

Brookside Briefs

February 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians:

There is no shortage of inspiration in the hallways of Brookside Place School. Moody city skylines created with tempera paint can be found near the art room. Outside the lower elementary classrooms there are creative writing samples imagining what it would be like to be stuck inside a snow globe. How would you escape!? Math concepts including arrays, quotients, multiplication and repeated subtraction hang outside the fourth grade classes.

One particular display that caught my eye was a collection by Mrs. O'Shea's first grade class. Each student was asked to complete Dr. Martin Luther King's famous line, "I have a dream." The responses were insightful: "That everybody will be kind," "That the world will be peaceful," "That people will be nice, no matter what color their skin is." These are wonderful reminders as we honor Dr. King's legacy and they certainly complement our January and February character traits of courage and kindness. When paired together, courage and kindness can certainly help shape our schools and our communities.

This month we look forward to several celebrations. As of February 1, the 100th day of school is set to coincide with Valentine's Day, although the possibility of inclement weather is always a factor on this final date. The 100 day milestone is a fun benchmark, especially for our first grade classes which use it as a springboard to explore number concepts. Please see the entries below regarding Valentine's Day celebrations as well as Mrs. O'Hara's initiatives to raise awareness of heart and dental health.

Thank you to those who continue to collaborate with the Cranford Public School leadership and greater community to Reimagine Cranford Public Schools. There are three upcoming community meetings that will include Question and Answer sessions. Please see the third entry in these Brookside Briefs for exact times and locations. Additional Reimagination information including demographic information and

presentations is archived on the Cranford Board of Education web site www.cranfordschools.org.

Please see the remainder of the February Brookside Briefs for timely reminders, forthcoming dates and important information about BPS and district initiatives. As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or topics you would like to discuss. My email address is klimko@cranfordschools.org.

Congratulations Mrs. Francis

The Governor's Educator of the Year program is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Education and is designed to recognize "innovation, achievement and success in the classroom." The 2018-2019 Brookside Place School Classroom Teacher of the Year is Kindergarten Teacher Mrs. Anne Marie Francis. Congratulations to Mrs. Francis on this special recognition and thanks to those parents/guardians and BPS staff members who submitted nominations. A short profile of Mrs. Francis's teaching career and the special role she plays at Brookside Place School will be posted on the BPS Web page.

Kindergarten and New Student Registration

Central registration for kindergarten, first grade, READY and students who will be new to the district for the 2019-2020 school year will be done online followed by an in-person appointment at Lincoln School (playground entrance) between the hours of 8:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 19 through Friday, February 22 with limited appointments available on Saturday, February 23, 2019. **An appointment is required.**

For full instructions, please visit www.cranfordschools.org to view the registration letter and download the required forms.

Reimagining Cranford Public Schools **Community Meeting Dates**

Community feedback continues to be instrumental in shaping the process of potentially Reimagining Cranford Public Schools. There are three meetings planned for the month of February. Each will include a Q&A session. These community-wide meetings will take place at 7:00 PM on the following dates/locations:

- February 5 at Orange Avenue School
- February 7 at Hillside Avenue School
- February 19 at Brookside Avenue School

Language Selection for Grade 5 Students

Reminder: Mrs. Annamaria Bellino, supervisor of World Languages, will visit the three fifth grade classrooms during their scheduled Spanish instruction during the week of February 4 to assist them with making a selection for language study during middle school. A letter with details was emailed to all Grade 5 families on Tuesday, January 22, 2019.

CogAT Testing

BPS second grade students will participate in CogAT screenings during the mornings of Tuesday, February 5 and Wednesday, February 6. The screening provides valuable data and is part of the process for indentifying students for the Pathways to Excellence (P2E) program. CogAT stands for Cognitive Abilities Test which is a nationally standardized assessment that measures reasoning and problem-solving skills in three different areas: verbal, quantitative and nonverbal. The screening will be completed by students online. It is not timed, but it is estimated to take approximately 120 minutes over the two days. There is no need to prepare in advance. If a student has not brought headphones into their class at the start of the school year, sending them in for testing purposes would be helpful. Parents/guardians will receive a copy of the report via mail about a month after the testing window is closed. At the same time there may also be notification as to whether the student is eligible to move to the next phase of the P2E identification process. For additional information,

BPS parents/guardians of grade 2 students may refer to the January 8 letter discussing the CogAT administration.

This is Your Brain on Phones: **Smartphone & Social Media Overuse**

The Cranford Police Department will present a health and wellness seminar for community members called “This Is Your Brain on Phones: Smartphone and Social Media Overuse” on Wednesday, February 13 at Cranford High School from 6:30 – 8:00 PM. This forum will discuss the effects of smartphones on individuals and what can be done to ensure the health and wellness of families. The evening is presented in conjunction with Cranford Public Schools and Prevention Links.

