I decided not to pursue the Principal position for reasons of work-life balance, I'm excited to continue at Thurgood Marshall as Assistant Principal next year.

Which teachers have announced they are leaving?

Mr. Pendergrass (Music), Ms. Quinlivan (4th Grade), Ms. Cowan (3rd Grade), Ms. Chow (2nd Grade), and Ms. Gano (1st/2nd Grade) will move to Fairmount Park Elementary next year. Because Ms. Vosti (3rd Grade) is on an indefinite medical leave, we will be searching for a replacement for her as well.

What's the latest with hiring teachers?

Immediately after spring break we begin interviewing for the 1st-, 2nd-, 3rd- and 4th-grade teachers. Parents who've completed the District interview training are invited to serve on the interview committees. Please email president@tmlink.org by tomorrow, April 11, if you have been trained and want to volunteer. Hiring for the music teacher will occur in May.

Will our school size change next year?

Our enrollment for next year looks stable. While some families will leave to attend Fairmount Park in West Seattle, new families in the area will move to our school for the APP program. In addition, we have a steady and healthy enrollment from our neighborhood for kindergarten. As is the case every year, enrollment numbers will adjust between now and the start of the new school year, but we don't anticipate this to significantly impact staffing.

What about funding for next year? Is anything being cut?

In last week's *Pup Press* I explained how, with the PTA's assistance, we'll be able to continue funding all current programs and staffing at Thurgood Marshall. We're very grateful for your generous financial support of the PTA.

Why the new traffic enforcement during drop-off and pick-up?

This isn't anything new to Thurgood Marshall. The Safety Committee, led by Interim Asst. Principal McShane, is simply reminding everyone to be careful when pulling up to drop off or pick up children. You can review the traffic flow map in the March 27 issue of *Pup Press* online.

I hope this note helps answer any lingering questions. There has been a lot of change recently, but I'm happy to assure you that everything is on track. I'm very excited about the possibilities that lie ahead for our fabulous community. In the meantime, I wish you and your families a wonderful spring break!

- Christine Helm, Interim Principal



UPCOMING EVENTS

April 14-18, Monday-Friday

NO SCHOOL - Spring break

April 27, Sunday

Mariners Game @ 1:10 pm

May 5-9, Monday-Friday

Teacher Appreciation Week

May 7, Wednesday

Thurgood Marshall Open House for current families @ 6:30-8 pm

May 15, Thursday

Games Night @ 6:30 pm

A LOOK AHEAD

May 22, Thursday

Spring Instrumental Concert @ 7 pm

May 23, Friday

Reading Kick-off Event @ 5 pm

May 26, Monday

NO SCHOOL - Memorial Day

May 29, Thursday

PTA General Meeting @ 6:30 pm

June 3, Tuesday

Spring Choir Concert @ 7 pm

June 9-12, Monday-Thursday

Grade level picnics after school

June 13, Friday

Field Day

TUTU'S PANTRY

Specific needs include: canned vegetables and fruit, peanut butter, and tuna.

April 21: 3rd Grade

April 28: 4th Grade

May 5: 5th Grade

May 12: K/PEACE

May 19: 1st Grade

May 27: 2nd Grade

Mariners Game Day Tickets

Order deadline is this Friday, April 11. Join us for the Mariners vs. Rangers game on April 27 at 1:10 pm at Safeco Field. Discount tickets are \$11. Order forms went home with students last week and can be found online at www.tmlink.org under PTA Forms.

Give Feedback on Math Adoption

Seattle Public Schools wants your feedback to help choose the best math curricula for the 2014/15 school year and beyond. Review the materials online at www.bit.ly/MathAdoption2014 or in person at one of six locations, including nearby Douglass-Truth Branch Library. Learn more at www.tinyurl.com/kjcp6aw.

Feedback forms are also available in the Thurgood Marshall front office.

Do Box Tops Matter?

Yes they do! We've already earned over \$800 this school year thanks to your Box Tops. Once you start looking, you'll see these little pink coupons everywhere. Each Box Top coupon is worth 10¢ for our school. Many of your Box Tops may expire in June - so have your child bring them into the classroom, or the main office today! Thank you.



For 5th-Grade Band/Orchestra Students

As a reminder to families, incoming 6th-graders at Washington Middle School next year *do not* have to audition for placement in a music ensemble. Instead Mr. Yarr and I will recommend ensemble placements for each of our current 5th-grade band and orchestra students. Intermediate band students learned our recommendation earlier this week. Details of the WMS music program are on my website at www.mrpendergrass.com.

