Coming Up!

Monday, December 14 - March 1, 2021
Myschooldc Lottery
visit myschooldc.org to apply

Wednesday, February 3
DCPS - The Pre-L Lottery: Your Questions about DCPS Pre-K Answered
5:30 p.m.
bit.ly/dcpsecersvp

Monday, February 8
Brent ReOpening Committee Meeting
5 p.m.

Tuesday, February 9
Brent Community Meeting on Virtual Learning
7 - 8 p.m.

Saturday, February 13
Community Book Exchange for PK, K and 1st
1:30 - 3 p.m.
Garfield Park
Sign up for the PK-1 Playdate at: https://cutt.ly/mkuZ8oh

Monday, February 15
Presidents Day
Brent closed

Friday, February 19
Deadlines for video submissions for the Brent Black History Month
In honor of Black History Month, students at Brent Elementary School will present a Virtual African American Living Wax Museum. The virtual wax museum will be done completely at home with the student dressing up and someone recording their performance. The theme for this year is “The Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity.” The Virtual Wax Museum will take place on Friday, February 26, 2021 with an all-school viewing. All submissions of videos should be emailed to dayon.hairston@k12.dc.gov by February 19. For more information please read the attached letter for more information and sign up here:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=7kagKk6zMQOqSt5md8rwKMvLH3femP09Ilq0AllwLffyFUNVpESUgwUUJCOUhLVTVVQjJEMT1NWVE1N

CommUNITY Book Exchanges for Black History Month
As much as we love Brent’s all school CommUNITY dance, this year the Diversity Working Group is instead celebrating Black History Month with grade-level book exchange play dates. The events will be held in Garfield Park on Saturdays in February. Attendance for each will be capped at 10 families to promote distancing. Sign up early to reserve a spot at your grade level’s playdate!

When/Where: Saturdays 1:30 – 3pm at Garfield Park (2nd and F Streets SE)


Grades 2-3: Saturday, Feb. 20. Sign up for the Grade 2-3 Playdate at: https://cutt.ly/KkuXKIO

Grade 4-5 Saturday, Feb. 27. Sign up for the Grade 4-5 Playdate at: https://cutt.ly/gkuX3qH

Bring: A book to exchange for Black History Month. Bring your best-loved book by African-American author or focused on African American characters to trade with a classmate. Want to buy something new to share instead? Consider the Coretta Scott King award winners Coretta Scott King Book Awards - All Recipients, 1970-Present | Round Tables (ala.org). Nothing to share? Not a problem. Just let us know at BrentDiversityWG@gmail.com. DWG will happily provide books for each event so all Brent Bears leave with something new.

DWG Book Study: Courageous Conversations – Tuesday, February 18 from 11 - noon
As a part of the Brent Diversity Working Group’s ongoing efforts to foster conversations about the difficult subjects such as race, racism, ethnicity, and privilege, we’re engaging in a conversation and shared reading of Courageous Conversations About Race by Glen Singleton. Our hope is that through a robust discussion and deep study of the text we’ll learn to deepen and sustain conversations about racism across the community.
Objectives:
Build foundational common knowledge of race, equity, and skills for engaging in conversations about these topics
Identify text to self connections
Build community and identify applications to the Brent Community
Please read chapters 4 & 5. The text can be ordered at East City or borrowed from Brent (email Brent-DiversityWG@gmail.com if you’d like to check out a copy).

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84544396517?pwd=K105TUpvakUrSFFLUWQeDQ0Y0tMUT09
Meeting ID: 845 4439 6517
Passcode: DWG

Please reach out to BrentDiversity-WG@gmail.com if you’re interested in joining us or if you’d like to learn more. We’ll meet regularly on zoom and plan to read 2 chapters, discuss, and engage in some of the ideas generated from reading and experience. Even if you weren’t able to read the chapters, you’re welcome to come join in the discussion.

Reading Spotlight
Black History Month 2021
The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity

Homemade Love by Shane Evans (28 pages) A girl who is Girlpie to her mama and Honey Bun Chocolate Dewdrop to her daddy savors the warmth and love of her family. (From the publisher)

Saturday by Oge Mora (40 pages) In this story by the Caldecott Honor-winning creator of Thank You, Omu!, a mother and daughter go on an up-and-down journey that reminds them of what’s best about Saturdays: precious time together. (From the publisher)

Just Like a Mama by Alice Faye Duncan (40 pages) Carol Olivia Clementine lives with Mama Rose. Mama Rose is tender and sweet, and also stern and demanding as any good parent should be. Carol misses her mother and father, but she learns to surrender to the love that is present. Mama Rose becomes her “home.” And Carol Olivia Clementine concludes that she loves Miss Rose, “just like a mama.” (From the publisher)

This Is the Rope by Jacqueline Woodson (32 pages) During the time of the Great Migration, millions of African American families relocated from the South, seeking better opportunities. The story of one family’s journey north during the Great Migration starts with a little girl in South Carolina who finds a rope under a tree one summer. She has no idea the rope will become part of her family’s history. (From the publisher)

Early Sunday Morning by Denene Millner (40 pages) Sundays are June’s favorite days because she gets to spend it with Mommy, Daddy, and her brother. Next Sunday is more special than most, because she will be leading the youth choir in front of her church. (From the publisher)

As Brave As You by Jason Reynolds (224 pages) When two brothers decide to prove how brave they are, everything backfires—literally. A multigenerational story about family love and bravery. (From the publisher)
Some Places More Than Others
by Renee Watson (202 pages)
All Amara wants for her birthday is to visit her father’s family in New York City--Harlem, to be exact. She can’t wait to finally meet her Grandpa Earl and cousins in person, and to stay in the brownstone where her father grew up. Maybe this will help her understand her family--and herself--in new way.
(From the publisher)

All titles are available at Brent’s and/or the public library.

