

THE TUES. NEWS

6-3-2020

BRENT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Coming Up

Key Contact Information
Main Office Mobile Line
202-590-7458

Brent General Email
brentelementary@k12.dc.gov

DC Government Information
<https://coronavirus.dc.gov/>

Website
brentelementary.org

Facebook
facebook.com/BrentElementarySchool

Twitter
twitter.com/brentelementary

Instagram
Instagram.com/BrentBears

Action Items for Families

- If you have not already done so, complete an enrollment packet today. This is critical for Brent's budget for next year. Visit https://forms.dc.gov/f/DCPSEnrollment-Form_English
- Schedule well check-ups and dental visits. DCPS is requiring all students to have current health forms on file in order to attend school.
- Visit Brent's summer learning page on the website & map a plan for summer learning activities.

Principal's Corner

Dear Brent Families,

Knowing where to start can feel daunting.

Do we start with the fact that, in the span of less than two weeks, we witnessed Amy Cooper weaponize the power of her whiteness to threaten Christian Cooper in Central Park; Georgia prosecutors ignore Gregory and Travis McMichaels' violent shooting of Ahmaud Arbery until the public release of video and 911 calls forced those prosecutors to bring charges of felony murder and assault; Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin kneel on George Floyd's neck and back until he died without intervention from the other officers present and despite Mr. Floyd's and bystanders' desperate pleas; and Louisville officials reveal the details of a no-knock warrant and the spray of 20-rounds of plain-clothes police bullets that took Breonna Taylor's life?

Do we start with the fact that we are aware of these tragedies because someone hit record on their camera or lifted them up to newspaper headlines and social media posts even as we know countless others have gone unnamed? The noxious smog of racism infiltrates our history, our institutions,

and our conscious and subconscious mindsets. That smog is so thick that there is no record that can capture the disproportionate impacts that Black Americans faced in the past, cope with in the present and, if we do not persist, we will suffer from in the future.

Do we start with ourselves? I have so much work to do as a person, a parent, an educator and a leader. I will continue to reflect on and name the ways I have contributed to racism at Brent, including remaining far too still and silent, and therefore complicit. I commit to reflecting on the privilege and power of my whiteness and taking ownership for my blind spots, my failures, my biases, and my decisions. I ask you to hold me accountable now and in the future.

Do we start with empathy? I do not pretend to understand what it means to be a Black person in America. I cannot fathom the depth of sadness, hurt, fear, disappointment, frustration and fatigue that some have shared. But I can work to notice, embrace and act on your feelings with my whole self as a requirement of my humanity.

In recent years, particularly in schools and to the extent we have talked about race, we have shifted from celebrat-

ing diversity to demanding tolerance to embracing inclusivity and belonging. While full of good intent, none of those paths were anywhere near adequate and suggested a neutrality that Desmond Tutu once named: “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.” Our next evolution is to practice anti-racism, which Angela Davis defines here as proactively fighting against racism in all its forms: individual, interpersonal, institutional and structural.

The practice of anti-racism demands that White people to talk with and challenge one another and our children. Here is a start at some resources to support this work:

- Chancellor Ferebee’s June 1st Letter to the DCPS Community (also contains further resources)

- [How to Make This Moment the Turning Point for Real Change](#)

- [Trevor Noah: George Floyd, Minneapolis Protests, Ahmaud Arbery, & Amy Cooper](#)

- [Black and Brown People Have Been Protesting for Centuries. It’s White People Who Are Responsible for What Happens Next.](#)

- [Podcast: Talking to White Kids About Race and Racism](#)

- [Anti-Racism Books for Kids](#)

- [How Black and White Families Are Talking About Racism in a Time of Reckoning](#)

White people can also seek other forms of action and while there are many suggestions out there including [this list](#) and [this list](#).

In the Brent context, we will supplement these broader actions by being transparent and deeply about our outcomes that show a persistent opportunity gap between Black and

White students in both academic and social emotional realms; leaning into the developing work of the Diversity Working Group and making it work shared across formal and informal leadership spaces; broadening affinity-based listening sessions that have already revealed that participating Black families are telling us that personal relationships matter and must be cultivated beyond existing social connections; creating ample space for faculty conversation and shared leadership; and analyzing our curriculum, instructional approaches, field experiences and material resources.

Where do we start? We start by paying attention to the present, re-learning history, repeatedly examining ourselves, having hard conversations and both speaking our truth and listening carefully to the truth of others, seeking and using available resources, and paying acute attention to the Brent context. We have an enormous opportunity because moments like these bring a renewed obligation and permission to face head on racism in ourselves, our school, and our society. It’s a long and complex journey.