- Mr Pendergrass, music teacher

Return of the Paper Pup Press

As you know, we'd hoped to switch from a paper to an electronic version of *Pup Press* this year in an effort to save time and money. Unfortunately, neither the school district nor the PTA, has a sufficiently reliable or robust email list to allow an e-version to succeed at this time. Because this newsletter is the primary way our school communicates with families, we're returning to paper distribution for the remainder of this school year.

Did you miss an issue of *Pup Press*? Find every issue from this school year online at www.tmlink.org under News and Events. Recent issues included news about staff changes, school safety and budget planning.

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

Join Teacher Hiring Committees

New teacher hiring will begin after spring break. **If you wish to serve on a hiring committee, you must email us by tomorrow, April 11** at president@tmlink.org with your name and the grade of your child. Note: you must have completed the District interview training first.

Attention All Choir Families

On Thursday, May 1 at 7 pm, the Thurgood Marshall Prep Choir and Cantate Choir will perform at the South Central SPS Choir Festival at Garfield High School. It's important that all choir members attend because every voice makes a difference!

- **Students must arrive at 5:50 pm for rehearsal** in the Garfield auditorium. Parents may go directly to the gym, where the performance begins at 7 pm.
- **Students are required to wear concert dress.** For boys, a shirt with a collar (polo-type shirt is okay). For girls, skirts or pants with a blouse. No faded or old jeans. You've worked hard on this music, so dress up and look good because you will sound good!

Does your child need assistance in order to attend? Contact me at kependergross@seattleschools.org or the school at 252-2800.

- Mr. Pendergrass, music teacher

Cyber Safety

As part of our Library Information curriculum, our 4th-graders have been visiting www.cybersmart.gov.au, a website developed in Australia to help children use the Internet safely. I don't know if it was the Australian accents, or the computer graphics, but the kids had a great time and many hope to visit the website at home, too. I strongly urge students to stay on the Kids pages, in the "upper primary" curriculum. Parents, this could be a great opportunity to discuss with your kids the importance of being safe online. - Merilee Hudson, librarian

Safe Routes to School Update

The District is planning several road improvements to make it safer and more comfortable to walk/bike to Thurgood Marshall. Installation of two speed humps at the front of the school should take place over spring break. Later this year ADA curb ramps will be installed at the corner of S. Judkins St. and 26th Avenue S., and Judkins St. will be repaved between MLK and 26th. Work should be complete by the beginning of September.

Fun Facts Quiz



1. Ms. Dugan, PEACE Academy teacher, has dual citizenship in which country besides the U.S.A?
a. Ireland b. South Africa c. England
2. 5th-grade teacher Ms. Egelhoff once drove from Connecticut to Massachusetts to see the home of what famous person?
a. George Washington b. Emily Dickinson c. Samuel Adams
3. What staff member has met the actor Tom Felton, famous for portraying "Draco Malfoy" in the Harry Potter films?

Answers: 1.a. Ireland 2. b. Emily Dickinson 3. Maddie Powers

We realize that not every parent can attend the PTA meetings held in the evening, and so we strive to provide the entire TM community with the meeting minutes. We hope this will provide transparency, and simply keep you informed! If you have questions or concerns, we would love to hear from you! Email us at: president@tmlink.org.

Thurgood Marshall PTA, General Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

The general membership will vote whether to approve these draft minutes at the next PTA meeting on May 29.

March 27, 2014, 6:30 - 8:30pm

In attendance - Katy Ransom, Sharmila Williams, Jen Hobbs, Julia Janak, Trinia Washington, Tasha Irvine, Casey Sommers, Scott Engan, Annette Sherr, Brindy Bundesmann, Lauri Nakamoto, Birgit McShane, Natalie Zheng, Jinna Kim, Angie Jenkins, Donna Dugan, Stacey Joanovic, Ben Kim

The meeting began with an introduction to Dr. Stephan Blanford of the Seattle Public School Board. Dr. Blanford gave a brief description of what motivated him to join the SPS Board. He joined the board four months ago when he saw an opportunity to apply some of what he has studied and strongly believes in to the SPS. With work, he believes SPS should be the best district in the nation - we have the support of a generous community, polls says we are one of most literate cities, and we value education so highly, to name just three of many reasons. Our current challenges are largely a result of having leaders on different sides of issues opposing one another. We need to find common ground and collaboration. He believes we can get there and he feels very confident in being held accountable.

