DCPS Announcement: The School Year Ends on May 29th

During her press conference on Friday, Mayor Bowser announced that the school year – and Distance Learning for the school year – will end on May 29th. As soon as we have more details about the thinking that went into that decision/information about school calendars, we will share it. In the meantime, as part of our Week Five goal of Reflection and Revision, we will plan meaningful instruction for the remainder of the year, identify points of community connection and celebration as a set of culminating and shared experiences, and develop thoughtful ideas for summer learning.
Earth Week
This week, the Brent community is celebrating Earth Week! Families are encouraged to celebrate in 3 Ways:

Help Brent’s Virtual Garden Grow!
Send us a picture of a plant or pollinator that you drew, painted, or created with upcycled materials. We will collect and compile your submissions into a big and beautiful virtual garden to share with the community.

Participate in the Brent Bear Earth Walk.
Download the scavenger hunt list at tinyurl.com/brentearthwalk.

Take action to help the Earth (pick up litter, recycle, upcycle, plant a seed).

Share your virtual garden submissions, scavenger hunt finds, and responsible Earth Week actions with us by tagging us on Instagram (@brentbears), Twitter (@brentelementary), Facebook, or emailing julia.sadowsky@k12.dc.gov.

Community Meeting
We will have a Community Meeting this Wednesday, April 22nd from 8pm-9pm. Now a regular part of our Distance Learning engagement, the agenda includes:

- Presentation of the FY21 PTA Budget with Current Context and Possible Next Steps
- Description of the PTA Election Process
- Presentation of Family Feedback Survey Data with Follow Up Discussion
- Family-to-Family Connections

Log in provided via email.

Important – Enrollment and Re-Enrollment Begins
April 27 – May 1
DCPS has announced an online enrollment process for SY20-21. On April 27, families will receive an email with a link to complete the enrollment documents. Families will then complete the enrollment forms, upload residency documents, provide a digital signature and click submit. The completed enrollment packet will then be emailed to Brent. Staff will review the packet and update the enrollment database Aspen.

Consider joining the PTA Nominating Committee and help recruit PTA Board candidates for the FY20-21 school year
Consider joining the PTA Nominating Committee and help recruit PTA Board candidates for the FY20-21 school year. The nominating committee includes the PTA presidents, three at-large members, Principal Lycknell and one teacher representative, and will help nominate at least two eligible people for each office to be filled. For the FY20-21 school year, the PTA is recruiting for co-vice presidents, a co-treasurer, a co-secretary, and co-community liaisons for the PTA Board. The PTA hopes to recruit a diverse array of candidates.

If you’re interested in joining the PTA’s nominating committee, please email Kiana Moore (kiana.j.moore@gmail.com) and Nazanin Ash (nazarin.samari.ash@gmail.com) by Thursday (4/23).

It is critical that all Brent families complete an enrollment packet as soon as possible. DC funds schools on a per student basis and during...
this time uncertainty, Brent needs to demonstrate enrollment for SY20-21 as soon as possible.

**Become Brent Buddies with an Incoming Brent Family**

Registration for the 2020-21 school year starts next week. Brent Buddies is an easy way to welcome our new arrivals. If you sign up to be a Current Brent Family Buddy, you will be assigned a family that is transitioning into Brent. We are asking our Current Brent Family Buddies to reach out to their assigned incoming family via phone to make the initial introductions and formally welcome the incoming family to the community. Once social distancing is over, we would also love our Current Brent Family Buddies to meet up with their incoming families at an organized school function such as the ECE/K playdate or Family Picnic. You will have an opportunity to share with them about your experience at Brent, but mostly your job will be to make our new friends feel welcome. To sign up, please add your information to the Brent Buddies Spreadsheet, found at www.tinyurl.com/BrentBuddies or emailing brentelementary@k12.dc.gov. Once registration starts, volunteers will be paired with families.

