Coming Up

**Wednesday, September 5**
LSAT Meeting
6:30 – 8 p.m.
Library

**Cub Scout Information Meeting**
7 – 8 p.m.
Multipurpose Room

**Friday, September 7**
Spirit Day – Team Day
Wear a shirt / jersey representing your favorite team (Nats, Girls on the Run, Capitol Hill Little League etc.)

**Principal’s Coffee**
8:15 a.m.- 9 a.m.
ASL Interpreter Provided

**Wednesday, September 12**
PTA Executive Board Meeting
6:30 - 8 p.m.

**Sunday, September 16**
Brent Family Picnic
11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
X Park
Volunteer Today

**Wednesday, September 19**
Diversity Working Group
6:30 - 8 p.m.

**Team Spirit Day – This Friday**
Brent’s first spirit day of the year will be on Friday, September 7th and the theme is team day. Students and staff are encouraged to wear a shirt/jersey representing their favorite sports team (Nationals, Girls on the Run, etc.). This will be a uniform-free day.

**Cub Scouts Information Meeting- This Wednesday, September 5 at 7 p.m.**
Cub Scout Pack 230--based on Capitol Hill--will host a recruitment meeting in Brent’s multipurpose room on September 5th. Feel free to come between 6:30 and 7 p.m for conversation and scout
about everything Pack 230 has
to offer while having your ques-
tions answered about Cub Scouts.
Any questions, please email Pack
230 Chairman Byran Dierlam at
bryan.dierlam@gmail.com (Dad to
Brent 4th Grader, William and 2nd
Grader, Emma--Both Scouts!)

Volunteer to Help Brent
Last week at Back to School Night,
we heard about all of the great
things planned at the school this
year. This would not be possible
without volunteers giving their
time. This year the Brent PTA is
asking every family to volunteer
their time to at least one PTA ac-
tivity or event. Time commitments
range from only a few hours over
the course of the school year to a
few hours a week. So let us know
what you are interested in and we
will connect you with the right
groups.

Also, a big THANK YOU to all
of the people who have already
signed up to volunteer this year.
Sign up today to volunteer using
the link below:
www.tinyurl.com/helpbrentbears

Family Welcome Picnic –
Sunday, September 16 (11
a.m. – 2 p.m. at X Park)
We hope you will join us!
Join us for the Brent family picnic,
welcoming all Brent community
families to the new school year.
Enjoy live music from Soul Grav-
ity, bounce houses, face painting,
crafts and other kids activities.
Browse children’s books at our
annual used book sale and buy
yummy treats from Brent bakers.
Hamburgers and hot dogs will be
available for purchase or bring
your own picnic food. Wristbands
are $15 per family in advance on-
line and $20 per family the day of
the picnic. Buy wristbands or get
more information at http://bren-
telementary.org/picnic.

Volunteer: The picnic is a parent-
run event, so please plan to vol-
unteer a little of your time to help
organize and/or manage activities
the day of the picnic. The book
sale needs help sorting books after
school on Thursday, September 13.
You can sign up at Thank you in
advance.

Bake: Whether you love to bake
or just love baked goods, we need
your help! Please sign up to bake
something (purchased items wel-
come, too) to be sold at the Brent
family welcome picnic. Please sign
up to bring something.

Please email Diana Rubin at
diana.rubin@gmail.com with any
questions.

Morning Bell Schedule
Please review a reminder of Brent’s
morning bell schedule:
8:35 a.m. Line up– students line
up in the their parking lot spaces
on the playground
8:40 a.m. Proceed to Class
– teachers meet students on the
playground and walk to their class-
rooms.
8:45 a.m. Class Begins - stu-
dents who arrive into their class-
rooms after the 8:45 a.m. bell will be
marked tardy. Families will be noti-
ed via email about late arriv-
als.

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, fol-
low Brent on twitter, @BrentEle-
mentary

Student Store – New Items
The student store is now selling
White dri-fit polos: $20. White
dri-fit t-shirts: $15. Visit the stu-
dent store at brentelementary.org
to purchase these shirts today. See
photos.