Q and A period followed:

- 1. What does the next phase of growth boundaries look like? When?** He thinks next year. They will continue to talk about boundaries and see how changing numbers/buildings affect things. High schools will be the focus of the next round of changes with some clean up of elementary and middle school changes that do not make sense - like sending kids out of their neighborhoods for school.
- 2. How will Advanced Learning change in the coming years?** Not sure - Special Education will change first as it is a bigger issue at this point.
- 3. How do the math curriculums among elementary, middle and high schools connect?** The big challenge right now is aligning everything with Common Core. The current focus is replacing Elementary text books. A team is reviewing the various options right now - once the curriculum for Elementary has been decided, Middle and High school will follow.
- 4. When you need to slash, how you do decide what to slash?** There is a very thorough budgetary scrub to eliminate anything that doesn't make sense. The board has made a conscious decision to preserve the classroom student/teacher dynamic. The McCleary decision requires the state to put A LOT more money into public schools.
- 5. Does the SPS raise additional funds?** Yes, through various non-profits such as Alliance for Education. The SPS has a contract lobbyist advocating for SPS and increased funds.
- 6. How do you deal with the criticism that the SPS is doing a very bad job of managing money?** He understands how people can be critical - it is our job to advocate for our kids. We need to look at the best evidence-based strategy to get us to the place that we want to be. Some people just undermine the process at every turn. They want to see SPS fail. We need to work together to succeed. SPS should have the best public education system. And we can get there with a lot of work.
- 7. Now that you are four months in, how do you feel about your campaign promises?** It is more work than he realized - more time away from his family. His family comes from generational poverty. He is the first high school grad, first college grad, first home owner, perhaps first voter. He was real on the trail and he wants the schools to be successful.
- 8. Why not test every kindergarten child for advanced learning opportunities?** Wouldn't it help the inequitable demographics? Part of his strategy is to ask the board and staff those hard questions. We are a very segregated city yet we are one of the most progressive cities. How is that possible? His hope is that the superintendent can start to push some of those boundaries. He would like to encourage his colleagues to give Jose Banda the support he needs for that change.

Regular meeting agenda resumed...

1/16 Minutes were approved

Parking Lot Update - Ms. McShane is very happy to be at TM. She looks forward to creating a safe and efficient parking lot over the next few weeks. Please take note and ABIDE BY the new markings as well as any cones directing traffic. Thank you!

Principal Hiring committee Update - We will find out in the next two to three weeks what the superintendent has decided regarding our incoming Principal.

Volunteer Chair Update - Wendy Eckert

We are looking for volunteers for various events including Teacher Appreciation Week, Bingo and Field Day. Please consider lending a few hours of your time to make these events a success! Your time is very appreciated.

Principal's Report - Christine Helm

A few budget iterations have taken place. Enrollment projections are a little too fluid at this point. We want to keep staffing as it is this year, and not down one teacher as the district had suggested. It was avoided that with a mitigation submission. So at this point we have voted yes on budget and staffing for next year and staffing numbers will remain the same. Staffing changes will occur - five teachers are leaving TM for Fairmount Park and Vosti is still out on medical leave - at a minimum there will be five hiring committees - those jobs will be posted on april 15th for internal applicants only.

Treasurer's Report - Brindy Bundesmann

Brindy explained that the TM PTA works in parallel with the school to supplement staffing budget - the process requires working with staff, principal and BLT to commit to supplementary staffing in line with the district's deadline, earlier than the PTA deadline. Budget materials can be found online at www.tmlink.org under "About Us - What the PTA Supports."

2014/15 PTA staff funding is as follows – PTA will fund a total of 1.1 FTE (same as 2013/2014). The breakdown is .5 Librarian and .6 Counselor. The PTA was asked to commit same FTE with slightly higher dollar amount due to yearly salary increases. Our dollar commitment has gone up to \$84,984 from \$82,565. The goal was to maintain consistent staffing and support the current programs so that there is no loss of programs next year. The board has approved the proposal. Brindy moved to approve the grant proposal. Tasha seconded the motion. The 2014/2015 supplemental staff portion of the budget was approved.

We are very much on target with revenue and expenditures - no areas of concern. The next step in the PTA budgeting process is for the Budget Committee to meet to determine how the rest of the funds will be allocated. Input from teachers and families are welcome. If you have ideas of how the PTA should spend funds or if you would like to be involved in the decision-making process, please let Brindy know.

Fundraising Update - Casey Sommers

We have over 120k at this point. We are 93% of the way to our financial goal. We have 9k yet to go. We will push to accomplish that during the May Give Big campaign. We are currently at 46% participation. We would like to reach 60% by end of year. We are still looking for a Fundraising accounting manager and various other volunteer opportunities within the Fundraising committee. Please see Casey if you are interested.

Meeting adjourned.