A Note about Valentine’s Day Celebrations

Valentine’s Day celebrations will be taking place at BPS on or around Wednesday, February 14 and may include treats. According to our district policy, the food served (party foods) “shall be announced in advance so that parents/guardians of children with allergies can make appropriate plans for what their child may safely consume during the celebration.” Any candy or treats sent in with Valentine cards will not be eaten during the school day, but will be sent home for parents/guardians to determine if their child should eat.

School Closed for Presidents Day **February 18, 2019**

School will be closed for students and staff on Monday, February 18, 2019 in observance of Presidents Day.

BPS Cultural Night

Come and experience tastes from around the world! The BPS PTA will host a Cultural Night on Monday, February 25 from 6:30 – 8:00 PM. Families are invited to bring a dish from a culture of their choice to share and others will do the same for all to enjoy. Students and parents/guardians may also come dressed in cultural attire. Come out and taste something new

and share something unique. A sign up genius is posted on the BPS PTA website: bpspta.digitalpto.com

Are You Smarter? Academic Bowl

For the tenth year in a row the Cranford and Garwood Public Schools and the Cranford Rotary Club will team up to sponsor a friendly competition called “Are You Smarter than a (Cranford/Garwood) Fifth Grader?” Academic Bowl. A flyer was sent home to Grade 5 families with all the details and deadlines. “Auditions” for BPS fifth graders will be held on Thursday, February 28 from 3:00 – 3:00 PM in the Art Room. A permission slip is required. There is also an opportunity for one BPS parent/guardian to participate. Please see the flyer for details.

Kindness

The featured character trait for February is kindness. Homeroom teachers will have the opportunity to select from a menu of activities to celebrate and raise awareness of this important quality. Some of the choices include: 1) Contributing to the “Snow Many Ways to Be Kind” hallway display 2) Meeting with a buddy class 3) Contributing examples kindness to the “Acts of Kindness” jar in the Main Office to be read on the morning announcements 4) Participating in a classroom-based Random Acts of Kindness Challenge. In addition, the K-2 classes will read *The Kindness Quilt* by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace and grades 3-5 will read *The Brand New Kid* by Katie Couric.

A “Souper” Effort

The Brookside Place Student Council recently coordinated our annual “Souper” Bowl event. Thank you to all those who donated canned soup in honor of their preferred team: the Los Angeles Rams or the New England Patriots. While the results are still unofficial until the final count is completed the Rams were leading the *charge* and looked like a sure-thing to prevail in the BPS “Souper” Bowl. Look for official results on the web page and in the March Brookside Briefs. All donations will be delivered to Cranford Family Care. Thank you for your support!

Pasta for Pennies

One of the annual acts of kindness at Brookside Place School is our participation in the Pasta for Pennies fundraiser which supports the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Thank you to all who have donated! The final totals will be announced on or around Monday, February 4 and the homeroom class that collects the highest amount will earn a special lunch courtesy of The Olive Garden. Special thanks to Mrs. Jerian Brockman and her class of fourth grade students for coordinating this community service effort.

Living with Allergies

Thank you to Nurse Paula O’Hara and several BPS students for helping us better understand what it is like to be a student living with the possibility of severe allergic reactions. During January Mrs. O’Hara visited classrooms to help present a PowerPoint presentation created by a BPS fourth grade student about life with allergies. A first person account from a fifth grade student was also shared with the parent/guardian community. This effort to raise awareness of food allergies coincided with the January character trait of courage.

Healthy Hearts and Smiles

Please see the related February Healthy Hints newsletter from Nurse O’Hara for information and initiatives surrounding heart and dental health. There are two forms for students to fill out and return for the chance to be entered in a monthly raffle.

Delayed Opening Schedule

Winter weather sometimes results in the need for a delayed opening. Please note that on this schedule, student arrival should begin at 9:40 AM at the earliest. All school day schedules (regular day, single session and delayed opening) are posted on the BPS PTA web page www.cranfordschools.org/Domain/14 They are also included on page 6 of the BPS student agenda.

Delayed Opening Schedule Continued

Grades 1 – 5

Student Entrance: 9:50 AM
Attendance: 9:55 AM
Lunch: 11:50 AM – 12:50 PM
Dismissal: 2:55 PM

AM Kindergarten

Student Entrance: 9:50 AM
Attendance: 9:55 AM
Dismissal: 11:55 AM

PM Kindergarten

Student Entrance and Attendance: 12:55 PM
Dismissal: 2:55 PM

Save the Date ~ BPS Variety Show 2019

Preparations are underway for the 2019 edition of the BPS Variety Show. The theme is *Jersey Boys and Girls* and will include acts that feature artists from the Garden State. The dress rehearsal will be on Wednesday, April 10 and the final show on Friday, April 12 at 7:00 PM in the Cranford High School auditorium. Watch for more details in future communications.

