The Year of ‘Sharing Our Stories’

Our theme for this year is “Sharing Our Stories.” The idea behind this theme is that to really build bridges between the various factions of our community, we need to understand each other’s stories. The first step in this is sharing our ideas and experiences so we can begin to know each other better.

You may have noticed the bulletin board in our entryway with our “Sharing Our Stories” theme on it. At a recent staff meeting, our teachers created six-word memoirs – very short stories telling us something about whom they are. Here are a few examples: “A dad, in first grade again,” “Teacher: Leader, Creator, Supporter, Inspirer, Learner,” and “Reads people/See everything/Chooses Positive.” And my own: “Always reading books… Searching for answers.”

I invite you to share your own six-word memoir with us. I have posted paper near the bulletin board – give it a try and post your results to share with us. You may choose to add your name or to remain anonymous. NPR took the six-word memoir a step further and created the “Race Card Project.” Participants try to distill their thoughts, ideas and experiences about race in just six words. You can learn more: [http://theracecardproject.com](http://theracecardproject.com).

Other resources to get your creative juices flowing:

- Six Words Are The Way in Ted Talk – [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8eY0oAdQrs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8eY0oAdQrs)

This year, we also hope to gain a better understanding about our students’ stories, particularly in the way they feel about their school experiences. To that end, Assistant Principal Sabrina Kovacs-Storlie and I are recruiting two students from each classroom in Grades 3-5 to participate in a focus group. We plan to meet with these students regularly throughout the year to learn what they like about the school, what they think could be improved, and other questions related to our District’s annual student-climate survey. [See our school’s results at http://bit.ly/TMclimate](http://bit.ly/TMclimate). The results of the District surveys leave some areas up to adult interpretation that may not fully reflect a child’s experience. We are hoping that we can get the inside scoop from our students and use this information to improve our practices. We will also be participating in a District pilot project to give a short, interim climate survey each trimester. Students spend many of their waking hours in school each day; we want school to be a place that feels safe and comfortable to them. By listening to their experiences, together we can create this environment.

Survey on 2017 Bell Times

In 2017-18 the District will add 20 more minutes per school day, except for one day per week, which will be 1 hour shorter than the others in order to provide teachers with collaboration time. The District is asking families to offer their preferences on how these changes should be made. Six specific alternatives have been proposed, including three in which Thurgood Marshall’s start time would be 10:15 a.m. or later on the weekday when teachers will have meeting time. The full array of the bell time ideas, and option to take a survey, is at [http://bit.ly/2017timechange](http://bit.ly/2017timechange). In addition, printed surveys are available in the front office, translated into the top six home languages of families with students in Seattle Public Schools. Deadline for taking this survey is Oct. 21.
**Topic at PTA Meeting on Oct. 18**

**Bringing Home the Social Tools Used at School**

The PTA is pleased to present School Counselor Meghan Kaloper for a discussion of Positive Discipline, RULER (the social/emotional learning program at Thurgood Marshall) and more. What do these words really mean? Come to our first PTA general meeting of 2016-17 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 18, to find out, and meet other parents and staff during the 6-6:30 Appetizer Social. (If possible, bring a favorite item to share.)

At the meeting, starting at 6:30, learn the basics of the role of the counselor. Get a glimpse into what your child is learning through the school counseling classroom lessons and hear about the various programs Ms. Kaloper works to support (Conflict Mediators and Recess Mentors, as well as RULER). You will also get a tutorial on how to use RULER at home and we will set aside time to brainstrom with your fellow parents about how you might use some of the RULER tools and techniques. Walk away confident in trying some new ideas and know that Ms. Kaloper is always a resource to you and your family!

*Note: The YMCA program’s staff will provide FREE child care, including pizza, for 30 school-aged children in the Cafeteria. You must RSVP in advance to pta@tmlink.org.*

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**Volunteers Needed: Health Screenings, Yearbook, More**

Please help with some of our school’s most important events and projects!

**Health Screenings** (Oct. 11-12). Assist the school nurse with vision and hearing screening! Full day commitments preferred, but morning or afternoon shifts welcome. Online signup: [http://tinyurl.com/TMhealthscreen](http://tinyurl.com/TMhealthscreen).

**Yearbook Coordinator Jen Hobbs needs assistants** such as a FERPA fetcher, Editor and Purchase Distributor. More specific job descriptions available. Email volunteering@tmlink.org or Jen at jen@jenfu.org.

**Tutu’s Pantry** seeks someone to help identify/recruit/coordinate companies or organizations that can provide food donations on a recurring basis. Email Maggie: maggietrapp@yahoo.com.

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**Bullpup Briefs**

**Message about Dismissal? Don’t Call at Last Minute**

If you need to get your child(ren) a message about dismissal, please try to call the office as early in the day as possible. Ms. Dickey and Ms. Patu report that calls about pick-up and dismissal tend to come in all at once at the end of the day, making it difficult to relay the messages in a timely manner.

We understand how important your messages are and want to be certain that each child knows how they are getting home at the end of the day. Thanks for your cooperation! Oh, you need that number?: 206-252-2800.

**DJ Eric is Back for Fall Dance but Event Leader is Needed**

Mark your dance card for the Fall Family Dance and Holiday Food Drive, on Nov. 4, 6:30-8 p.m. in the Cafeteria/ Gym. DJ Eric will be back to spin the tunes, and we’ll enjoy a potluck of appetizers, finger foods and desserts.

While the full volunteer signup is not yet posted, the PTA is seeking a person or two to take the helm on coordinating. Please email volunteering@tmlink.org ASAP!

**Sat. Workshop on ‘Puzzle of the Gifted Family’**

An 8-hour workshop on Saturday, Oct. 8, will teach parents how to use tools developed by SENG (“Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted”). Specific tools to be covered in “Putting Together the Puzzle of the Gifted Family” include:

1) measuring gifted traits in family members,

2) examining causes of ongoing conflicts and misunderstandings, and

3) identifying strategies to help address those challenges.

The presenters are Anne van Roden and Gloria Sandford, licensed mental health professionals who work with gifted families in the Seattle area. The workshop will run 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at the Good Shepherd Center in Wallingford. Cost is $175 for 1 parent, $245 for 2 (in same family).

Come to the year’s first

PTA General Meeting
6–8 p.m. • Oct. 18, 2016 • TM Library

6-6:30 will feature
An Appetizer Social
Bring something to share if you’d like

6:30-8 will include a brief report by Principal Katie May and feature a Special Talk by School Counselor Meghan Kaloper “Home-School Connections with Big Impact”

→ Hear what your child is learning through school counseling classroom lessons.
→ Find out how to use RULER at home, and brainstorm with fellow parents about how to incorporate RULER tools and techniques.
→ Walk away confident in trying some new ideas and knowing that Ms. Kaloper is always a resource for your family!

FREE child care, including pizza dinner, for 30 school-aged children Hosted by the YMCA in the Cafeteria – Must RSVP to pta@tmlink.org

Meeting is open to all TM families (no PTA membership required)
Be a Part of PTA’s Reflections® Program

2016–2017 THEME:
What Is Your Story?
An opportunity for your art and creativity to be recognized!

Art entries from all students welcome.

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: Friday, Nov.4 to the Art Room
FOR DETAILS, CONTACT: blzirngible@seattleschools.org