**Brent Bears are ACTIVE!**

We are so proud of all of the Brent Bears who took on our 60 Minute Challenge last week! From running, scooter rides, and bike rides, to disco dances and karate, to climbing the monument steps, we saw you working hard and getting creative to get 60 minutes of physical activity each and every day. Keep up the great work and enjoy these photos of our Active Brent Bears.
Dear Brent Families,

If you are anything like me, Mayor Bowser’s announcement on Friday came as quite a surprise. Many of us imagined that we would not return to our school building this school year; few of us imagined that the school year would be truncated. The sense of loss is deep.

I trust that the Mayor and Chancellor did not reach this decision easily and that they will share more about their rationale in the coming days. We have LOTS of questions (grading? Sum-mer? Start of the next school year?). As soon as I receive those details I will share them with you.

In the meantime, the Brent team has shifted our planning for what will now be the last six weeks of school in a distance learning setting. We continue to consider what is most important for our students and how we can best serve them, whether through academic experiences, social connection, or community celebrations designed to grow their sense of well-being. Our last six weeks (and into the summer) will take shape in five intervals:

**Interval One (Weeks Five and Six):**
Planning for and delivering instruction around priority goals and skills within and across grade levels. These goals and skills will be published in the May 4th edition of TuesMonNews to help parents further prioritize learning at home.

**Interval Two (Weeks Seven and Eight):**
Fulfilling priority goals and skills. Engaging in a community-wide culminating project.

**Interval Three (Weeks Nine and Ten):**
Transitioning to summer with Step Up Meetings, 1:1 teacher/student/parent conferences, and end-of-year traditions such as the Fifth Grade Clap Out and Promotion.

**Interval Four (June 1st-June 19th):**
Bridging into the summer with sample schedules, learning activities, and points of family-family engagement.

**Interval Five (June 20th-?):**
Engaging in summer learning through Brent-provided recommendations.

Finally, as many of you know, my wife and I are expecting a second baby VERY soon – we have an induction scheduled for April 27th (for those who have lost track of days like I have, that’s one week away J). We are mostly excited, and a little scared, to be welcoming a new life into our world. I will stay peripherally connected to Brent in the 1-2 weeks after his or her birth and leave the day-to-day operations in the hands of our amazing leadership team and faculty, including Sara Ewbank (Assistant Principal) and Denise Diggs (Manager of Strategy and Logistics). I plan to close the year with our virtual community and then take full parental leave later in the summer/early in the Fall. But for now, we’re just going to take it a week at a time.

Sincerely,

Norah Lycknell
Principal
“...I know how tough it is some days to look with hope and confidence on the months and years ahead. But, I would like to tell you what I often told you when you were much younger: “I like you just the way you are.” And what’s more, I am so grateful to you for helping the children in your life to know that you’ll do everything you can to keep them safe, and to help them express their feelings in ways that will bring healing in many different neighborhoods.”

- Fred Rogers

With the continuing news about the coronavirus (COVID-19), we know schools, families, and communities are being extra cautious about the spread of germs and are preparing to protect each other. Children are certainly hearing about the coronavirus and may have feelings and questions that you can help them with.

Here are some ideas for how to talk to children about the coronavirus:

• Help your child know that you and the adults in their life are protecting them, and that doctors and nurses and scientists are taking care of people who are sick and working to find ways to keep everyone safe. While children need to know it is not their job to stop or fix the virus, you can empower them to be a helper by washing their hands often and covering their nose and mouth if they cough or sneeze.

• Be mindful of what your children hear and see on the news, and try to limit how much they see and hear. As reports continue to grow, it is important that children know that no one person, or group of people, is responsible for people being sick.

• Let your child know they can always come to you with questions. If you don’t know the answer to a question, it is okay to tell your child “I wonder about that, too” or let them know you will come back to them if you have an answer later.

• Ask your child what they have heard about the coronavirus. They may have heard more than you realize, or heard misinformation. Asking them what they know, rather than assuming, will give you the chance to meet them where they are in your conversations.

• Let your child know that their feelings are always safe with you, whether they are feeling worried, angry, sad, or anything at all.
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How many can you find? Color a paw when you see an item on your walk.