Coming Up

**Wednesday, September 4**
Back to School Night  
6 - 7:30 p.m.  
ASL Interpreters Provided

**Friday, September 6**
Principal’s September Coffee  
8:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.

**Tuesday, September 10**
Picture-Day  
Uniform-Free Day

**Wednesday, September 11**
PTA Board Meeting  
6 - 7:30 p.m.

**Sunday, September 15**
PTA Welcome Picnic  
11 – 2 p.m.  
ASL Interpreters Provided

**Wednesday, September 18**
Diversity Working Group Meeting  
6 - 7:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, September 25**
PTA General Meeting  
6 - 7:30 p.m.  
Childcare provided  
ASL Interpreters Provided

**Wednesday, October 2**
LSAT Meeting  
6 - 7:30 p.m.

**Brent’s Back to School Night,**  
**Wednesday, September 4**  
**from 6 – 7:30 p.m.**

On Wednesday, September 4 from 6 – 7:30 p.m. Brent will host Back to School Night. Principal Lycknell will introduce Brent staff and
discuss school-wide initiatives. After Principal Lycknell’s remarks, parents will visit their children’s classrooms, meet the teachers, and

Photos: Scenes from the first day of school for Brent’s early childhood students
learn about classroom goals and expectations for the year. We welcome every family to participate in this important event.

**Event Schedule**

- **6 p.m.** Brent Faculty introductions
- **6:10 p.m.** Brent Faculty departs to classrooms
- **6 – 6:25 p.m.** Norah Lycknell, Brent’s principal, remarks
- **6:25 – 6:30 p.m.** Transition to classrooms
- **6:30 – 6:55 p.m.** Session 1
- **6:55 – 7 p.m.** Transition - Session 2
- **7 – 7:25 p.m.** Session 2 (If you have more than one child at Brent, please attend Session 2 - teachers will be repeating the presentation from Session 1)

**7:25 – 7:30 p.m.** Building closing

Notes about back to school night:
- Back to School Night is an adults-only event and childcare is not provided.
- Back to School Night will begin promptly at 6 p.m. in the multipurpose room. Please arrive early.
- Brent families with three or more children will need to split at least one session.
- Back to School Night focuses on collective information. If you have topics of individual concern, please schedule an individual meeting.

**Early Dismissal Before 3 p.m.**

If you require early dismissal, please pick up in the main office prior to 3 p.m. After 3 p.m we will ask families to wait until the regular dismissal time of 3:15 p.m.

Between 3-3:15 p.m. classes are moving about the building or are engaged in dismissal routines. Even when we call students to the office in this window of time, it takes until the regular dismissal time of 3:15 p.m. to get there. Arrive prior to 3 p.m. to make sure you are on time for those afternoon doctor’s appointments and to make sure that all of our students can engage in an intentional dismissal routine.

**Enrichment: First Term Dates**

Innovation Learning oversees all enrichment providers and has been putting together a fall enrichment program that maintains many of our past providers with some new additions too. They are also mandating that all enrichment providers have the appropriate DCPS background clearance.

The fall enrichment catalogue will be published on or before September 12th. We will send a community email with the catalogue link and sign up process. Enrichment classes will begin on September 30th.

**Enrichment: Financial Assistance Applications**

For families wishing to apply for financial assistance for aftercare, please contact Cindy Novy at 866-239-3661 or cnovy@innovation-learning.com by Friday, September 13, 2019 to start the application process. Notifications of financial assistance will be communicated in five business days.

**Brent PTA’s Family Picnic - Sunday, September 15**

We hope to see you next Sunday, September 15 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at X Park for the Brent family picnic, welcoming all Brent community families to the new school year. Enjoy live music by Great Northern, browse children’s books at our annual book sale and other fun for kids, including bounce houses, face painting and crafts.
Sample some goodies at the bake sale, too! Wristbands are $15 in advance (buy online at brentelementary.org/picnic) and $20 day of (this cost is waived for families who qualify for free or reduced lunch). All proceeds benefit the Brent PTA. Picnic food will be available for purchase or you’re welcome to bring your own.

We’re 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 https://tinyurl.com/y2x2r8eg. If you love to bake (or buy treats!), please sign up to contribute to the bake sale (https://tinyurl.com/y5o4tjum)

Many thanks to the Jeanne Phil & Meg/Compass team for their generous sponsorship of the picnic.

