

MetWest Is Hiring!! Teacher/Advisor Position Available for 2010-2011

METWEST HIGH SCHOOL OVERVIEW

MetWest High School is a small Oakland public high school serving one hundred sixty students. In conjunction with their advisors, each student designs an individualized learning plan focused on their interests and passions. The core of each student's learning plan is an internship that gives students a deep sense of how their interests play out in the adult world, and provides an authentic environment and audience for their work. Our curriculum is designed to teach students the academic skills and habits they need to successfully complete rigorous, complex, real world project work. The work is grounded in a theoretical framework that enables our students to analyze history, literature, and the world around them in terms of institutional, interpersonal, and internalized oppression and institutional, community, and personal liberatory action.

College-Prep through 'Real World' Learning: While MetWest is focused on students pursuing their passions in the workplace, it is not a vocational school. Rather than training students to follow a particular career path, the internship structure is designed to foster students' intellectual development through first-hand experience, and to develop habits of initiative-taking in their education. Our students spend two days a week working with a mentor at an internship of their choosing, learning professional expectations, communicating effectively with adults from different backgrounds, and producing real world work. In addition to their integrated coursework at MetWest and their individualized, internship-based projects, many of our students take courses at Laney College. We expect all of our students to continue their education after high school, and internships, projects, and community college experiences are important opportunities for them to envision possible paths for their lives after MetWest.

OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

We learn best in the context of being known well. Real relationships between adults and young people are crucial to their academic development. To this end, each Advisor works with a core group of 20 students for 2 years, visiting their homes and being in regular contact with their families.

We learn best when we are pursuing our own passions and interests. We design and teach curriculum that is related to students' experience and that helps them understand the world they are living in. Whether that means investigating the environmental impacts the Port of Oakland has on the air we're breathing, or analyzing Oedipus to make sense of human motivation, we work to connect curricula to students' lives and experience. We also intentionally design all of our curriculum to support students' skill building around the investigative and analytical skills they need to design and complete increasingly complex project work.

We learn most deeply when we connect "mind" work and "hand" work. High schools in this country have traditionally separated mind learning and hand learning, yet we know that in order to learn things deeply, we need to study and try them out. Our students take this powerful opportunity when they study health and the causes of premature birth while interning at Highland Hospital, or when they study Government while interning with a member of City Council.

We work harder when our work has real meaning and value to others. At the end of each quarter, our students demonstrate their learning through formal public exhibitions. They answer questions and receive feedback from a panel of peers, teachers, parents, mentors, and community members.

YOUR WEEKLY SCHEDULE

As an Advisor, you will teach Advisory class to your 20 students every morning. Unlike most schools' "advisory", Advisory at MetWest is an integrated academic class that includes academic units designed to teach our school-wide learning objectives and the habits of work required for academic and professional success, as well as community building activities.

The rest of MWF are spent teaching small groups or coaching students individually. You are a teacher, a project manager, and a social support person for your advisees. You will conduct regular meetings and phone conferences with your students' family members regarding their progress. You will coordinate academic and internship opportunities for students inside and outside of school for the school year and the summer.

The rest of Tuesday and Thursday are spent visiting students' internship sites all over the Bay Area, meeting with them and their mentors to plan, troubleshoot, reflect on and evaluate project work and internship work. You will coach students through the search process, from creating professional resumes, to making phone inquiries, to conducting informational interviews. You will develop, support, and monitor in-depth, multi-disciplinary projects with students and internship mentors.

Supportive professional community

The staff of MetWest work together 5 1/2 hours weekly to create curriculum, reflect on our teaching and our students' learning, evaluate our results, and plan for school-wide improvement. We plan and implement multi-disciplinary curriculum in teams. We build capacity as we share best practices and teaching dilemmas in a creative, collaborative, supportive environment.

Summer work prepares us for an excellent school year, through home visits to students, student orientations, and 13 days of professional development which includes integration of new staff into our professional learning community, collaborative curriculum planning time, and whole-school focus work (based on our year-long school wide focus).

As part of the Big Picture Learning network of schools, we receive training and support from Big Picture Learning, a wealth of curriculum and technological tools, and the opportunity to collaborate with staff at other schools around the network through video conferencing and school visits.

There are many opportunities to take leadership. Our school has been built by a staff of leaders who come with a desire to innovate. Together, we take responsibility for the continued improvement of our school program.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Please send the following to the MetWest Hiring Committee. We're currently reviewing candidates.

1. A resume with references
2. Two letters of recommendation (one from a recent supervisor and one from a student or student's parent from the past 5 years)
3. A cover letter that describes:
 - a. Why you would be a good fit at MetWest
 - b. How you have supported improved student achievement for African American and Latino students
 - c. Ways you have participated in a professional learning community
 - d. Your beliefs about the role of education in social change

You can email or send your application packet to:

MetWest High School

Attn: Hiring Committee

314 East 10th Street, Huerta Hall

Oakland, CA 94606

(510) 879-0235

metwestedgarn@gmail.com