Coming Up

Tuesday, September 19  
Diversity Working Group Meeting  
6:30 - 8 p.m.

Friday, September 22  
Professional Development Day  
No School for Students  
Springboard Available

Sunday, September 24  
PTA Fall Picnic  
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Wednesday, September 27  
PTA General Meeting  
6:30 - 8 p.m.  
Childcare Provided  
ASL Interpreters Provided

Monday, October 2  
Open House for Prospective Families  
9 - 10 a.m.

Friday, October 6  
Principal Coffee  
8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Monday, October 9  
Columbus Day  
No school for students, teachers and staff

Wednesday, October 10  
PTA Board Meeting  
6:30 - 8 p.m.

Brent Family Welcome Picnic  
This Sunday, September 24  
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

We hope to see you this Sunday, September 24 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at X Park (Providence Park - 498 2nd St SE) for the Brent family picnic, welcoming all Brent community families to the new school year. Enjoy live music by Jerry Tolk and the Old Soul String Band, bounce houses, face painting, crafts and other fun for kids. Additional activities include a book sale and bake sale! Tickets are $10 in advance (buy online at brentelementary.org/picnic) and $20 day of. All proceeds benefit the Brent PTA. Picnic food available for purchase or you’re welcome to bring your own.

We’re still looking for volunteers to staff various picnic stations for a one-hour time slot. It’s a great way to see friends and meet new members of the community. Please sign-up at http://tinyurl.com/hkhc12z. We could also still use some additional baked goodies for the bake sale to be sold at the
We need more children’s books for the book sale!
The used book sale will be held this Sunday, September 24, as part of the Brent Fall Festival. Please bring your used children’s books (we do not sell adult books) in by Thursday so that we can sort them this Friday! Collection boxes in the front entrance to the school and on the stage in the multipurpose room. All proceeds from the book sale will support the Brent PTA, and all leftover books will be donated to Reading Partners DC, a local nonprofit that helps DC students master essential reading skills. So they will be going to a great cause no matter what!

We can use a few more volunteers for sorting books on Friday and running the book sale on Sunday. Book sorting is Friday, September 22, from 9 am-Noon in the multipurpose room. This is a professional development day, and you are welcome to bring your children with you. Feel free to come for a half hour or hour or whatever time you can spare. On Sunday, September 24, we will move the books to the park and setup from 9-11 am, sell books from 11 am-2 pm, and clean up from 2-3 pm. Please volunteer for a 1 or 2 hour shift.

Save the date for Wednesday, Oct. 4 as it’s International Walk to School Day!
Join students, families, school leaders, community partners and mayors around the country on October 4 to celebrate the benefits of walking to school during International Walk to School Day.

Capitol Hill schools will meet at Lincoln Park beginning at 7:30am on Wednesday, Oct. 4 for performances, snacks, speakers, and light exercise. Each school will meet up and leave Lincoln Park to reach their school on time.

More details will be shared as they are finalized. If you have questions, please reach out to Ben Champa, Brent PTA Board President, at benchampa@gmail.com or Ms. Diggs at denise.diggs@dc.gov.

Like Brent on Facebook and Follow Brent on Twitter for the Latest News!
In addition to Brent’s website, brentelementary.org, Brent has a Facebook page. Like Brent’s page and see updates on PTA events, classroom activities, field trips and even lunch menus. Also, follow Brent on twitter, @BrentElementary
Dear Brent Families,

Thank you very much to the many parents who came to the first Principal’s Coffee where we initiated this monthly routine with the purpose of transparent dialogue. I learned from the conversation and hope that the other participants can say the same, I am eager to see how our dialogue develops between now and next month’s Principal’s Coffee (October 6th from 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.)

Homework emerged as one of the topics – as it often does. Homework is a point of explicit connection between home and school, particularly for our older students. It can feel like a way to get a picture into a taciturn student’s day and mechanisms of learning; it can also feel like an arduous push/pull between a reluctant and tired child and an equally reluctant and tired adult. So what is the goal of homework and Brent and how can it be crafted into a successful routine at home?

- Homework is not a representation of all learning done during the day, or even an approximation of the rigor of that learning; instead, it is designed as a practice of (often rote) skills securely acquired in the classroom.
- Homework can help to establish routines and executive functioning skills. You can support those skills by setting a consistent and quiet space (the child should have some choice in that space), having supporting materials available (pencils, scratch paper), co-planning a checklist of what needs to be accomplished, and setting a timer for each portion of the homework (agreeing that effortful work can and should stop when that time has been reached).
- Homework should represent student learning. It is okay to act as a guide or help, but the point is not to get everything right. Ask your student to write a note to their teacher or circle a particular part of the homework that was a struggle (rather than “this is hard,” defining what is hard); adults can do the same if they find themselves helping beyond student independence.
- Homework is often best accomplished after a break, period of physical activity and a snack. By the time the dismissal bell rings, students have been engaged in learning (from academic to social) for six-and-a-half hours. Taking time to refresh is important before facing a new layer of work.

These tips are just a starting point and we encourage you to reach out and ask questions about your homework routine, successes and challenges. Though homework can feel like a big deal after a long day, it is certainly not the most important home learning task; our central goal is to build a learning life. Read a book together or head to the local library; have family journal time to collect ideas for a story or essay; collect natural materials that prompt a scientist’s curiosity; puzzle through a problem orally to build the metacognition of solving it; or take pictures of an inspirational piece of public art. Making learning meaningful, inspiring and playful? That’s our real homework.

Sincerely,

Norah Lycknell

Attendance Reminder - Jewish Holidays

As a reminder, parents should email Denise Diggs (denise.diggs@dc.gov) if their children will be absent due to the upcoming Jewish holidays. Per DCPS attendance policies, Brent can only excuse absences with written documentation from parents.

Penelope Clark
2nd Grade Teacher

What is your teaching and educational background?

I graduated from the University of Oregon (Go Ducks!) with my degree in Family & Human Services and a minor in special education. I then went on to get my teaching credential at California State University at East Bay. My past teaching experience has been in grades 1, 3, and 4, so 2nd grade is a happy medium and I am loving it. I come from a family of teachers and always knew that teaching is what I wanted to do!

I am originally from California but decided to take a big leap and explore a new part of the country, moving to D.C. this summer. I feel so fortunate to have landed at
Brent Elementary! Thank you SO much to the staff, students, and parent community/PTA for the warm welcome and support.

Tell us how the start of the school year is going for your class.

Our class, also known as the Brainstorming Bears, is off to a great start! We have been focusing on building community and getting to know each other in the classroom. We have also been working hard practicing our classroom procedures and routines and are so excited to start diving deeper into the curriculum. The Brainstorming Bears are great thinkers, contributors, and collaborators and I can’t wait to see all that we accomplish together this year!

What would be some of the words your students have used to describe you as a teacher?

I think students would describe me as enthusiastic, friendly, and caring. I make it a priority to get to know each and every one of my students to build a strong teacher-student relationship. I am hoping to have a long-lasting impact on them this year and beyond!

What are your hopes and dreams for your students this year?

My hopes and dreams for my students are that they always have an “I think I can” attitude, that they persevere in achieving their goals even when they face challenges, and that they always give 100% effort. I am looking forward to helping them fulfill their goals this year!