Please email diana.rubin@gmail.com with any questions.

**We need more children’s books to sell!**
The Brent PTA will be selling used children’s books at its annual used book sale, held as part of the Brent Welcome Family Picnic on Sunday, September 15. Clear out books you no longer need from your kids’ book shelves and bring the books to Brent! There are collection boxes by the front office and on the stage in the multipurpose room. And if you would like to help sort or sell books (or help with other aspects of the picnic), you can sign up at https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1kZKtzoux70MjJL_rjw-wjoVwyVWsyd3XCeEN4er4sqpE/edit#gid=0.

All proceeds from the book sale will support the Brent PTA, and all leftover books will be donated Reading Partners, a local nonprofit that provides reading support to kids.

No adult books please.

Contact co-coordinators Brittany Poley (Brittany.poley@gmail.com), Sarah Carr (sarah@sdcarr.com), or Ellen Psychas (epsych@hotmail.com) with any questions.

**Brent School Store Update**

Pickup online orders placed by EOD 9/3 during Back-to-School Night on Wednesday, September 4th. Show your school pride and support your PTA with Brent Gear including athletic shorts, Dri-Fit shirts, water bottles and T-shirts! All store items are approved uniforms. We are switching to a parent pick-up system for the store this year - please plan to pick-up online orders at school events or from the front office.

**Brent PTA Fundraising Update**

We all want the brightest futures for our children. At Brent we believe in meeting every child where they are and ensuring exceptional academic and social experiences during these formative years. But with increasing government mandates and shrinking budgets these challenges can be daunting. The PTA works hard every year, alongside Brent’s incredible administrative staff, to partner on ways that make our community and school the best and strongest it can be. We do this through a number of different ways but our annual fundraising efforts are critical to our success. Different from the school supply and field trip expenses, these dollars are allocated to programs, resources, technology and infrastructure improvements that are deemed critical by the school, and by you, our community. The first of our three major fund-raising efforts is the ANNUAL FUND drive, which will kick off within the next weeks and run until Thanksgiving. Visit brentelementry.org/support-brent.html link to learn more about each of our fundraisers and see about ways to contribute, volunteer or get involved. As always parents are welcome and encouraged to join any of our PTA Board meetings either in person or virtually if they have further questions or suggestions. Welcome back families and together lets make this Brent’s best year yet! Brent PTA

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**Staff Spotlight**

**Nancy Khuu**
5th Grade Focus Teacher & ELA Instructional Coach

**What is your teaching and educational background?**

I began teaching in the New York City Public School system as a 3rd and 4th grade teacher. In August of 2010, my husband and I moved to Silver Spring, Maryland, and I joined Janney Elementary School as an Instructional Coach. I worked at Janney for five years before moving to Brookland Middle School for two years, also as an Instructional Coach. In the seven years as an instructional coach, I learned so much from the teachers with whom I worked, and I also missed working with...
students directly. I was eager to go back into a student-facing teaching role to try on a lot of my new learning, so over the last two years, I was the co-teacher (similar to a Focus Teacher) at Janney, serving 5th graders in ELA. I was able to co-teach with several reading and writing teachers. Co-teaching served as a type of professional development that allowed me to learn with the general education teacher and provided a thought partner as we planned and responded to students.

I have my Bachelors in English Literature from Hartwick College, and Masters of Arts in Elementary Education, Curriculum & Teaching from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a Masters of Arts in School Leadership and Administration from Fordham University.

Tell about your role as a 5th grade focus teacher and an instructional coach at Brent?

As the 5th grade focus teacher, I will be working with Mrs. Lee and Mrs. Saxton to support students when and where needed. That includes pulling students into small groups for specialized instruction that may fall outside of the general 5th grade curriculum and pushing into the classrooms to work with the class, small groups, and individuals. The fifth grade teachers and I will look at student data together to identify when that support is needed.

You are serving in two roles - as a teacher and an instructional coach, what are your hopes and dreams for the students you will teaching and for the staff you will be supporting?

My hope is that our students enjoy coming to school and are curious about the learning that we will do each day. As the students engage in the work, they will continue to grow in their abilities and skills in all academic and social areas. By the end of the school year, I would like our students to be confident in their learning, in who they are, and feel that they have the skills and strategies they need to tackle new challenges and new learning.

