Coming Up

Thursday, October 18
Diversity Working Group Meeting
6:30 - 8 p.m.
Library

Wednesday, October 24
PTA October General Meeting
6:30 - 8 p.m.
ASL Interpreters Provided
Childcare Provided

Thursday, October 25 and Friday, October 26
Professional Development Days
No school for students
Springboard programming available.
Register at springboardkids.com

Tuesday, October 30
Brent Picture Day
See Attached Flyer
Uniform-Free Day

Tuesday, November 6
Election Day
Parent-Teacher Conference Day
No school for Students

Friday, November 30 - Sunday, December 2
Brent Christmas Tree and Holiday Sale

Brent Cheers on DC United
Thanks to everyone from the Brent community who helped cheer on DC United Saturday evening during the first outing for Brent Elementary at DC United’s new stadium. DC United defeated FC Dallas to move one step closer to the MLS playoffs in a great game with the winning goal coming in the last five minutes. Over 100 people from the Brent community showed up to watch, on what was a crisp fall evening. We’ll be sure to set something up for next year and DC United has promised to fix the ticketing issues so that everyone will be seated near each other, and hopefully the 30-minute wait for popcorn will be sorted out by then too! See photos.

Brent ES Picture Day – Tuesday, October 30!
School pictures will be taken on Tuesday, October 30. Picture day orders forms are attached to the paper issue of Tues News which will be distributed to all students today. Students do not have to wear Brent uniforms on that day and are encouraged to look their best. Picture taking begins right away in the morning and continues into the early afternoon. Parents are needed to help with line management and last minute face wiping and hair combing. Assistance for all or part of the day would be greatly appreciated. If you would like to make the magic happen on Picture Day or have questions, please contact...
Ms. Diggs (denise.diggs@dc.gov). For the classes going on field trips that day, we have scheduled those classes to complete their group and individual pictures first thing in the morning with time to change into a field trip shirt before heading out to their class’s field experience.

Used Brent Uniforms for Sale (Pay-What-You-Can)

Brent is excited to announce a new initiative: we will be collecting used Brent uniforms and offering them for sale to other parents. Pay what you can! Clean out your closets of old, wearable Brent uniforms and know that another student will be able to use them.

Led by Brent parents, Kelly Vielmo (parent to Raine in 4th grade and Ravyn in 2nd grade) and Carol Harlow (parent to Chase in 3rd grade), the fundamentals are like this:

Parents can donate clean, wearable Brent uniforms that their children have outgrown to Brent. Uniforms can be dropped off in the Front Office or on Kelly’s front porch (665 South Carolina Avenue SE).

At future Brent events, a table will be set up with the used uniforms. Parents can choose what uniform pieces they want. The first sale will be set up during the next Brent PTA Meeting on Wednesday, October 24th beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Parents will receive a “payment reminder slip” and will pay what they can for the uniforms on the Brent website. No cash will be accepted at the sale table.

Parents can begin dropping off their donations immediately in the Front Office, or bring them to next week’s PTA Meeting. If you have questions, please contact Kelly Vielmo (kvielmo@gmail.com or 202-415-0820, lead organizer), or Denise Diggs (denise.diggs@dc.gov).

Money collected will be transferred to the school to purchase new uniform clothing for students in need. This is not a fundraiser for the PTA but an opportunity to support members of the Brent community.

Get those scissors out! It’s Box Top time.

If you have a collection of Box Tops at home, please bring them to the front office in a plastic bag with your child’s name, the child’s teacher’s name, and the number of Box Tops written on the bag. They will be sent in for redemption by the end of the month. Those little bits of paper add up for the school. Last year Brent earned over $300 through the Box Tops program. In addition to cutting them off packages of cereal or Ziploc bags or fruit snacks, you can also use the Box Tops app to earn money for the school.

Brent Cross Country Competes in Second Meet

With the temperature rising and feet flying, the Brent Cross Country team took to the course for their 2nd meet of the year last Wednesday. In the 3200-meter race, the girls team placed 8th with 4th grader Alia Woodby leading with a time of 19:08.09. Fifth grader Logan Higgenbottham led the boys team to their 7th place finish with a time of 16:40.26. The team will run again next week in the championship meet. Go Bears Cross Country!

Specials Newsletter Posted on Website

Another edition of the Specials Newsletter has been posted on the Brent website. Visit http://www.brentelementary.org/specials.html

Clarification on New DC Kids Ride Free SMARTTrip Cards

DCPS and DDOT has provided clarification on the new Kids Ride Free SMARTTrip Cards. These cards are for students who use public transportation for travel to and from school. Families should not request cards for the sole purpose of field trip transportation as Brent will have access to field trip specific metro cards from DCPS for our field trip trips requiring metro. DC One Cards are still available upon request to use as library cards and access to DC’s Parks and Recreation facilities. Families of students who travel via public transportation to and from school and who do not currently have a new Kids Ride Free SMART Trip card should contact Denise Diggs immediately.

Last Call to Support the Brent PTA and Look Great Doing So

The Brent PTA has been offered a unique opportunity from Alton Lane to purchase custom men’s clothing while also supporting the school. Please plan to join us on November 1, from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Alton Lane’s DuPont Circle location for a very special preview that will also raise money for the school. After the preview, schedule time to get fitted for made-to-order clothing because 20% of that evening’s purchases will be added to a gift card that will be auctioned off at the Brent Elementary Gala in the spring. Refreshments will be served. Space is limited! Sign up today via the link below. Please contact Ben Champa (benchampa@gmail.com) with any questions. https://tinyurl.com/brentptaalonlane
2nd Grade AWS Brent Family Day
On Saturday, second graders and their families participated in an extension of our partnership with the Anacostia Watershed Society. A Brent tradition each year, students participate in Project SONG - Saving Our Native Grasslands. As part of the Project SONG, students collect the seeds of native grasses which will be used to help support the development of meadow ecosystems along the Anacostia River. This weekend, families enjoyed a pontoon boat tour on the river. On the tour, families spotted local wildlife and learned more about the history of our local watershed. See photo.

