



The Brier Bulletin

Brier Elementary School—Home of the Bobcats

A Message from the Principal:

Greetings Brier Families,

Winter definitely came in with a blast! I hope you have all found ways to stay warm and comfortable through the winter wonderlands, flooding, and cold, cold weather we have been experiencing! Our winter blast resulted in three days of missed school, December 17th, 18th, and 19th. Those three days will be made up in June. The last day of school-unless additional snow make up days are needed-is now Friday, June 19th which will be an early release day. June 16th, 17th and 18th will now be regular days of school.

During the month of January, we honored Dr. King with a wonderful assembly! This assembly put the spotlight on our Brier students and they did a tremendous job. I want to recognize our Brier Elementary Band along with Mr. Allison, Mrs. Gray's class, Cantare along with Mrs. McBride, Jessica Bressler, Oliver Wolfe and Our Student Council. Watching the students take ownership of the assembly and orchestrate it with perfection was such a powerful way to recognize the work of Dr. King. Congratulations to our 2008-2009 student council, Nicole Hairell (president), Emma Hense (Vice President), Catherine Allemann (Secretary), Gabe Grundman-Brady, Zoey LeSueur, Ali Hitchcock, Toby Castillo, Andrew Kim, Trent Brooks, Joey Owens, Rikki Kuhn, Maddie Powers, Katherine Gustafson, Kira Doan, and Jaden Kelly...You all did a wonderful job during this assembly. Jessica and Oliver, your pieces of writing were fantastic and heartfelt. Both our fifth and sixth grade bands were terrific! Cantare, we appreciate you taking the lead in helping us to sign through our all school song. Mrs. Gray's class, your musical poster walk gave us time to think and your art work spread motivating silent messages that moved us all! Thank you to everyone for all of your hard work and leadership in this event! Ending the assembly with the entire school singing and signing "We Shall Overcome" was a touching way to come together and stand proud. Thank you to all of our parents and families who were able to join us for this assembly, we love to have you with us!

The afternoon of January 22nd and January 23rd were professional development days here at Brier. I want to first say "Thank You" from all of us here at Brier for your continued support of this time for our staff to come together and work and learn with each other. January 22nd provided us time to have collegial conversations about the best way for all of us to collaborate together in order to get the work done that we have to do as well as take part in conversations around our new math implementation. The 23rd provided us time to come together around the structures and components of a balanced reading program including Reader's Workshop. The opportunity for all of us to work with each other is an invaluable part of our continued learning and professional growth. This time is invaluable to the work we do with our students and we appreciate your continued support for this time. Thank you.

February Smiles,

Tori Thomas, Principal



Firm, Fair & Consistent®

Brier Elementary

Guiding Students for School Success

Build respect at the dinner table

Being polite is a way to show respect. And dinnertime offers you a daily chance to reinforce this lesson. First, explain how being polite makes life more pleasant for everyone. Then:

- **Start with the basics.** Have everyone wash hands before dinner and do not allow toys at the table. Everyone should sit up straight, use polite words and—when excused—carry dishes to the sink.
- **Teach extra skills.** Kids are proud to learn “grown up” rules. For example, it’s polite to wait until everyone is served before starting to eat. Also teach the proper way to use utensils.
- **Practice communicating.** Dinnertime is about more than eating. It’s about talking, too. Set a great example by avoiding lectures and arguments. Try to ignore the phone and other interruptions.
- **Set guidelines.** Decide which rules are most important to your family, such as having everyone there for dinner. Choose rules that everyone can follow. (But don’t require your child to “clean his plate.” It’s best to stop when he’s full.)
- **Use consequences.** Require a *please* when asking for a dish to be passed. Impose a consequence for leaving the table without asking to be excused. In general, though, mealtime should be fun!



Source: “Teaching table manners to your school-age child,” ParentCenter.com, http://parentcenter.babycenter.com/0_teaching-table-manners-to-your-school-age-child_1429037.pcf?articleId=1429037&showAll=true.

Uh oh. You see your child doing something wrong and you think he might deny it with a lie. You can prevent this by how you approach the situation.



Instead of saying, “Alex, did you eat an extra cookie?” you might say, “I see you ate a cookie without asking. Let’s talk about it.” Then, instead of having two problems (misbehavior and a lie), you only have one.

Turn misbehavior into a lesson on respect

Your child tries to provoke you by calling you a name. What do you do? Don’t take the bait!

Instead, respond calmly. “We don’t call people names in this family. If you want my attention, speak to me politely.”

Using this approach, you can demonstrate the kind of respect you’d like your child to show.



Source: Mary VanClay, “The respectful child: How to teach respect,” BabyCenter.com, <http://parentcenter.com>.

