

THE PLAN

Adding 7th and 8th Grades at Broadoaks

Background: For more than a decade, Broadoaks parents have requested the addition of a middle school program. After careful consideration of the potential benefits and costs of expanding Broadoaks, college administrators determined about three years ago that a middle school would contribute to the college in significant ways. Dr. Susan Gotsch, Vice President for Academic Affairs met with parents on two occasions to express the institution's interest in Broadoaks' expansion and to explain that Broadoaks could not expand until appropriate space could be allocated.

Current Status: We have space and a *preliminary plan* to open 7th grade in 2009 and 8th grade in 2010, but much work remains to be done to transform the plan into reality. A key element is parent commitment to the project, both through their active involvement in the implementation process and, most importantly, their willingness to make early enrollment commitments.

Mission: To expand Broadoaks' role as a learning laboratory for Whittier College students and faculty by providing a consistent model of excellence in programs and services for middle school students and their families in a campus demonstration school setting.

The Vision: The middle school program will be of the same consistently high quality as the existing preschool and elementary school. Middle school teachers will subscribe to the same strength-based approach to active learning and will consistently implement "best instructional practices" based on contemporary educational theory and research.

The middle school will not be typical, but rather, an extraordinary, exemplary, perhaps even idealized, school setting where students truly feel as if they are part of a Community of Learners.

The middle school will take advantage of its location on a college campus, incorporating college faculty and other institutional resources into the instructional program to the greatest extent possible. Experienced Broadoaks teachers will be centrally responsible for curriculum and instruction, working collaboratively with college faculty who teach in the program.

The middle school will follow California State Standards and highlight mathematics and science. Broadoaks middle school will be small and, therefore, unable to provide some experiences readily available in larger middle schools, such as, for example, intramural sports or a marching band.

Facilities: The program will initially be housed in three home-like structures on the south side of Philadelphia Street.

Class Size: Classes will be small in order to create an intimate, collaborative, mutually supportive learning environment where students receive individualized instruction to challenge each of them to perform to the best of their ability. Classes will be limited to approximately 20 students. Teacher student ratios will be approximately 1:20.

Parent Involvement and Commitment: We will hold a series of meetings beginning in spring 2008 and continuing throughout 2008-2009. Parents will be a vital part of the planning and implementation process.

Tuition and Fundraising: The college is exploring a variety of possible grants and other funding sources to help create and sustain the middle school. However, as with the preschool and elementary school, the middle school will have to be self-sustaining, generating sufficient revenues through tuition

to cover salaries and operating costs, as well as sufficient revenues through fundraising to cover instructional materials, furnishing, and other costs not covered by tuition. As with the existing program, our intention is to provide extraordinary educational opportunities for the lowest possible tuition so we can sustain a diverse and widely representative student population.

Timeline: If there is sufficient interest among parents of current 4th and 5th-grade students, we will begin implementing the plan in spring 2008. If everything goes according to schedule, we anticipate opening 7th grade for summer school in 2009 and adding 8th grade the following summer.

Enrollment priority will be given to currently enrolled students. Priority Enrollment applications for 2009-2010 will be accepted in September and October 2008, after which any remaining spaces will be made available to students who are not currently enrolled at Broadoaks. Acceptance criteria and policies will be developed in spring 2008.

First Step: The very first step will be for parents to complete the interest survey available in the school office and on the Broadoaks website.