Save the Date for the Brent Holiday Sale AND Calling All Truck Owners!
The annual Brent Christmas Tree and Holiday Sale is being planned for November 30-December 2. Mark your calendars to come get your Christmas Trees, greenery, poinsettias, and soak up the festive spirit of the holidays! More to come on the specifics of the sale, how to pre-order, and volunteering. In the meantime, if you own a pick-up truck and are willing to help deliver trees during the weekend of the sale (or you are comfortable with loaning us your truck), please contact Alyson Lewis (alysonandjeff@gmail.com). The more volunteer trucks we have, the fewer we will need to rent, and the more money we will earn for Brent!

Tues News
Teacher Spotlight
Donna Girardi-Reed
3rd Grade Focus Teacher

First off, how is your son’s school year going?
His year is going great! He LOVES kindergarten and can now draw a ten frame by himself! He wrote a book last week about a lonely spider.

Tell us about your educational and professional background?
I have an undergraduate degree from Clemson University in Political Science and Communications Studies. My masters’ is in Education with a focus on special education from UMass-Boston. I lived and worked in Boston for 6 years where I taught as an inclusion specialist in Boston Public Schools. I moved to DC in 2012 and worked at Friendship Public Charter School for two years where I co-taught 5th grade and then moved to the Lab School where I taught 5th grade as well for 4 years.

Photo: Ms. Girardi-Reed with husband Giullo and children Erina and Leone.

How are you using your experience as a former teacher at The Lab School at Brent?
Lab is a school for students with learning differences, so it taught me about the beauty of all kinds of minds. I try to use my knowledge of different methods of addressing students’ diverse needs (kinesthetic and visual learners for example) to teach things in a different way. I also received training in the Orton-Gillingham method of reading instruction, which has been invaluable.

What is your role as Brent’s 3rd grade focus teacher?
My role is to be a fourth teacher in the grade to provide more opportunities for differentiated instruction. That can look like co-teaching, small groups for intervention, or serving as a sounding board when teachers are thinking about how to approach things differently for a particular student or concept.

What is unique about 3rd graders?
I love their innocence and their still-evolving approach to life.

What are your hopes and dreams for your students?
I hope that they leave the third grade with a love for learning and more inquisitive than they came.
Principal’s Corner

Dear Brent Family,

It is with great joy that I pass along the news that the Brent community now includes a tiny new member! Principal Lycknell and her wife welcomed their son, Jonah Timothy Lycknell, last Thursday and couldn’t be happier. Principal Lycknell will be home with her newly extended family for the next few weeks, and I will be writing for her column here in Tues News while she is away.

The welcoming of this new addition has me thinking about the various other acts of welcome we are engaging in this time of year. At grade level assemblies, Principal Lycknell shared and read aloud from the beautiful picture book All Are Welcome, written by Alexandra Penfold and illustrated by Suzanne Kaufman. Early childhood classes and kindergarten classes have hosted their Fall Family potlucks, sharing a meal together in fellowship and celebration of the class communities. Faculty members of the Diversity Working Group designed and created an interactive front hallway display celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month that includes an area for Brent students to share their own Hispanic heritage with photos and memories. Book buddy classes are beginning to join together for morning meetings in the spirit of togetherness, and in preparation for our first school-wide morning meeting on November 1st.

Through these acts, we aim to live and convey the message that each of us – every child and adult member of the Brent Community – belongs. I feel proud to be a member of a school community that embraces that principle, and my sincerest hope is that you do, as well.

Sincerely,
Sara Ewbank
Assistant Principal

Reminder - Brent’s Celebration Policy

About five years ago, Brent reviewed its approach to celebrations and guidelines. The school removed extrinsic motivators like food and gifts and sought to promote equity (some students had more social access than others based on their contributions during celebrations) by prohibiting holiday celebrations at school.

Brent defined the goal of its celebration policy as: At Brent Elementary School, our goal is to create a school environment in which each student feels secure, comfortable and proud of his or her individualism, traditions, culture and religion while ensuring that all students, staff and families also feel acknowledged and connected within a larger school and national community. The goal of our policies around celebrations is to keep the focus on our students – on their personal and academic accomplishments – and less on the candy, cards and commercialism that tend to dominate holidays.

In action, this celebrations policy means:

- We do not celebrate any holidays or birthdays with food, snacks or candy.
- On Halloween, Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day, and Father’s Day, we do not create or distribute cards or gifts (except those that may happen organically as part of early childhood centers) or distribute candy or flowers. On Halloween, we do not wear costumes.
- We do discuss the history and cultural origins of holidays and may provide read alouds or activities to support this understanding.
- We incorporate birthday recognition into the educational program in a variety of ways. To maintain classroom time for these and other learning experiences, we ask that you not send individual treats or gifts to be shared with classmates. If you would like to participate in the classroom program on your child’s birthday, please consult with the teacher. Some ways families have contributed to a child’s celebration at school are:
  - Sending in a favorite book. A family member or teacher can read it to the class.
  - Preparing your child to share her or his birthday tradition. Children have opportunities to share during Class Meetings.
  - Donating a book to the classroom or school library in honor of your child’s birthday.
  - Enjoying lunch or recess with your child.

For additional information, visit brentelementary.org->Parents->Policies->Holiday Celebrations. As we look ahead to holidays and other traditions that occur within the school year, we appreciate your adherence to this policy as it stands.