Brent Used Book Sale in Need
of Children’s Books
The Brent PTA will be holding a
book sale of used and new chil-
ren’s books as part of the Brent
Family Picnic on September 16.
Please donate any gently used
and new children's’ books that you
would like to pass on to the next
young reader! We are looking for
board books, young reader books,
chapter books for kids, advanced
reader books . . . any books for
children. Books should be dropped
off in collection bins near the
front office and on the stage in the
multipurpose room by Thursday,
September 13. All proceeds will
support the Brent PTA, and all
leftover books will be donated to
local organizations that provide
books to kids. If you have any
questions, please contact Sarah
Carr at sarah@sdcarr.com.

Join the Diversity Working
Group
The Diversity Working Group con-
sists of parents, teachers and ad-
ministrators committed to equity
and inclusion. Our meetings are open to all and provide a forum to share experiences and plan events. Our first meeting of the new school year will be Wednesday, September 19 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Save the date and join the fun!

In the meantime, you can read about the DWG mission and last year’s activities under the Parents tab on the Brent website. Interested? Please contact Danielle Drissel at Danielle@websterious.com to be added to our email list.

**Brent Buddies at the Family Picnic**
The Brent Family Picnic on Sunday, September 16 is a great time to connect with friends old and new. This year, the Diversity Working Group and the PTA are teaming up to make the picnic the site of the first official Brent Buddies meet up. Details coming soon! It’s not too late the sign up for the Brent Buddies program to welcome new families to the Brent community. Please sign up using the link http://www.tinyurl.com/DWGBrentBuddies or email Danielle Drissel at danielle@websterious.com to volunteer or ask questions.

**Call for Egg Cartons**
Looking for lots of egg cartons for craft table fun at the Brent picnic! Please drop off egg cartons in the front office this week and next. Only the paper pulp kind please; no plastic or styrofoam cartons. Thank you!

**Music Notes from Mr. Krohn, Brent’s Performing Arts director!**
Students in grades 1st – 5th will have the opportunity to come to music four times a week for approximately 13 weeks. During their time in music students will be studying percussion, guitar, ukulele, violin, piano, vocal instruction/coaching, theater, and movement while hopefully gaining a deep appreciation for what the performing arts can offer. This trimester the following classes will have music: Ms. Bisanz, Mr. Meneghello, Ms. Hill, Ms. Werstuik, and Ms. Saxton.

We have been working with percussion as well as reminding ourselves about how we use our singing voice to match pitch with various instruments (i.e. piano, xylophone, etc...). Students are also being reminded that great musicians look, listen, and learn when someone is speaking.

3rd Grade musicians have been introduced to the recorder through the method book “Recorder Karate” and they have been asked to practice at least 5-10 minutes daily so they can improve their muscle memory, finger dexterity, and music reading abilities. “Belt” tests will be starting in two weeks.

Looking for a way to volunteer? I am in need of book binding, photo copying, and emailing parents as a room parent. If you are interested, please email me at Joshua.krohn@dc.gov

**DCPS /Attendance Guidelines**

**From the Brent Attendance Team (Denise Diggs, Manager, Strategy and Logistics, Stephanie Young, Social Worker, Catherine Bisanz, 1st grade teacher, Erin Kelly, kindergarten teacher and Dayon Hairston, Behavioral Tech)**

**DCPS Attendance Policy**
At DC Public Schools (DCPS), it is the goal to ensure that every student achieves academic success by being present at school every day and on time. Students who have regular school attendance learn more and are more successful in school. DCPS monitors both unexcused absences and all absences by tracking In-Seat Attendance (ISA).

Some absences are unavoidable, but when children miss too much school - excused or unexcused - they can fall behind.

**Is Attending School Required?**
Yes, attending school is required by law! All students who reach five years of age on or before September 30 of the current school year must attend school every day until they meet high school graduation requirements or reach their 18th birthday.

**What Is Truancy?**
Truancy is the unexcused absence from school by a minor (5-17 years of age) with or without approval, parent knowledge or consent.

**Which Absences Are Excused vs. Unexcused?**
Excused absences are when school-aged students are absent from school with a valid excuse and parental approval. Excused absences include: student illness (a doctor’s note is required if a student is absent for more than...
5 days); death in the student’s immediate family; observance of a religious holiday; medical reasons such as a doctor’s appointment (a doctor’s note is required). Unexcused absences are when school-aged students are absent from school without a valid excuse, with or without parental approval. Examples of unexcused absences include: family vacation, doing errands and parent’s illness.