Like our students, the adults at Brent also have our own goals and next steps. I am looking forward to working with and learning from the staff at Brent. There will be many opportunities to engage in professional development work with grade level teams, individual teachers, and our other instructional coach, Ms. Paxson, which will challenge and push my own thinking and learning. As a partner to the staff in our building, I hope that I am able to support adult learning through classroom visits and observations, through analysis of student data, by researching and providing resources, and by serving as a thought partner to plan and teach responsively to our students.

How will you work with the 5th graders to ensure they are prepared to be successful both academically and socially in middle school?

It is critical that the skills we learn in fifth grade are transferable as our students leave Brent. Through our work in advisory, we will work on relationship building with friends we know and friends new to us, on developing our social skills and conflict resolution, and developing organizational skills and strategies that will help us better navigate a new setting. We will also grow and support our students in setting goals and developing a plan to achieve their goals. The ability to identify where one is in their academics and abilities and set goals toward growth is an important skill that they will need to take with them into middle school and beyond.
Room Parent Opportunities Still Exist

With the second week of school underway, some classes still need room parents. If your child is in one of these classes, please consider volunteering to be the room parent this year:

Ms. Montgomery (PK)
Ms. Santora (K)
Ms. Bisanz (1st)
Mr. Berg (2nd)
Ms. Laskowski (2nd)
Ms. Leary (4th)
Ms. Saxton (5th)
Ms. Lee (5th)
Ms. Leary (4th)
Ms. Werstuik (4th)
Ms. Gibson (Art)
Mr. Krohn (Music)
Mr. Mangiaracina (Science)
Coach Mitchell (P.E.)
Ms. Bettina (Library)

Please send a message to Keri Maruska at kmorisch@gmail.com if you'd like to help your child’s class and teacher this year.

Principal’s Corner

Dear Brent Community,

Over the first week of school I witnessed a community forming. Students shared summer stories and met new classmates and friends. Teachers taught procedures and expectations, reinforcing their students’ positive contributions. Faculty introduced new lunch and revised recess structures designed to improve the student experience and a sense of shared ownership. The first week challenged us to consider our individual needs alongside our membership in a unified group, and it was full of the joy that we hope will shape our year as Brent Bears.

Even as we continue our focus on forming community, the second week of school is centered around the assessments needed to form academic instruction. When we talk about assessment, we mean one of four things:

- Diagnostic Assessments: Often given at beginning (now), middle, and end of the school year, these assessments compare student performance to grade-level expectations and learning standards. Individual results help to shape long-term instructional planning. Our diagnostic assessments include:
  - All grade levels: Fountas and Pinnell Reading Level Assessment (can also be considered a benchmark assessment), Math Standards Assessment (faculty designed), Writing On Demand (faculty designed)
  - K-2: DIBELS Early Literacy Skills Assessment
  - 2-5: iReady Math Assessment and The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)

- Benchmark or Interim Assessments: These assessments are designed to capture skills and standards a student was expected to acquire. Families are most likely to receive the results of these assessments in the form of Eureka Math Module Assessments or a published writing piece. Individual results help a teacher understand what might require re-teaching or additional depth.

- Summative Assessments: Given at the end of the year, summative assessments aim to evaluate the year’s learning. While Brent administers standards-level assessments, the most widely known summative assessment is PARCC for grades 3-5. This data helps us understand learning trends and the way our program will be shaped to meet them.

  - Formative Assessments: Arguably the most important and frequent mode, formative assessments are used to evaluate student learning in the moment. They include observations, questioning, and the analysis of student work.

Our students are best prepared for assessments when they are ready to offer what they know. They take part in responding assessment results by tracking their learning against the learning objective, selecting a just-right text, measuring their writing with a rubric or checklist, or setting a goal after a teacher conference. As partners in the learning process, we encourage families to ask students what they are learning and how their work contributes to that learning.

Teachers are first and foremost decisionmakers. Research has shown that they make up to 1500 daily decisions critical to academic and social emotional instruction. Though the assessment load can at times feel overwhelming to both students and adults, the results enable more intentional action. They propel us to ask more precise questions, reflect on past planning, and set goals founded on strengths and directed toward growth.

To a week of discovering more about who our students are, what they are able to do, and what they will be able to do next.

Sincerely,

Norah Lycknell