Happy Reading!

- Principal Corner

Dear Brent Families,

Most if not all of my recent letters have been about the introduction of in person learning. And that makes some sense, but also has a consequence: it obfuscates the significant work we are doing to improve virtual learning (come to the Virtual Learning Meeting on Tuesday, February 9th at 7pm to learn and share more), the commitment to equitable access to learning materials (see the Supply Day photos above), and our faculty’s commitment to the professional growth that affects the student experience.

While students were out of school on Friday, our faculty first gathered to studies the trauma-responsive practices centered on the realities of this pandemic and its impact on our children. According to the CDC and the content of this
session, trauma-responsive means looking at every aspect of an organization’s programming, environment, language, and values and involving all staff in better serving clients who have experienced trauma. In this first of a series session, we thought through the research lens (what are the signs of toxic stress?), through the action lens (how does relational trust mitigate the effects of trauma?) and the collaborative lens (how can we work together to address problems of practice?).

Following this session, grade-level teams gathered to develop unit and lesson plans, an ongoing process. Teams used content knowledge, standards-based goals, student work and assessments to identify the sequence of upcoming lessons in both the virtual and in-person environments. Focus areas varied but many team discussions also addressed student engagement/motivation and feedback mechanisms as central to the planning process.

In the afternoon, teacher’s had recordkeeping time to prepare Term 2 report cards and IEP progress reports. Grades will be finalized on the February 9th and mailed and accessible in Aspen by February 12th.

All of us are balancing countless things this year. It’s the challenge of our lives. At Brent, we are working hard to address all of the immediate priorities even while remembering our most essential work.

Sincerely,

Norah Lycknell
Dear Families,

In honor of Black History Month, students at Brent Elementary School will present a Virtual African American Living Wax Museum. The virtual wax museum will be done completely at home with the student dressing up and someone recording their performance. The theme for this year is “The Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity.” The Virtual Wax Museum will take place on Friday February 26, 2021 with an all school viewing. It will later be available for family viewing as well. Your student will have the opportunity to present in the Virtual Living Wax Museum by first choosing who they want to represent. Each student will select an African American person to portray. They will have approximately two to three weeks to complete the project. The project will consist of researching and documenting facts, making a visual (poster, trifold, book, etc.), and writing and performing a short speech. The expectation is that the student would dress up in some way that represents the person they have chosen and use props to help them “become” the person that they researched. Their speech should be roughly 1 to 2 minutes long and should include important facts about their person that goes with the theme for the year.

This project will require preparation outside of the classroom and school day. On February 5th all students need to have selected a person to portray in the wax museum and have filled out the Microsoft form letting us know that they will be participating. Students have to be committed for the Black History Program because they are the project. Once your student commits to doing the project please make sure they follow through so that we can have a successful event. The students will be required to dress in character for the person they researched (props are required) and get someone to record them and email the video to Ms. Hairston at dayon.hairston@k12.dc.gov by Friday, February 19th so that she can put it all together for viewing on Friday February 26th.

Black History Virtual Wax Museum Details

Biography Research Project:

Visual:
The students are to choose any African American they are interested in. The research for their person will take place outside of the classroom. Students may use a variety of sources for their research such as books, documentaries, and the internet.
Their research should include, but is not limited to the following:

Date & place of birth
Family info.
Historical importance/ contribution to society
Accomplishments
Death date & details

Speech:
In addition to the students speech, the information should be presented visually for the wax museum. Students are encouraged to use poster board, trifold, book, brochure, etc to present their information for the audience to be able to see or read.

To be believable as a “wax statue come to life” the students are required to write and memorize a speech.

They are to apply the information they learned about their significant figure to a 1st person perspective (using “I”), 1 to 2 minute speech that will be given for the actual Black History Wax Museum, on February 26. Remember that all entries should be turned in by February 19th. Students can have 1 small note card that states the most important details about the person. Note card may have notes on front and back to help student with their speech.

For example:
Introduction of person/ Beginning
Date & place of birth
Family info.
Middle part of life
Historical importance (Details)
Why I deserve to be famous.
Why am I important to history?
Ending / Closing
Death date & details
Closing sentence about your life

Costume on Wax Museum Recording Day:
Student are to dress up as their research person. Although costumes and props are required, we encourage students to be as creative as possible, without having to buy anything new. NO WEAPONS

PLEASE HAVE FUN AND ENJOY