



The Blast

Brittan Acres School | Weekly Messenger

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PTA Corner

Join the Bruin Village. [Click here](#) to make your contribution TODAY!

Monday, September 24, 2018

Principal's Message

Dear Parent/Guardian:

September is Attendance Awareness Month! Our goal at Brittan Acres is to ensure that every student attends school regularly. Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school.

Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and understand why attendance is so important for success in school and in life.

We realize some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. But, we also know that when students miss too much school— regardless of the reason – it can cause them to fall behind academically. Your child is less likely to succeed if he or she is chronically absent—which means missing 18 or more days over the course of an entire school year. Research shows:

- Children chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade.

[September Meeting Minutes](#)

Mark Your Calendars

- Classroom Socials: Sept 24-28
 - Spirit Day - Sports Day: Friday Sept 28
 - Laurie Keller: October 5
 - [Walk-A-Jog: Sunday Oct 21](#)
-

Volunteer

[Volunteer at BA](#) to build community and support our students. There are lots of in class and at home roles to choose from.

Fundraising Rewards

Participate in our [Amazon](#) and [eScrip](#) rewards programs and a percentage of your purchases will automatically be donated to the Brittan Acres PTA - at no cost to you!



- By 6th grade, chronic absence is a proven early warning sign for students at risk for dropping out of school.
- By 9th grade good attendance can predict graduation rates even better than 8th grade test scores.

Absences can add up quickly. A child is chronically absent if he or she misses just two days every month! Please keep in mind that nine days of school is the equivalent of 5% of the school year!

Regular Attendance Matters

We already have a great deal of absences as many families have been taking vacations during the first month of school. These days combined later with absences for other reasons, do add up. We will be sending home letters addressing concerns of individual student's excessive absences or tardies. We don't want your child to fall behind in school and get discouraged. Please ensure that your child attends school every day and arrives on time. Here are a few practical tips to help support regular attendance:

- Make sure your children keep a regular bedtime and establish a morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Ensure your children go to school every day unless they are truly sick
- Avoid scheduling vacations or doctor's appointments when school is in session.
- Talk to teachers and counselors for advice if your children feel anxious about going to school.
- Develop back up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, neighbor, or another parent to take your child to school.

Let us know how we can best support you and your children so that they can show up for school on time every day. We want your child to be successful in school! If you have any questions or need more information, please contact your child's school.

Sincerely,

Ms. Waslif

Principal, Brittan Acres



Follow BA on Social Media

Follow us on Twitter and Facebook for up-to-date info on events and issues!



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Bear Hugs!

Our students at Brittan Acres have been learning about school-wide behavioral expectations. These expectations have been agreed upon by our district-wide staff as an effective way to be proactive in supporting school-wide positive behaviors. Please take this opportunity to talk to your child about the expectations at school and the importance of continuing to demonstrate PBIS behaviors. With your continued support and involvement, Brittan Acres will remain a school where students will excel.

BA Students are being acknowledged for exhibiting the behaviors that we expect by receiving a “Bruin Bear Hug”. These Bear Hugs are turned into the office and student names are read over the announcements every Friday. In addition, monthly drawings will be held for a “special” reward.

Next time you are on campus, check out our BA display case with our Bruin Bear Hugs!

Thank you for partnering with us to support our PBIS efforts and in creating a safe, respectful and responsible environment!

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Recess & Playground Equipment Update

Recess helps kids reset their brains for the remainder of the day. After recess, students are more attentive and better able to perform cognitively. In essence, recess can help students retain more of what they learn. The research demonstrates pretty clearly that taking those breaks in the day makes students better able to encode memory and learn and perform academically. But just as critical to cognitive improvement, recess also is crucial to developing social and communication skills picked up on the playground – lessons that usually don’t get taught inside a classroom. Recess is the only place in school, maybe the only place in their social life, where kids have the opportunity to develop social skills with their peers. Research shows it will help them learn better in school. Additionally, recess time has been championed as a way to help combat the nation’s childhood obesity problem. Studies also have shown that the free-play that comes with recess is crucial to a child’s cognitive, social and emotional development. **To that end, Principal Waslif has purchased additional playground equipment and have partnered with Legarza to bring back Tetherball for our students. She has purchased tricycles, additional basketballs, soccer balls, soccer nets, rubber balls, hoola hoops and jump ropes. We hope to receive these additional items within the next few weeks.**

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PTA News

JOIN THE BRUIN VILLAGE - ONE WEEK TO GO!