Principal's Open Agenda Meeting

The next Principal's Open Agenda Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 23 at 7:00 PM.

Lost and Found

Please encourage your child or children to check the lost and found bin for missing items. The bin is located in the gym. There are quite a few winter coats, jackets, sweatshirts, hats, gloves and water bottles.

Change to Contact Information

If there is a change to your contact information, please remember to alert the BPS Main Office. This pertains to home phone numbers, cell phones and email addresses. More and more, families are opting to forgo a land-based home phone number so it is especially

important that cell, personal email, and work contact information is current and up to date.

Online Resources

Please visit the following sites for important school-related information:

- Cranford Board of Education web site: www.cranfordschools.org
- Brookside Place web page: www.cranfordschools.org/Domain/14
- BPS PTA web site: <http://bpspta.digitalpto.com>

Cancelling Lunch Orders

Parents/Guardians of students who pre-order the school lunch are reminded that if their son/daughter is going to be absent (illness/field trip), to **cancel the order by 8:00 AM on that morning** to avoid the charge for the lunch. For order edits or cancellations, please email foodservice@cranfordschools.org by 8:00 AM.

Main Office Phone Numbers

To contact the BPS Main Office you may dial any of these three numbers: 908-709-6244 (Main Office line), 908-709-8878 (Mrs. Rokicki, school secretary), 908-709-6247 (Ms. Moultrie, clerical assistant).

Attendance Line/Absence Reporting

Please reach out to the school nurse, Mrs. O'Hara, at 908-709-6246 to report your son/daughter's absence. Please remember to always indicate your child's name, date of call, class, and reason for absence. Please be sure to state specific symptoms: sore throat, fever, nausea, headache, etc. Thanks, in advance, for making these calls as early as possible. If you send an email to your child's teacher regarding a planned absence, please be sure to copy Mrs. O'Hara at oharapau@cranfordschools.org

Drop Off Zones

There are two drop off zones (one on Spruce Street closer to the closed part of the parking lot and one on Brookside Place close to the second grade door). Thanks for remembering to keep these two zones free of parked vehicles.

General Reminders

- ❖ Brookside Briefs and Healthy Hints will be posted monthly on the BPS PTA website and BPS web page:
www.bpspta.digitalpto.com
www.cranfordschools.org/Domain/14
- ❖ Homeroom begins promptly at 8:42 AM. Please check with your son/daughter about the belongings he/she will need for the day to help develop personal responsibility.
- ❖ Lunch at Home:
 - ✓ **Send in a note for HR teacher**
 - ✓ Pick up at 11:50 AM at Brookside Place doors
 - ✓ Return time 12:48 PM at Brookside Place doors.
- ❖ If you have a problem or concern, please contact your child's teacher immediately. He/she will notify you as to the best method for contacting them (phone, e-mail, note, etc.).

Safety First

Safety is a core value at Brookside Place. Please see the following reminders:

- Please refrain from walking or biking through the parking lot.
- Please use crosswalks and the help of the crossing guard to cross streets.
- Please keep dogs on a leash and at the perimeter of the school grounds at all times.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Klimko

February 2019 Calendar

- 2/2 BPS PTA Skate Night – Union Sports Arena – 6:30 – 8:00 PM (event is sold out – registration was required)
- 2/4 BPS Faculty Meeting – 3:10 PM
- 2/5 Reimagining Cranford Public Schools, community-wide meeting at Orange Avenue School – 7:00 PM
- 2/7 Reimagining Cranford Public Schools, community-wide meeting at Hillside Avenue School – 7:00 PM
- 2/8 BPS School Store – Grades 4 and 5
- 2/13 Presentation for Parents/Guardians: “This is Your Brain On Phones: Smartphone & Social Media Overuse” presented by Cranford Public Schools, Cranford Police Department and Prevention Links at the Cranford High School auditorium – 6:30 – 8:00 PM
- 2/14 Grade 4 Ice Cream Social – 2:20 – 2:50 PM
- 2/15 BPS School Store – Grades 1 and 3
- 2/18 School Closed for President's Day
- 2/19 Reimagining Cranford Public Schools, community-wide meeting at Brookside Place School – 7:00 PM
- 2/22 BPS School Store – Grade 2
- 2/25 BPS PTA Cultural Night in the BPS Cafegymnasium – 6:30 – 8:00 PM
- 2/28 “Are You Smarter than a (Cranford/Garwood) Fifth Grader” Academic Bowl Auditions in the BPS Art Room – 3:00 – 3:30 PM (permission slip required)