



Bobcat Pride

A SEASON OF CHANGE

Watching the leaves turn from various shades of green to a majestic tapestry of gold, brown, red and purple is without a doubt the greatest reason why I love this time of year. Not only do our eyes get the profound yearly opportunity to witness one of nature's finest moments, we are also reminded symbolically that this is a season of change.

During this time of year we make the most obvious changes. We change our attire from tanks and shorts to sweaters, coats and hats. We change the foods we eat, like BBQ and summer salads to warm bowls of chili, beef stew, and hot cocoa. But we can also take this cue as an opportunity to instill any changes that we deem appropriate and beneficial to our individual and collective growth.

With that said, this month all K-5th grade students will receive

instruction on the District initiative, "Bully Prevention In Positive Behavior Support". Students will be given tools to reduce bullying behavior through the blending of school-wide positive behavior support, explicit instruction, and a redefinition of the bullying construct. The essence of lessons learned through this initiative consists in the students' ability to acquire social responsibility skills known as, "Stop/Walk/Talk."

All students that attend Brooks Elementary School deserves, and are entitled to feel safe and secure in an environment conducive to learning. This statement is more than a philosophy or an ideal. It is an expectation! An excerpt from the Elementary Handbook on page 13 states, "No student shall bully, harass or intimidate another student. The

District will not tolerate bullying, harassing or intimidating conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual that affects tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment..."

It is our goal that through stop/walk/talk, students will gain the confidence to navigate accordingly regarding concerns such as gossip, inappropriate remarks, and cyber-bullying. It is also our hope and goal, that through this initiative another change will take place; a shift that further promotes the tenants of **RESPECT** aka

Responsibility Equality Sincerity
Pride Empathy Communication
Trust

~Ms. Spears

Building Positive Teacher-Parent Relationships

A good parent-teacher relationship can be the difference between knowing how your child's doing in school and knowing how he tells you he's doing. Education expert, Dorothy Rich, suggests the following four tips to get off on the right foot with your child's new teacher:

* Introduce yourself to the teacher, and let the teacher

know where you can be reached.

* Ask questions. What is the class going to cover this year, and how can I help? What can we do at home to help?

* Say a few words about your child's special interests and positive qualities, but you don't have to go into every dark secret. Your child may behave dif-

ferently with this teacher; talking about negative qualities at this stage could put those expectations in a new teacher's mind.

* Volunteer to help out. Let the teacher and the principal know when you're available.

Article continues on pg 3

Gwendolyn Brooks Elementary School

Volume IV Issue II

October, 2011

Friendly Reminders

- ☺ Oct. 2nd-8th Fire Prevention Week
- ☺ Oct 7th: No School/ Institute Day
- ☺ Oct. 11th Columbus Day SCHOOL IS OPEN
- ☺ Oct. 17th-21st National Bus Safety Week
- ☺ Oct. 31st Early Release Day—School Improvement

Inside this issue:

Items of Interest:	2
In Good Health	2
Nat'l Sch Lunch Wk	2
Teacher-Parent Relationships	3
Nat'l Bus Safety Wk	3
Nat'l Custodial Day	3
Brooks PTA News and Fall Fest Review	4-5

Items of Interest

FREE BOOKS!!!

Each month look for the FREE BOOKS table outside the main office. You may take anything that looks good. Donations of children books are welcomed! If the table is not up, drop donations off with Ms. Bereman.

HALLOWEEN CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS

On behalf of myself and the Gwendolyn Brooks Elementary School Staff, we would like to thank the PTA, Head Room Parents, and volunteers who are taking their time to create and facilitate our first class party for the 2011-12 school year. Your contributions provide the "something extra special" for the students. If you are not a head room parent, and you are interested in serving in this capacity, please contact our Co-PTA Presidents, Mrs. Victoria Newport and/or

Mrs. Tracy Harris. We still have a couple of classrooms in need of head room parents and who knows, your child's classroom may be the one in need!!!