Thank you Bruin Village! We are more than halfway to our goal!! Your contributions make it possible for the BA PTA to offer so many incredible programs throughout the year. If you have not made your donation, please be sure to do so by September 28 to have your name included on the Bruin Village Roster. Go to <https://bapta.myschoolcentral.com/> to become a member of the Bruin Village.

For more information about the Bruin Village fundraising program and ALL the incredible programs your PTA dollars support, [click here](#).

Questions? Contact fundraising@brittanacres.org

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Walk-A-Jog

Walk-A-Jog is a few weeks away! Here are some helpful reminders to prepare for WAJ on Sunday, Oct. 21st.

Carnival Booths

Each classroom is responsible for hosting a WAJ booth. Please stay tuned to your classroom Shutterfly site to volunteer for a short shift at your room's booth.

Donate

MYSTERY WALL TOYS: Donate small (smaller than the size of a shoe box), gently-used toys, left-over party favors, company giveaways, and unused coloring books for the Mystery Wall. Please remember that toys must be little enough to fit through the small Mystery Wall windows. Drop off at 789 Cedar St. – look for the bins on the front porch!

Questions? Email bawalkajog@gmail.com.

Calling all BA Parent Owned Businesses! Walk-A-Jog 2018 is Looking for Sponsors!

Do you have a local business or service you would like the BA community to know about? Here's your chance to spread the word! Be a sponsor of Walk-A-Jog. There are many different ways to advertise

your business at BA's largest fundraiser of the year and gain exposure as a valued supporter of our school. Please contact Andy McCandlish, at bawalkajog@gmail.com for more information.

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Clean-up Day Thank You!

A big THANK YOU to all those were able to make it out on Sunday for Clean Up Day! We had RECORD NUMBERS of volunteers.... more that 60 people!! Thank you so much! We were able to accomplish so much with all of your help! Your time and care make Brittan Acres a beautiful place! Go Bruins!

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Vision

Vision and Hearing Screenings are required at specific intervals and grade levels in California. Schools must conduct vision screening on all students upon school entry and every third year thereafter through grade eight (California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Section 2952 (c)(1)) . This year TK, K and 2nd grade students and any new students to Brittan Acres will be receiving Vision and Hearing screening in the month of October.

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Medications

This is a friendly reminder to bring all medications that your student needs to the BA office. Please bring medications in original containers with the student's name on them. California law requires ALL medications (prescription and over the counter) to be ordered by a licensed health care provider. If your provider indicates your student is able to carry their own medication (such as asthma inhalers) they need to indicate this on the [medication authorization form](#).

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Technology at Brittan Acres

I'm so excited for the new school year to begin. My name is Jenna Hubbard and I'm the tech associate at Brittan Acres. I will be working with your child's teacher to integrate technology into the curriculum and teach the students digital citizenship skills using Common Sense Media's Digital Citizenship curriculum. Code.org's definition of Digital Citizenship is succinct and to the point: Someone who acts safely, responsibly, and respectfully online. We use several websites, programs and games in the computer lab and classroom to reinforce learning and visualize and present information. Below are some of the resources we use:

- ABCYA.com
- Starfall.com
- TypingClub.com
- Reading A-Z
- Pebble Go
- Kidpix
- Sketchup
- ComicLife
- Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint
- Google Docs, Sheets, Slides, Email and Classroom
- Freckle.com
- Brainpop
- iMovie
- Code.org hour of code activities
- Seussville.com
- Pbskids.org
- Scratch

Students will complete projects using iPads, Chromebooks, and MacBooks, which enables them to gain experience on different devices and peripherals. The third grade students use Chromebooks to take the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) test in May. It is essential that students have strong keyboarding and file navigation skills by the end of third grade to successfully complete the test.

We will also be launching a Makerspace this fall with the help of parent volunteers. Makerspace provides students with the opportunity for hands-on activities and experiences in design thinking. Makerspace encourages collaborative problem-solving, prototyping to test out ideas, and time to reflect on successes and challenges.

My Background

I've worked as a classroom teacher, computer lab teacher, and librarian in public and private schools for over 8 years. I've also worked for 17 years as a project manager and producer for video game companies including Electronic Arts, Blizzard Entertainment, 3DO, and Shockwave. My family recently moved to Belmont from the coast and we are all enjoying the seemingly endless sunshine.

Please contact me if you have any questions, concerns, or comments. My email is jhubbart@scsdk8.org or stop by the computer lab located in the library.

Warm regards,

Jenna Hubbart

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