Coming Up

Monday, December 10, 2018 - Friday, March 1, 2019
MySchoolDC Lottery Window for PS - 8th
Visit myschooldc.org to apply

Wednesday, February 13
PTA Board / LSAT Joint Budget Meeting
Closed meeting - PTA Board members and LSAT members only

Monday, February 18
Presidents’ Day
Brent Closed

Tuesday, February 19 - 22
Mid-Winter Break
No school for students or teachers
Brent Main Office open

Wednesday, February 27
PTA General Meeting
6:30 - 8 p.m.
ASL Interpreters provided

Thursday, March 6
Atelier Celebration
6 - 7 p.m.

Saturday, March 30
Brent’s Annual Taste of the Hill Spring Gala
7 - 11:30
AJAX DC

Don’t Forget - Buy Your Spring Gala Tickets Today!
The Spring Gala team is hard at work planning another amazing event. This year, the Gala will be on March 30 from 7 – 11:30 p.m. at the AJAX DC. Early bird ticket pricing of $85 is still available! Tickets can be purchased at https://BrentGala.givesmart.com or Text BrentGala to 52182.

Brent’s Black History Month Celebration Continues
Brent’s 4th Annual Family CommUNITY Dance was a great success! Over 300 people came out last Friday for a fun evening of dancing, crafts and community in honor of Black History Month. Thank you to everyone who donated time, energy and food. It was a great start to our Black History Month celebration. Look for more events and activities throughout February.

This week, students will experience in-school performances of Discovery Theater’s “Into the Great Unknown: African American Adventurers & Explorers.” During the break, on February 23 at 2:30 p.m., the Diversity Working Group invites students and families to
come together at the Southeast Library for a performance of “Going for Freedom.” Marcia Cole’s all-ages show will use poetry and spoken word to recount dramatic and imaginative escapes on the Underground Railroad. After the break, students will make history come alive as a famous black inventor or adventurer in Brent’s first-ever Black History Wax Museum. For more information, email Ms. Hairston at dayon.hairston@dc.gov or Danielle Drissel at danielle@websterious.com.

**Brent Brownies’ Cookies Sales and Service Project**
Please support our troop and get your Thin Mint fix! We will be selling cookies at Brent on Wednesday, February 27th from 3:15 - 6 p.m. (after school and before the PTA meeting.) We are also collecting mini toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrushes, combs, shampoo,) to benefit ThriveDC, a local homeless shelter. Please drop off travel size toiletries in our collection bins in Brent’s front office during the month of February.

**Brent 5th Graders Perform at Ford’s Theatre**
Last week Brent fifth graders participated in the Lincoln Oratory Festival at Ford’s Theatre. Both the Logical Yodas and Thunder Dragons gave powerful performances of speeches made by President Lincoln. The festival capped off a series of field experiences 5th graders have participated in over the course of the year to deepen their understanding of the Civil War as they study it in social studies. Fifth graders showed bravery as they took the stage in front of an audience of their peers across the district and their families as well as empathy when they gave encouraging words to performers who made mistakes. Their teachers enjoyed watching them play an active role in their learning as they studied their parts carefully in order to bring life to their performances and take responsibility for their piece of a shared performance. See photo.

**Brent Spellers Compete at Cluster Finals**
On February 6th, Charlie King, Donovan Wheelock and Susie Gerey went up against 38 other contestants in the local Spelling Bee at Langley EC. All three spellers were in the top 10, with Charlie coming in third place. Donovan and Susie battled for sixth place, but unfortunately were defeated by another contestant. Elsie Murray, who was the alternate, supported and cheered on her fellow classmates as they took the stage. Charlie will move on to District finals! See photo below.

**Music Notes from Mr. Krohn**
Musicians in 1st, 2nd, and 4th grade have been composing their own music and learning how to play their music on the piano. They will be hosting a publishing
party on Wednesday during their scheduled music class to give parents and community members the opportunity to learn more about the process.

Musicians are also gearing up for their end-of-trimester concert! Students in Ms. Hoisl’s, Mr. Berg’s, Ms. Maschari’s, and Ms. Rodriguez’s classes will be performing on Monday, March 4th at 6 p.m. Performing students are asked to arrive at 5:50 p.m. in concert white/black attire (i.e. white shirt/blouse, dark pants/dress/skirt). 3rd and 4th grade performers are asked to bring their recorders.

Two years ago DCPS created its first All-City Choir made up of the best singers throughout DC Public Schools. That inaugural choir performed in March 2017 and for the last two years Brent has had students perform in that choir. I am excited to announce that Brent will be participating in that choir again for the 2018-2019 school year (performance will be on March 23, 2019). Auditions were held and the following students will be representing Brent ES at the DCPS All-City Chorus: Bea Applegate, Sasha Boehm, Avery Drobnyk, Ava Martin, Clara Merrick, Raine Montgomery-Vielmo, Annalee Nieves, Zaida Slakey, and Gabriela Sutherland.