As a friendly reminder, per the District Wellness Guidelines, all classroom parties may include one high in fat and sugar item (cupcake, cookie, etc); yet other items must be healthy choices (fruit, vegetables). Caffeinated soda should not be served. Monday, October 31st is an early dismissal day for K-5th grade students. Students will be dismissed at 12:15.

This year's Halloween party will take place on Monday, October 31st. Festivities will begin with a parade around 10:30, and the classroom party will follow afterwards. We must all remember that the education of our students is our first priority, and will so be that day. With this in mind, 1st-5th grade students should bring their costume to school (kinders can come to school with costume on). Students will change into their costume at approximately 10:00. If a student arrives wearing a costume, they will be asked to take the costume off and if necessary parents will be called and asked to bring a change of clothes. Any student coming to school with make-up on will be asked to wash it off before going to class. They may put make-up on when they put on their costume. Students are not allowed to wear costumes that depict a violent nature such as: running blood, stabbings, shootings or bullets, decapitations/missing bloody limbs. I would encourage that if this is the theme of the costume you have already purchased, to save it for the neighborhood activities later in the day. Schools are trying to create a safe and orderly environment and a costume that is depicting a violent scene is contrary to the environment we are trying to create and may be disturbing to some. Play weapons of any sort are not allowed at any time in accordance to our handbook.

In Good Health Courtesy of the Health Office

Please do not send your child to school if he/she appears to be ill. A child must be free of an elevated temperature (without the use of medication to reduce a fever), vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours prior to returning to school. This is necessary in order to minimize the chance of passing illness to classmates. Your child may also not feel 100%. They may be tired and uncomfortable in the school environment. Please contact the school office at

(815)754-9936 to report your child's absence and let us know the type of illness your child has.

Children also need to dress warmly for outdoor activities. Layered clothing during changing seasons is a good option. Temperatures at Brooks School tend to be 5-7 degrees cooler than schools in town. Warmer jackets, hats, and mittens will be needed sooner than you think!

As a final note, please make sure that

children wear shoes appropriate for climbing on the playground equipment. Sandals and slippery-soled dress shoes are not recommended.

The physical well being of all students is our #1 priority.

"Our body is a well-set clock, which keeps good time, but if it be too much or indiscreetly tampered with, the alarm runs out before the hour."

Joseph Hall

National School Lunch Week: Oct. 11th-15th An Ode to the Lunch Lady

Teachers come and teachers go, it's the lunch lady who you get to know. She ladles the gravy, she scoops the peas, you can get an extra portion if you just say please. Five days of the week, the lunch lady is there,



Many thanks to Ms. Pat Botts, Ms. Karen Germ, and Ms. Dana Moore!

handing you a tray with a pizza square. Although some of the food might look a bit scary, you can rest assured it's sanitary, because the lunch lady serves her food with pride, even if she's not sure what's inside. Po-

tato nuggets, corn dogs, pudding and pie, casseroles, medleys and something that's fried. She fills your plate with a smile and a wink, and reminds you to pick out something to drink. Lunch lady, lunch lady, you're the diva of the school, I don't care what my friends say, I still think you're cool.

Poem discovered by Mrs. Kandi Talley

National School Bus Safety Week

October 18th-22nd is National Bus Safety Week. This is the perfect opportunity to teach kids the important school bus safety rules they should follow when traveling to and from school. It is also a great time to recognize your child's driver for their dedication to the safety of all students. All Brooks' students will practice bus safety on Tuesday, October 19th.

A safe rider is a responsible rider. So please remind your child to do the following:

- Pay attention to the bus drivers.
- Talk quietly and stay seated on the bus.
- Keep your school bag and other belongings out of the aisle. Put

them on your lap or under your seat.

- Don't push, yell or throw things while at the bus stop or on the bus.
- Never stick something out the window, including your hands, head, or feet.
- Treat bus equipment as you would valuable furniture in your own home. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
- Observe safety precautions at exit

points.