Stop being a referee for sibling conflicts

Is your children’s constant bickering driving you nuts? To get a handle on sibling squabbles:



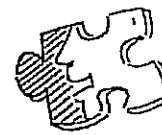
- **Refuse to take sides.** Don’t leap to one child’s defense when they’re both fighting.
- **Spend one-on-one time** with them. Just a few minutes of daily “alone time” with each child can ease tensions between siblings.
- **Teach them to resolve** their own conflicts. Offer some ways to make peace that don’t involve screaming and fighting.

Source: Kyla Boyce, R.N., “Sibling Rivalry,” University of Michigan Health System, www.med.umich.edu/libe/yourchild/sibriv.htm.

Open the lines of communication

Of course you speak with your child, but how well do the two of you communicate? To make sure you’re communicating effectively:

- **Speak her language.** Use words your child understands.
- **Stay calm.** Even if you’re angry, try not to yell at her.
- **Watch your body language.** When it comes to communicating with your child, your non-verbal cues speak volumes.



Source: “Communicating with Children,” ChildBehavior.com, www.kidbehavior.com/



News Flash



Parade of Words: To celebrate "Read Across America—the birthday of Dr. Seuss" Brier Elementary will be having a school-wide Parade of Words! The event will be on Friday, February 20th. Students and

staff members will dress up as their favorite word and will parade through the school on the morning of February 20th. The goal is to increase student's awareness of vocabulary and reading. Costumes can be simple "orange" or complex "spaghetti", but most of all they should be fun and comfortable. Each costume should include the word and a simple definition. Words must be school appropriate, a list of ideas is attached to this Bulletin. Try to push your vocabulary, for example instead of "rain" try "precipitation". Get out those dictionaries, your imaginations, and have fun!

Brier Pride Pledge...

At Brier, we are Responsible,
Kind, Respectful and Safe.

I am ready to learn and
will encourage others
to be successful because
learning comes first!



Music Notes Let's Go on a Brier Musical Safari!

All Brier students will be performing in an all school concert celebrating Brier's Giraffe Project. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, March 16, 17 and 18th will bring a performance of African inspired music presented by Brier Students. All classes, grades one to six have begun preparing and rehearsing for our Musical Safari. Our classrooms will be divided into three groups (students are naming them this week) who will perform one of the three designated nights. Each evening concert will present the same musical selections performed by one third of our student body. The division of classrooms will be announced towards the end of February. I will do my best to be flexible to ensure that siblings are able to perform on the same day (although it may mean performing with a class different from a students' home class - since they'll be learning the same pieces it will be an easy adjustment).

The students and I are excited to be preparing songs, recorders, drumming pieces, xylophone and non-pitched percussion pieces in a cooperative effort to support our Giraffe Project that is occurring in each classroom at Brier. The same week of the concert there will also be the Student Council sponsored food drive - just one of the many ways Brier students will be "sticking our necks out" to help our community.

On Feb. 24, the students in Mrs. Bollen's, Mrs. Gray's and Mr. Overleese's class will be attending the Seattle Symphony Arts in Education Concert at Benaroya Hall. We will be leaving at 9:20am and returning home about 12:20pm. More information will be coming home with permission slips.

Mark the dates and be on the lookout for more information in the coming weeks. Thanks for your support of your child's musical education.

Mary McBride, NBCT EMC Music 425-431-2113

February 20th is School Spirit
Day—Read in Day

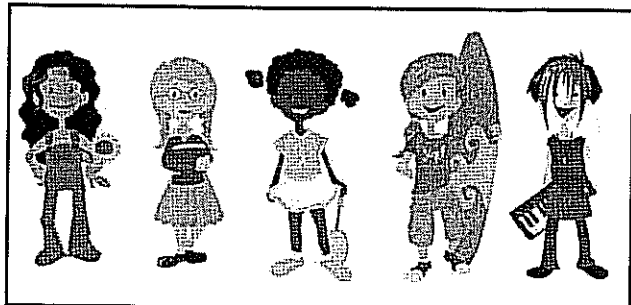


Important Dates

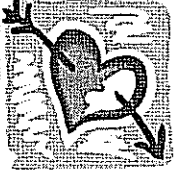


- No School: Feb. 13, 16 & 17
- Field trip: Bollen, Gray & Overleese Feb. 24th 9:20-12:20pm

Yearbooks are on sale this month.
Reserve your copy for \$11.75. Please
make your checks payable to
Kids Photography and return with your
order form by February 27th.



FEBRUARY

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
1	2	3	4 Kindergarten Report Cards Go Home	5 Hearing re-checks	6 Hearing re-checks	7
8	9 Kindergarten Tour for new families 11:00	10		12 Site Advisory Council 8:10	13 No School Teacher Profes- sional Day Day	14 
15	16 No School President's Day	17 No School Teacher Non- contract Day	18	19	20 Parade of Words 9:20am Spirit Day - Read in Day	21
22	23 Kindergarten Tour for new families 11:00	24 FT-Bollen, Gray, Overleese @ Benaroya Hall 9:20am	25	26 Student Council Mtg. 8:15 am	27	28

