

THE TUES. NEWS

8-1-2019

BRENT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Coming Up

Sunday, August 18

PTA Summer Playdate
Yards Park
4 - 6 p.m.

Wednesday, August 21

New Parent Orientation
9 - 10 a.m.
RSVP at
tinyurl.com/brentnewparentsvp

Friday, August 23

Back to School Open House
3 - 4 p.m.
ASL Interpreters Provided

Brent PTA's Popsicles in the Park
3 - 4 p.m.

New Parent Orientation

4 - 5 p.m.
RSVP at
tinyurl.com/brentnewparentsvp

Monday, August 26

First Day of School for K - 5th

Wednesday, August 28

New Parent Orientation
9-10 a.m.
RSVP at
tinyurl.com/brentnewparentsvp

Thursday, August 29

ECE first day for students with
last names beginning with A - L



Coming Up (cont.)

Friday, August 30

ECE first day for students with
last names beginning with M - Z

Monday, September 2

Labor Day
Brent closed

Wednesday, September 4

Back to School Night
6 - 7:30 p.m.
ASL Interpreters Provided

Friday, September 6

Principal's September Coffee
8:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.

Photo: Brent Bears at summer PTA playdate. Join the fun for the next one, Sunday, August 18 from 4 - 6 p.m. at Yards Park.

What is Tues News?

Welcome to the summer edition of Tues News. Tues News is Brent's weekly newsletter sent home to all families every Tuesday during the school year. Tues News covers upcoming events, learning activities, student and staff accomplishments and news from DCPS. Remember to check your child's communication folder (for families

with multiple children at Brent, we sent the paper copy home with the oldest child) and your email inbox every Tuesday. If you have news or announcements or are not receiving the email version, please email Denise Diggs at denise.diggs@k12.dc.gov.

New Before and After Care Provider at Brent

Brent is pleased to partner with Innovation Learning to provide high quality before and after school programming. Please visit innovationlearning.com to register your child today. The attached flyer provides additional information about the program.

The Brent Student Store

The Brent Elementary Online Store is operated by the Brent PTA. During the school year, Brent merchandise ordered online will be delivered to your child's classroom within a few days of your order. You can also purchase items at the school store by bringing checks or cash to the front office. Please see attached flyer for more details.

Brent PTA Gently-Used Uniform Program

The Brent PTA manages a gently used uniform program. Families are able to access organized uniform bins, select items and donate an amount of their choosing. The PTA uses money earned from this program to purchase additional clothing for families in need. Donations are accepted year-round in the hamper near the security desk. The used uniform bins will be available everyday this summer during Brent's main office hours until school starts and then during select school events.

The Kids Ride Free - SMART Trips Cards For Students

Students who use Metrorail, Metrobus, and DC Circulator to get to school and school-related activities can obtain a Kids Ride Free Program SmarTrip® card from the main office. Students with cards from last year, will need to get a new card by October 1, 2019. Please email Denise Diggs at denise.diggs@k12.dc.gov for a new card. Brent has cards for use for field experiences only so **only** students who travel via Metrorail, Metrobus, and DC Circulator to and from school should request a SMARTtrip card.

DCPS Food Services

Brent Elementary offers nutritious breakfast and lunch each school day through National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs and a snack to students attending afterschool programming. Breakfast at Brent is free to all students and is served from 8 – 8:35 a.m. Lunch costs \$2.90 and is served in three shifts beginning at 11:45 a.m. The DCPS Free and Reduced-meal (FARM) application supports DCPS Food and Nutrition Services providing students with high-quality meals through federal meal reimbursement.

Please complete a FARM application even if you decline the service. For fastest processing, please complete online application at <https://dcps.dc.gov/node/1036942>

Lunch payments are made through an online account. Details of how to set up your child's account will be sent home the first week of school. All students are eligible to purchase lunch during the first week of school even if an online account has not been created. Brent's cafeteria does not accept cash.

Remember to Renew Rewards Accounts – Help Earn Free Money for Brent Students

Please take a moment to renew your rewards shopping accounts with Harris Teeter and Safeway. These stores require a yearly renewal. Brent typically earn several thousand dollars from these stores' rewards programs, so please renew your rewards shopping accounts today.

Harris Teeter School Code: 7117

Safeway: Sign up at escript.com(Group ID #: 11873183), Register your Safeway Club Card

Also, when shopping on Amazon, go to smile.amazon.com and select Robert Brent Elementary School.

Important: DCPS Volunteer Clearance Required Field Trip Chaperones

Brent follows the DCPS volunteer clearance policy. This policy applies to any parent who would like to volunteer during the school day and to any parent who would like to serve as a field trip chaperone. Thanks to the over 100 parents who completed the three step process and have a volunteer clearance. The robust field experiences our faculty plans are only possible with the support of parents with volunteer clearances.

Below are the steps to obtaining a volunteer clearance:

Step 1: Fill out the brief application via this link:<https://octo.quickbase.com/db/bg37a864v>

Step 2: Complete a TB Test. Heidi Johnson, a nurse practitioner on the Hill, will conduct TB tests at Brent on Tuesday, September 17 from 8:00-9:30 a.m. (to conduct

the skin test) and on Friday, September 20 from 8:00 -9:30 a.m. to read the tests. - The cost will be \$45. Please RSVP to Denise Diggs (denise.diggs@dc.gov) by Friday, September 5. The serum for the test must be purchased so an accurate count is needed. If you are unable to come to Brent for TB testing, pharmacy minute clinics and travel clinics can be an expedient alternative.

Step 3: After completing the TB testing, bring the report to the DCPS Fingerprinting Office located on the 10th floor at 1200 First Street NE. The DCPS Fingerprinting Office operates Mondays through Thursdays from 8:00 a.m.-5 p.m. and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. - 3 p.m. with the results from your TB test. No appointment is required. A state-issued photo ID is required.