Explore new interests this spring at Brent Elementary! Registration Opens February 13th for Springboard’s Spring Electives

Registration for Springboard Spring Elective programs begins February 13th. Springboard’s spring programs are taught by local community experts, and offer multiple opportunities for kids to explore fun and creative activities!

Benefits of enrichment programs include:

- Increased academic success and social skills
- Boosted self-confidence and self-esteem
- Dedicated time for fun and relaxation while exploring new interests, or building skills

Register by March 8th to secure your child’s spot!

Questions, please email enrichments@springboardkids.com.
Visit parent.springboardkids.com to enroll. A course catalog can be found on Brent’s website, www.brentelementary.org.

February Specials Newsletter Now Posted on Website

Check out all the happenings in Brent’s specials classes by visiting the February Specials Newsletter at http://www.brentelementary.org/specials.html

A Can’t Miss Event for Families – The Building Museum Engineering Family Day – Saturday, February 16th

On Saturday, February 16, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Family Day will be held for the 27th time. It will kick off Engineers Week activities in the National Capital region. Through the years, it has illuminated engineering to thousands of parents, teachers and children.

Family Day is designed to introduce children from ages 4 to 12 years old to the wonders of engineering. This year marks the 17th year the event is being staged at the National Building Museum. Engineers of all types will be on hand to share their love of the design-and-build process. Admission is free. Tues News editor’s note: This is a wonderful event for families!
It’s Box Top time again.
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. In addition to cutting them off of packages of cereal or Ziploc bags or fruit snacks or granola bars, you can also use the Box Tops app to earn money for the school.

What would be some of the words your students have used to describe you as a teacher?
A student once wrote to me in a card and said, “You have a way of teaching topics that should be boring in a way that makes them fun and interesting.” I recently received a message from a student in my very first class who said she still remembers how I made her feel heard. Most commonly, students describe me as calm, nice, and funny. Fifth graders are figuring out who they are, and who they want to be. They tend to value fairness, challenges, and meaningful conversation. I care about those things, too, so we tend to get along.

What are your hopes and dreams for your students this year?
I hope that the Thunder Dragons and Logical Yodas set high goals for themselves and achieve those goals. I hope that they take risks, lead, and advocate for themselves. Lastly, I hope they make lasting memories of their final year of elementary school.

You will be teaching both 5th grade classes – the Thunder Dragons and the Logical Yodas - as both teachers will take family leave. Tell us about 5th graders and what makes them unique.
As you probably have noticed, I think fifth graders are the best. Fifth graders are at a pivotal time in their lives, and I love being able to help them reach their full potential. Brent students, staff, and families have made me feel very welcomed, and I can tell this is a place where people take care of each other. I think I made a great decision.

Principal’s Corner
What do we mean by “active” in B.E.A.R.?
In 2015, the Brent faculty developed and introduced the B.E.A.R. acronym to the students and community. We had already been thinking and talking quite a bit about the importance of empathy and responsibility, and worked that Fall to explore what was meant by bravery: acting in the presence of fear or nervousness, and demonstrating academic and social courage. But what about active? This has perhaps been the least well understood of our B.E.A.R. values.

What do we mean by “active” in B.E.A.R.?
When we talk with students about being active, we usually mean it in one of two senses: active minds or active bodies.

Staff Spotlight
Gretchen Giovanni
5th Grade Teacher
Why did you decide on a 5th grade teaching position at Brent?
I studied Elementary and Special Education at Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania. I was able to student teach in Raleigh, North Carolina and loved the area, so I decided to stay. I taught fifth grade math and science for three years, followed by three years of teaching fifth grade in Colorado.

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What do we mean by “active” in B.E.A.R.?
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Having an active mind is further defined as taking many forms: active listening, actively seeking understanding, and proactive choosing. Our stance is an active one, not a passive one, when it comes to learning: we ask questions, we seek clarification, we learn from mistakes and try again. Additionally, when teachers and classmates are talking, we engage in active listening: we don’t wait to be invited into learning, we seek it. We don’t sit and wait for answers or understanding, we try things, we experiment, we push ourselves toward growth in understanding. We don’t wait for right and wrong to be revealed to us: we choose.

Having an active body means we keep ourselves healthy through movement and play. We make time for this daily, and Brent makes programming available – Health and Fitness day, Girls on the Run, sports teams – to forward this value. Additionally, we have invested in our partnership with Playworks as a reflection of this value, increasing active options for all students through recess and Class Game Time.

We hope that once our students head to middle school they will further incorporate the lessons of active minds and active bodies. We hope our students will actively seek out a teacher for additional instruction on a challenging concept. We want our students to have the confidence to try a new sport or try out for a team. And most importantly, we want our students to push through challenge, struggle, and setback with an active agency to persevere.