Performing Arts

Welcome to an exciting year in the performing arts at Brent! For those I haven’t met: My name is Joshua Krohn and I am the music and performing arts teacher at Brent. The performing arts program at Brent encompasses both vocal and instrumental music instruction as well as both dance and theater instruction during the regular school day. For the 2019-2020 school year students in grades 1st - 5th will attend music four days a week for one trimester (i.e. Class 1A for the first trimester, class 1B for the 2nd trimester, class 1C for the 3rd trimester). Students in grades 3rd - 5th also have the opportunity to join the Brent Honors Chorus which has had numerous honors including performing for veterans at Reagan National Airport and performing the Millennium Stage at The Kennedy Center, the Brent recorder ensemble, and an ensemble dedicated to musical theater. The performing arts program at Brent holds more than fifteen opportunities each school year for students to perform including concerts in the winter and spring, talent shows, small instrumental/vocal recitals, a full-scale Broadway-style musical in the spring, Multi-cultural nights, and the Spring Mercado.

The past few weeks students have been learning about pitched and non-pitched percussion and how rhythm, pitch, steady beat, and ensemble work can produce great music. Here is a link to a video of our 4th grade musicians performing as a percussion ensemble (this YouTube link is listed as a private link meaning only those with the URL can access this video):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvyMf2mpFfE&feature=youtu.be

Students have also been working on their singing voices and how great musicians can also use their voice to create steady beat, pitch, and rhythm. Here is a link to our 5th grade musicians singing a small part of one of their favorite songs from this past week (this YouTube link is listed as a private link meaning only those with the URL can access this video):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYB3rDNmoa8&feature=youtu.be

Next week students in grades 3rd – 5th will be able to sign up for two separate music recess clubs. These clubs are meant to enhance our students’ musical experiences as well as allow our students more opportunities to perform. The Brent Honors choir will be rehearsing on Tuesdays from 11:45 – 12:15 and the Brent guitar ensemble will be rehearsing on Thursdays from 11:45 – 12:15. Students will be able to sign up through Mr. Krohn this week.

As many of you know parking at Brent can be a bit tricky and I am in the process of trying to secure a parking pass to be able to park on the street. If anyone would be willing to get me one I would greatly appreciate it! Please email me at Joshua.krohn@k12.dc.gov

If you have any questions or you would like to learn more about either myself or the performing arts at Brent please either visit the performing arts webpage at www.brentelementary.org/music or email me at Joshua.krohn@k12.dc.gov.
Atelier

Brent's kindergartners have had an exciting first few weeks in the atelier! Our focus has been for children to build their sense of self and their sense of place in their new learning space this school year. We have settled comfortably into our atelier routine: music and movement, projects and center time, and closing circle.

The children have been exploring and interacting with materials, some old and some new. One of the new experiences children were invited to encounter was expressing their ideas through the languages of light and shadow. Using an overhead projector, children collaboratively explored how a myriad of materials could be reflected and projected to represent their ideas in symbolic form. They began to find patterns and share theories regarding how translucent and opaque materials interacted differently with light and shadows. We look forward to seeing where these theories and ideas take us next on our learning journey!
Visual Arts

Art classes at Brent are off to a great start. Our students have embraced the idea that they are artists and that developing artistic habits of mind are as important as developing technical proficiency with materials.

In just a short time we have covered a lot of ground, building on our previous learning, discussing topics such as **perspective, color mixing**, the emotional value of colors and using symbols for effective visual communication.

We have practiced ways of working with our **heads, hands and hearts** to create meaningful artwork. Starting with the idea of both literal and metaphorical foundations, students reflected on their strengths and though about how they could use those strengths to help them grow in new areas.
Visual Arts (continued)

You may wonder when students will begin to bring home finished artwork. At Brent we use a choice-based approach to art education. What this means is that in our studio students are regarded as artists. Students choose what to work on. Students scaffold their own learning, sometimes going deeply into specific subjects or media.

