Seeing Results from Blended Classes

I wanted to give you an update on our Social Studies program. Anecdotally, we are seeing a shift in relationships between students. This started slowly at first, with a few students beginning to connect. At our most recent Social Studies Steering Committee meeting, teachers reported that friendships are really developing across settings (not just in Social Studies). A parent mentioned that she hears her child and their friends more often talking about new kids. Ms. Kovacs-Storlie and I see students regularly eating with children they have gotten to know in Social Studies. Our Art, Music and PE teachers, who have classes blended across programs in 1st and 4th grade, frequently let me know how well this works. Given our focus on becoming a more-connected learning community, I am gratified to see students from different programs form relationships.

Our Parent Survey received 132 responses, and reflected the right proportion for each grade. About 18 percent of respondents had students in General Education, 2 percent in the PEACE Academy, and 80 percent in the Highly Capable Program. Here’s some of what we learned:

- 60 percent of parents report their child talks about Social Studies at home
- 72 percent of parents report their child has made friends with a child outside of their program this year.
- 95 percent of parents reported that they felt positive (61 percent) or neutral (34 percent) about our Social Studies program.
- Many of you (92 percent!) would like more information about what students are learning in Social Studies.
- Most of you would prefer that information come through the Pup Press and teacher newsletters.

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Donations Doubled for ‘March Match-ness’ Only

Join the “Big Dance” to support our school!

As budget cuts loom, we need your help more than ever to raise the PTA funding that supports key programs at our school. Thanks to a generous group of donors, we’ve created a 2-for-1 play. Every dollar donated in March, up to $15,000, will be DOUBLED!

Everyone at Thurgood Marshall can help us earn the match: Benchwarmers … get in the game and make your gift NOW! Already gave? Go for the rebound – give again! The PTA spends $300/student annually and must raise $160,000, total.

Give online at http://bit.ly/TM2017AGF, or send donations via kid mail or by postal mail to Thurgood Marshall Annual Fund, 2401 S. Irving St., Questions? Reach Fundraising Co-Chairs Heather Bauer and Stacey Kryman at giving@tmlink.org.

Consider PTA Board Positions

As many of you know, part of what makes our school great is the PTA. It builds community with events, coordinates volunteers, runs the Enrichment Program, raises funds, and much more.

The PTA Board drives most of these activities, and positions are available for 2017-18: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Communications Chair, Events Chair, Fundraising Chair, Volunteer Chair, to name a few. All roles can be shared by two co-Chairs to help ensure a rewarding, flexible experience.

Would you consider joining the PTA Board next year? You can learn more by contacting Jennifer Ellis at jenniferellis.206@gmail.com or viewing www.tmlink.org/info/join-pta-board.

Want to Meet with Teacher? Please Give Advance Notice

Parents, our teachers want to work closely with you, listen to your concerns and be a partner in your child’s education. If you wish to meet with a teacher, please do your best to set up a time in advance, rather than popping in. A teacher’s day is very full with planning for and preparing lessons, meeting with grade-level teammates and intervention specialists, working with individual kids, and teaching the full group.

Teachers find it difficult to just drop what they are doing to meet with a parent if they have already allotted that time to preparing a lesson. A teacher in the middle of instructing a class cannot interrupt student learning to meet with a parent. Thank you for your understanding!

– Katie May

Mr. Bullpup asks that you to take your best shot.
The impact of budget cuts is starting to become very real. You may know that we received some legislative relief, that greatly reduces the $74M deficit we were expecting, but does not get us anywhere close to our anticipated expenses next year. Thus, we’re looking at significant reductions.

The Superintendent proposed Tuesday night that Central Office bear the brunt of most of these cuts, which I believe could negatively impact our efforts to close opportunity gaps. I’ve asked that the Superintendent be clearer about his rationale for all cuts falling on Central Office and any assurances that he is prioritizing equity when making these cuts.

School Board Elections: Three of the seven positions will come up this summer and fall, and candidate filing deadlines are May 19. I have announced that I will not run again, so the District 5 position is available, as is District 4 (held by Director Peters) and District 7 (held by Director Patu). I’d be happy to talk to anyone considering throwing their hat in the ring, because I believe we need good candidates who are well informed about the issues that will face the District and the challenges of serving on the Board. Contact me at dsblanford@seattleschools.org.

Pup Press occasionally runs updates and commentary from elected and other Seattle School District officials. Dr. Stephan Blanford represents the region of Seattle that includes our school.

TM’s Focus on Equity & Racism

Teams Meet Tonight; Workshop on Tues.

The Equity Action Teams meeting in the Library 6-8 tonight (March 23) will review progress and plan next steps. Child care info below.

Limited space is still available in the FREE “Undoing Racism & Teaching Equity to our Children” workshop 6-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday (March 28). Learn how your family – of any ethnicity or background – can talk about racial identity and racism. Families of Color Seattle (FOCS) will help us explore systemic racism and our understanding of racial identity, power, privilege and oppression. The workshop is hosted by TM’s PTA, Equity Action Teams and the Black Families Advocacy Support Group. Please RSVP to https://undoingracismtm.eventbrite.com.

Free care at equity events for up to 30 children (ages 5-12) is available to parents attending. YOU MUST reserve in advance: Contact Sterling at 206-718-5705 or sterlingnelson@seattleymca.org.

TM Team Close in Global Reading Challenge Final