When your child is absent from school, please provide a written note to the front office or email Denise Diggs at denise.diggs@dc.gov. If your child misses five consecutive absences due to illness, documentation from a doctor is required.

**What Happens if My Child Accrues Unexcused Absences?**

Brent follows the DC law on school attendance. This law pertains to students in grades K - 12th. At three unexcused absences, parents will receive an official attendance notification letter. At five unexcused absences, parents are required to attend an attendance intervention meeting and work with staff to develop an attendance intervention plan to improve attendance. At ten unexcused absences, families are referred to Child and Family Services for educational neglect. At fifteen unexcused absences, families are referred to DC Truancy Court.

**A Note about Late Arrivals**

Students arriving late to school miss valuable instructional time, social interaction with peers and critical morning routines. The Brent attendance team will be reaching out to families of students who arrive late to school to provide support and guidance. Being on time is a critical life skill.

For students’ academic careers, this skill is solidified in elementary school. Students need to be on the playground by 8:30 a.m. to line up for teacher pick-up. Students who are not in the classroom by 8:45 a.m. are marked tardy.

**And a Note About Family Travel**

Absences due to family travel are not excused. Therefore, student absences due to family travel trigger attendance interventions. Families are encouraged to review the school calendar to align family travel with school breaks. The 2018-2019 DCPS Calendar provides five 3-day weekends, three 4-day weekends, one 5-day weekend and extended time for Thanksgiving, Winter Break, February Break and Spring Break. Families are strongly discouraged from extending these breaks with additional days. Faculty at Brent extensively plans for instruction with emphasis on those days right before breaks.

**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.

**Principal’s Corner**

Dear Brent Families,

Thank you for joining us for Back to School Night last week! It was a pleasure to host our families for the launching point of our school year. If you missed the opening presentation or want to spend a moment reviewing it, visit Brent’s website. It contains operating principles and key levers to which we will return in this weekly column and otherwise.

Though this column is one point of weekly connection about school initiatives, policies and processes, we also have a monthly Principal’s Coffee this Friday from 8:15am-9:00am in the main office. The monthly Principal’s Coffee is an open forum to discuss ideas, ask questions and listen to the perspectives of other community members. While any topic is always a welcome addition to the discussion, on Friday we will deepen our understanding of the Focus Teacher role at Brent, the processes that support it, and how it ties into our approach to intervention and enrichment.

I hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

Norah Lycknell
Principal

*Photo: Recess at Brent*
Tues News Staff Spotlight
Melissa Lee
5th Grade Teacher

What is your teaching and educational background?
I began my teaching career as a Teach for America Corps Member in 2009. Initially, I was trained as a special education inclusion teacher but switched to general education after a few years. I spent 5 years at Tyler ES and then the next four at Hyde-Addison ES. When I was little, everyone always said I’d become a teacher one day. Apparently, they were right!

Tell us how the start of the school year is going for your class!
Our year is off to a great start! With a unique class arrangement in 5th grade, I feel like I’ve really gotten to know my students quickly. Our community is budding with excitement around American history and their enthusiasm for learning is infectious. I cannot wait to see where this year takes us.

As far as the school year in general, my transition into Brent has been fantastic. From the very start, my colleagues, the PTA and the community-at-large has been incredibly welcoming. I’ve never felt so supported in terms of supplies and assistance! It’s made being at a new school much more manageable, so thank you to everyone who has helped!

What would be some of the words your students have used to describe you as a teacher?
strict but fun, engaging and helpful, sometimes silly

What are your hopes and dreams for your students this year?
My hope is that all of my students feel safe to take risks, both academically and socially. I want them to know that pushing themselves beyond their comfort level is where true success and progress can be found. And, I hope they’ll surprise themselves along the way!

How will you work with the 5th graders to ensure they are prepared to be successful both academically and socially in middle school?
I’m really excited about our new advisory structure. Each 5th grader begins the day with just a few other students and an advisor. I think this type of environment will lend itself toward honest, individual support and will foster new relationships amongst the kids. In advisory we’ll cover social and emotional skills, organizational skills, topics of personal interest and get to know one another really well. I believe this will help prepare our students well for what’s to come.

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