We start now. And we don’t stop.

Sincerely,

Norah Lycknell

Pick-Up of Student Items from Brent

DCPS is currently waiting on guidance for schools to allow families to access the building to pick-up student items. Over the summer, Brent will store all items currently in Lost and Found and student items left in classrooms until families are able to access the building.

Summer Resources

Brent’s faculty is committed to ensuring that families have a wealth of resources heading into summer months that can allow learning and growing to continue! Academic resources are provided by grade level teams, specials resources (PE, Art, Music, Science, Atelier, Library, Spanish, Dance, and Game Time) are provided by specials teachers, and social emotional resources for family support are provided by Brent’s social worker, Stephanie Young. Everything can be accessed through the Brent website under the “Brent Summer Learning” Tab, or by navigating here: <http://www.brente elementary.org/brent-summer-learning.html>.

Resources are available to all families, current, incoming, and outgoing, as our hope is to provide meaningful learning for all Brent Bears!

Brent Summer Library TEAM

All Brent Bears, who want to stay in touch over the summer and get together from time to time to talk about summer reading experiences or join an occasional live read-aloud via Zoom, should join the Brent Summer Library TEAM. Ms. Bettina will post information of infrequent events in this team. Please note that the capability to post is turned off for students. If you have a question or want to share something with Ms. Bettina, she encourages you to send her an e-mail (bettina.schewe@k12.d.gov).

To join the Brent Summer Library Team, please log into Microsoft Teams and select “Teams” from the menu bar on the left, and/or “All Teams” above the Class TEAM icon. Then click on “Join or create team” in the upper right corner, enter code 8jw2nw5 and click on “Join team”.

Brent Virtual Talent Show - Thursday, June 4 at 7 p.m.

Come and watch Brent's students show their special talents! Login information below.

Topic: Brent Talent Show

Time: Jun 4, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89616621305>

Meeting ID: 896 1662 1305

Password: 280929

Brent LSAT Update

Thank you to the parents who volunteered to serve on the LSAT in the coming years. We are pleased to announce that Sarah Goldsmith, Greta Peisch, Ann Heilman-Dahl and Jean Blackerby Strich will be serving (or continuing to serve) as LSAT parent representatives, along with Josie Malone and Gretchen Phillips. The LSAT would like to thank Dunnzy Kaufman Levin and Laura Green for their service on the LSAT! Below are the candidate statements for the new/continuing parent representatives so that you can get to know them better. If you are interested in learning more about the LSAT, please reach out to jean.blackerby@gmail.com or come to the first meeting next year on Wednesday, September 2 at 6pm (in person or via Zoom, TBD).

Sarah Goldsmith (Jacob, rising 1st and Margot, incoming PK-3)

Distance learning has really made me aware that Brent is so much more than learning how to read, write and solve math equations, which makes me want

to do more to support the school. For example, it sounds like for the upcoming year Principal Lycknell is going to put a big emphasis on relationship building and I would love to help support this because it is often overlooked and so important, especially now.

I think my perspective is unique in a lot of ways, first as a parent who works part time. I get the opportunity to see and get to know a lot of the kids and parents on the playground after school, but I also understand the plight of the working parent which I think is especially crucial with distance learning. I have a background researching and developing healthcare conferences, where I gained a unique skillset that could be beneficial to the LSAT: for example, how to ask the right questions to identify underlying problems, stay within a budget, and adapt when things don't go as planned. Given that DCPS may employ a hybrid approach in the Fall, which I would assume will take a lot of thoughtful evaluation and adaptation, I would like to be a part of a committee that helps with the evolution of that.

With Jacob starting first grade in the Fall and Margot entering PK-3, I feel this is a great opportunity for me to help Brent to continue to improve for them as they progress through school, but also for other kids in the neighborhood.

Ann Heilman-Dahl (Elsa, rising 4th and Grant, rising 2nd)

Bio: Ann Heilman-Dahl has lived on Capitol Hill for 12 years and is a Brent parent to Elsa (rising 4th grader) and Grant (rising 2nd grader). In addition to one year on the LSAT from 2019-2020, Ann has enjoyed volun-

teering as a room parent for several classes, helping with the Brent Gala, organizing the Lion King stage crew, and serving as a Brent Buddy for new families.

Professionally, Ann is the Deputy Director of the Trade Agreements Negotiations and Compliance Office at the U.S. Department of Commerce. She is a proud career civil servant and recognized expert in international trade. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and Master of International Trade Policy from George Mason University. When not bumbling through homeschooling, Ann enjoys cooking, dance and spending time with neighbors and friends on the Hill.