Potential volunteers with an active secret or top secret federal security clearance should complete the federal security clearance verification letter in lieu of being fingerprinted with DCPS. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Denise Diggs at denise.diggs@k12.dc.gov. Also, please review the attached flyer for more information.

DCPS Attendance Policy

At DC Public Schools (DCPS), it is the goal to ensure that every student achieves academic success by being present at school every day and on time. Students who have regular school attendance learn more and are more successful in school. DCPS monitors both unexcused absences and all absences by tracking In-Seat Attendance (ISA). Some absences are unavoidable, but when children miss too much school - excused or unexcused - they can fall behind.

Is Attending School Required?

Yes, attending school is required by law! All students who reach five years of age on or before September 30 of the current school year must attend school every day until they meet high school graduation requirements or reach their 18th birthday.

Which Absences Are Excused vs. Unexcused?

Excused absences are when school-aged students are absent from school with a valid excuse and parental approval. Excused absences include: student illness (a doctor's note is required if a student is absent for more than five days); death in the student's immediate family; observance of a religious holiday; medical reasons such as a doctor's appointment (a doctor's note is required).

Unexcused absences are when school-aged students are absent from school without a valid excuse, with or without parental approval. Examples of unexcused absences include: family vacation, doing errands and parent's illness.

When your child is absent from school, please provide a written note to the front office or email Denise Diggs at denise.diggs@k12.dc.gov. If your child misses five consecutive absences due to illness, documentation from a doctor is required.

What Happens if My Child accrues Unexcused Absences?

Brent follows the DC law on school attendance. This law pertains to students in grades K - 12th. At three unexcused absences, parents will receive an official attendance notification letter. At five unexcused absences, parents are

required to attend an attendance intervention meeting and work with staff to develop an attendance intervention plan to improve attendance. At ten unexcused absences, families are referred to Child and Family Services for educational neglect.

A Note about Late Arrivals

Students arriving late to school miss valuable instructional time, social interaction with peers and critical morning routines. The Brent attendance team will be reaching out to families of students who arrive late to school to provide support and guidance. Being on time is a critical life skill. For students' academic careers, this skill is solidified in elementary school. Students need to be on the playground by 8:30 a.m. to line up for teacher pick-up. Students who are not in the classroom by 8:45 a.m. are marked tardy

And a Note About Family Travel

Absences due to family travel are not excused. Therefore, student absences due to family travel trigger attendance interventions. Families are encouraged to review the school calendar to align family travel with school breaks. The 2019-2020 DCPS Calendar provides five 3-day weekends, three 4-day weekends, one 5-day weekend and extended time for Thanksgiving, Winter Break, February Break and Spring Break. Families are strongly discouraged from extending these breaks with additional days. Faculty at Brent extensively plan for instruction with emphasis on days before breaks.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

August 26th is the first day for grades K-5 and we will welcome PS/PK on August 29 or August 30th.

Our arrival procedures are:

- Beforecare begins at 7 a.m. on the first day. Students must be registered to attend.
- Free breakfast for all students is available at 8:00 a.m. Brent staff will be in the multipurpose room to supervise.
- Enter the playground area through the front gate on North Carolina Avenue or the back gate on D Street.
- Play, greet and socialize. After-care staff members (increased to four counselors) provide supervision, but we rely on families to provide primary oversight for students not enrolled in after-care. Please note that play will be restricted to the blacktop and yellow-top areas and that the front gardens will not be used for morning play. For safety reasons, ball play will stop at 8:20 a.m. but general play is welcome until the 8:35 a.m. bell and the corresponding arrival of faculty.
- Line up in your class parking

spot (please see the map at the bottom of this note). Don't forget to note your classroom number on class lists (posted on the main doors and at brentelementary.org). Our K and PS/PK classes will line up at the dots closest to the rubber playground surface, with Ms. Santora's class and Ms. Miller's class proceeding directly to the classroom doors.

- Say goodbye to students at their parking spots. We want to ease the transition to school and ensure that our students feel an early sense of ownership for their space. If you need to visit the main office, please loop around to the main doors so that we can make sure the playground entry doors stay clear for efficient student arrival.
- Students will enter into the building at the 8:40 a.m. bell or signal.
- Morning activities start in the classroom at 8:45 a.m. Students who arrive in classrooms after that time will be marked as tardy. On the rare occasion when you do arrive late, perhaps after a doctor's appointment, be sure to sign in to the tardy log and receive a late pass before proceeding to the classroom. Students will not be permitted to enter the class without a late pass.



Brent's Principal Corner

Welcome to the Brent's Principal Corner – a blog-like column in Tues News where parents can better understand the thinking and decision making of Brent directly from me – the principal! The principal corner in Tues News provides a channel to delve deeper in exploring the values that Brent uses as the foundation for our school.

Last year, Brent's communication to parents primarily focused on the "how." How does Brent ensure our students are positively engaged during the school day – from morning meeting, instructional activities, specials classes to recess? How does Brent engage with our parent community? How does Brent recruit, maintain and develop exceptional staff? This year, I will be shifting the communication focus from the "How" to the "Why." Why does Brent have a strong focus on socio-emotional learning? Why is parent engagement critical to student success? Why does Brent implement a restorative justice program for elementary aged students?

I will also use the principal corner to discuss the latest in education research and respond to education trends. It is a place to expand on parent questions and feedback to provide a basis for further in-depth and productive discussions.

I welcome topics for this column – please email me at norah.lycknell@k12.dc.gov or participate in the monthly principal coffees. On a daily basis, I am usually available for quick questions during the 8:35 a.m. line up and at dismissal. Please call the main office at 202-698-3363 to schedule a meeting for more lengthy discussions.