On a final note, it is also important for you or a designated loved one to meet your younger aged child or children at the bus stop for pick-up after they are dismissed from school each day. The routine will help students and families alike recognize familiar faces which can keep everyone safe.



WE ARE SCHOOL BUS SAFETY SUPER STARS!!!

Be a School Bus Safety Super Star!

A-L-W-A-Y-S Follow the School Bus Safety Rules!

Building Positive Teacher-Parent Relationships

You could help chaperone a field trip, read to kids for an hour a week, or print the class newsletter on your home computer. But don't bite off more than you really have time for. Be consistent. Be someone the teacher can count on.

"Remember," says Rich, "You don't have to kowtow to a teacher to have a relationship -- relationships are built on partnership." And Rich adds not to get discouraged if you can't volunteer at school: "Though important, I don't think volunteer-

ing is the most significant part of parent involvement. The biggest piece is what you do with and say to your child at home."

You can also let the teacher know how you think your child learns best and what will really motivate (or turn off) your son or daughter. If the teacher doesn't ask you how she would like you to be involved as a parent, then ask the teacher. Let the teacher know if there are any reasons that you might not be able to do what she

would like you to do (you know -- you're a single parent with two jobs and you're the scout leader and you sing in the choir and you're getting your master's degree over the Internet -- that kind of thing).

Ask the teacher how much contact she likes to have with parents and when she prefers to talk and how (face to face, over the phone, via email).

I sincerely hope that the shared suggestions will prove beneficial.

National Custodial Recognition Day October 1st

Moving silent here and there fixing our world without a thank you. Your hands are rough from the work you do. Your back aches low and muscles sore. Your broom shows evidence of work unseen, the hallways shine and rooms always clean. The gum I stuck under my chair, doesn't get to tarry long there. You fight the woes of kids day in and out. Your frustrations may make you want to scream; food fights here and ball games there. I walk through your world without care. Thank you for the work you've done and will do, for though I may not see you much, I know what you do!

"Happy National Custodial Workers Day"



Mr. Tom Anhalt
Head Custodian

"Happy National Custodial Workers Day"



Mr. Randy MacAdam
Night Custodian

Gwendolyn Brooks Elementary School

3225 Sangamon Road
DeKalb, IL 60115

Phone: 815-754-9936

Fax: 815-754-1345

"Promoting Academic Excellence and Sound
Character"



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Brooks School would like to wish all the students born in October, Happy Birthday and may all your wishes come true. We would also like to wish the following staff members Happy Birthday.

Mrs. Kim Miller, K-5 Special Ed. Assistant: Oct. 11th

Mrs. Lisa Lenz, Resource Teacher: Oct. 19th



Brooks PTA News

September has been a very busy month for the PTA. During the month of September many activities have taken place, which include our annual membership drive, fall catalog fundraiser, Fall Fest, helping with school activities and filling room and head room positions. During our annual PTA membership drive, we had 79 families and staff, join the PTA. Thank you to everyone who joined the PTA. If you have not joined the PTA, it is not too late to join. Contact either Tracey Harris at tracy_harris@comcast.net or Victoria Newport at vnewport1@comcast.net for more information.

Brook's PTA annual Fall Fest took place on Friday September 30th. Despite the cold and windy night, everyone had a great time. Thank you to all of the par-

ents and staff members who volunteered to help with Fall Fest.

The fall box top challenge will kick off on Monday October 10th. The class who turns in the most box tops will win a prize from the PTA. Look for more information on the fall box top challenge in your child's pack back on Monday October 10th.

Head room parent and room parent information will be sent home during the week of October 11th. The first classroom party of the school year will take place on Monday October 31st. Monday October 31st is a $\frac{1}{2}$ day of school. The parties will start at 11:00.

The first PTA meeting will take place on October 18th in the library at Brooks School at 6:30.

Co Presidents

Tracey Harris and Victoria Newport