Statement: It was a privilege to serve on the LSAT this year. I enjoyed sharing my perspective to help our amazing school and community. The LSAT has always been an important channel for family input, but it will be even more important in the coming months given the challenging circumstances we find ourselves in. I intend to approach those challenges with pragmatic optimism.

Greta Peisch (Jack, incoming Kindergarten, Teddy, incoming PK-3 and Bryce, future Brent Bear)

I will be a first-time Brent parent in the fall with sons in the incoming Kindergarten (Jack) and PK-3 (Teddy) classes. I have served on the LSAT for the past two years as the community representative and seek to continue my service as a parent representative. As the community representative, I have gained appreciation for the multitude of decisions and policies that impact

the experience of students and families. Next year, I hope to provide the perspective of new Brent parents who may face particular challenges integrating into the Brent community under any social distancing and distance learning protocols. I also look forward to continuing to provide input into the school policy, enrollment, and budgetary matters to ensure that they support the teachers, administrators, families and broader community.

Jean Blackerby Strich (Ella, rising 2nd, Annie, rising 1st and Rose, future Brent Bear)

My husband and I have lived in the neighborhood for 13 years and have had children at Brent for two years. We expect to be part of the school community for many years as our three daughters make their way through elementary school. I have served on the Brent LSAT for four years, first as the community representative on the LSAT and then as a parent representative. I have enjoyed playing an active role in the policy and budget decisions that shape the school. I hope to continue working with the administration, teachers and other parents to improve the quality of education and community at Brent for all of its students. I value discussion and collaboration with all members of the school community in approaching these issues, including the voices of new Brent parents and of neighborhood families whose children are not yet at Brent. In times of great uncertainty such as the present, I believe some continuity on the LSAT will be beneficial – as Brent will work to get back to normal and then to expand to build the Brent of the next decade.

In my professional life, I am an attorney who has recently transitioned

to an in-house career after spending many years practicing corporate law at a large international law firm. I currently serve as Associate General Counsel at Transurban, an Australian company which operates the express lanes outside of DC.

DCPS presents LGBTQ+ Pride 2020: A Virtual Celebration

The DCPS LGBTQ Program, in collaboration with the Office of Communications and Engagement, has curated resources for families that include events like a Virtual Pride Parade, Parent University sessions and more!

Visit this link to learn more and register <https://linktr.ee/dcps.lgbtq>

You can also follow the DCPS LGBTQ Program on Instagram at [dcps.lgbtq](#)

If you have any questions about these events and opportunities, please email DCPS.LGBTQ@k12.dc.gov

Grades K-2: Springboard



DCPS is proud to partner with Springboard Collaborative to offer a summer reading program. You are invited to participate! **This year, the entire program will be virtual. Register at <http://bit.ly/2020Springboard>.**

Reading

Over five weeks, scholars will learn the joy of reading as they read together as a class, in small groups, and independently. During the summer, kids can fall behind without opportunities to practice their reading skills. But students who use Springboard actually improve their reading over the summer!

Family Workshops

At Springboard, we need parents' help! Plan for you or an adult in your family to attend weekly workshops on Wednesdays to learn about ways to support your young reader at home. Your child will become an even stronger reader with your help.

Celebrations

Families who attend all five weekly workshops can earn extra books. In addition, Springboard sets a growth goal for your child. Students who reach their goal will receive a backpack full of school supplies. Every family who attends each workshop and helps their child exceed their goal will also receive a tablet!

We look forward to reading with you!



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Questions? Email springboard.dcps@k12.dc.gov

Looking for other summer opportunities? Visit summer.dc.gov



THE DCPS LGBTQ & SEXUAL HEALTH PROGRAM, IN
COLLABORATION WITH THE DCPS
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT,
PRESENT

LGBTQ+ PRIDE 2020 A VIRTUAL CELEBRATION

Virtual Pride Parade

Click [here](#) for more information on how to participate.

Week of June 8th

DCPS + StoryCorps Coming Out Project

Click [here](#) for more information on how to participate.

Week of June 8th

**DCPS Parent University - Loving with Pride:
Ways to Support Your LGBTQ+ Child**

Click [here](#) to register for the webinar.

**June 10th
2:30 - 3:30 p.m.**

DCPS Parent University - Coming Out: Family Stories

Click [here](#) to register for the webinar.

**June 11th
6:00 - 7:00 p.m.**

If you have any questions about the events and opportunities listed
above, please email DCPS.LGBTQ@k12.dc.gov