They work at their own pace, following their own lines of inquiry, and develop skills as they need them. Not every piece can or should be a masterpiece. In the same way that musicians and athletes practice, artists experiment and practice to learn from their work.

3rd graders participating in a peer review process.

When students have worked very hard on a work of art we call it a WOW work.

To qualify as a WOW work, each piece was shaped, from start to finish, by the artist’s thinking and choices. Consistent with what we know about developing artistic thinking, students explored and practiced with materials until they felt ready to create a WOW work. After working on their WOW piece, students shared it with friends and went through a formal peer editing process. Using feedback from the peer editing process, students were able to adjust their work, if necessary, to make sure that their work spoke clearly and powerfully to their audience. Each artist then worked to craft an artist statement. “An artist's statement (or artist statement) is an artist's written description of their work. The brief verbal representation is for, and in support of, his or her own work to give the viewer understanding.”

I am excited to begin displaying WOW works this week in the main hallway across from the multipurpose room. Also check on the brents specials instagram account for great photos of our artists in action.

Sincerely, Ms. Gibson
Physical Education

It has been such a wonderful start to the new school year in P.E. class! I have enjoyed reconnecting with the returning Brent friends and meeting so many new friends.

Students in grades 3rd - 5th are participating in a Teamwork / Cooperation Unit. During these lessons, students will participate in a variety of activities that encourage everyone working toward a common goal and using positive communication. Students will participate in partners, small groups, and whole class activities.

Students in grades K - 2 are participating in a Building a Foundation Unit. During these lessons, students will focus on establishing our class environment, behavioral expectations, body and spatial awareness, pathways, levels, and cooperation / teamwork.

If at any time you need to contact me during the school year, please feel free to email me at brian.mitchell2@k12.dc.gov

Have a great day!

Coach Mitchell

Science

Science is off to a great start in the first trimester. Students are building their skills as critical thinkers and practicing ways to talk and write about ways that their thinking changes as they learn new things.

First grade scientists are starting off the trimester studying how animals and plants each have young that share traits with the adults. They are investigating mealworms, planting seeds and observing seedlings, and comparing pictures of young and adult animals.

Second grade scientists are investigating habitats. They have made an inventory of one square meter of grass in the schoolyard and are compiling lists of the living and non-living things they found there, and how they interact. They have also just created soda bottle terrariums so that they can study habitats in the classroom as well.

Third grade scientists are starting their year with a study of birds. Exploring adaptations of migratory and non-migratory birds, students have analyzed a read-aloud about a wood thrush and gone birding on the school grounds. They are about to begin a research project on migratory birds that we share with a sister school in Panama as part of the Bridging the Americas program.

Fourth grade scientists are studying energy transfer in many different forms. Students have made Rube Goldberg machines, investigated Newton’s cradle, and created waves with ropes and slinkies. Students have been analyzing what they observe in order to find evidence that energy cannot be created or destroyed.
Library

Over the past few weeks all students have visited our school library to check out books and will continue to do so on a regular basis. Students and parents are welcome to visit the library to pick additional reading material. Books can be returned anytime by placing them in the bin near the entrance to the library. Please help your child(ren) with the return of reading material when they don’t need it any longer. Reminders will be sent home to support this effort. Please note that all items can be kept until no longer needed; there are no overdue fees.

The library’s catalog and a variety of resources can be found at [www.destinydiscover.com](http://www.destinydiscover.com). Students can access their accounts to check out digital material and to put books on hold by using the following login information: Username: Student ID Number Password: Student’s Six-Digit Birth Date (MMDDYY)

Additional resources can be found on the DC Public Library website at [www.dclibrary.org](http://www.dclibrary.org).

Library (continued)

During story time ECE and Kindergarten students enjoyed *Schools First Day of School* by Adam Rex, *Froggy Goes to School* by Jonathan London, *I Love School* by Philemon Sturges, and *Jack’s Talent* by Maryann Cocca-Leffler, to name a few. We spent some time getting to know each other and to explore the library.

Please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Bettina (bettina.schewe @k12.dc.gov) with any questions or concerns.

Happy Reading!