



BROOKTALES

November, 2009

A VISIT FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

We are looking forward to our new superintendent, Dr. Kathy Birkett, visiting Brookdale's November PTA meeting! Please join us on Thursday, November 19 to learn about what is going on in the district as well as to hear her address questions you may have for her. We are asking that you please send your questions ahead of time to me, Barb Peterson (andy.peterson@sbcglobal.net), so that I can forward them to Dr. Birkett, giving her ample time to prepare her answer. I am asking that you submit questions to me by November 11. This will be a great opportunity for you to meet and interact with Dr. Birkett in an informal setting. You will be glad you did! She is very personable, down to earth and fun to listen to. She wants to hear from you about what matters to Brookdale and our kids.

Please also remember that if you have any questions or issues that you would like Mr. LeCrone to address at any point during the year, we strongly encourage you to submit them to him directly or drop them in the box in the office or you can submit them to a member of the PTA executive committee. He will then answer them at a future PTA meeting. Mr. LeCrone is committed to making Brookdale School a truly great place for children to learn and grow.

Finally, on a different note, are you in the market for a new **2010 Volvo**? If you are, and you are a member of eScrip (you know, that membership that gives our PTA free money by using the Fresh Values card at Dominicks), then here's a deal for you! This is what the Volvo of Lisle dealer writes to us: *"When you or a colleague purchase or lease a new 2010 Volvo, we'll give you or your colleague an additional \$1,000 off the bottom line purchase price which is available only to eScrip members AND Volvo Cars of North America will contribute \$500 to your eScrip school or group."* Wow! What a deal for you and your favorite Brookdale PTA. If you would like to take advantage of this offer, you must take an authenticated pre-printed coupon available at www.escrip.com.

I am looking forward to seeing you on November 19 for a great time with Dr. Birkett!

Upcoming Events

- Nov. 3 - Market Day Pick-up 9:45-10:15AM
- Nov. 4 - Conferences 4:30-8
- Nov. 6 - Buzy Bobcat Store 8:30-9AM grades K-2
- Nov. 10 - No School—Conferences 8-3, 4-8:30
- Nov. 11 - No School—Veteran's Day
- Nov. 13 - Girls' Basketball Night 7-9PM
- Nov. 17 - Breakfast with Books 8-9AM
- Nov. 17 - Family Dinner Night Out at Go Roma 11AM-8:30PM
- Nov. 19 - PTA Meeting 7-9PM
- Nov. 20 - Buzy Bobcat Store 8:30-9AM Grades 3-5
- Nov. 20 - Boys' Basketball Night 7-9PM
- Nov. 25,26,27 - No School—Thanksgiving Break

PERSONNEL UPDATE

Though Mrs. Michelli did not have her baby prior to the writing of this newsletter submission, she will undoubtedly have had the baby by the time you have read it. As such, though I do not know whether the baby is a boy or a girl, I will merely say "Congratulations!" and wish Candy, her husband Jason, and her daughter Ashley luck as they embark on a whole new journey. Mrs. Danielle Carstens has also embarked on a whole new journey as she has temporarily said good-bye to her fifth grade students and has begun her long-term substitute position to fill Candy's maternity leave. Mrs. Laura Farrell, who has worked to this point as a teaching assistant at Brookdale, has assumed the responsibility of teaching in Mrs. Carsten's classroom while Danielle serves as the Student Services Coordinator. Though I will miss Candy's expertise and input, I feel very fortunate to have such capable substitutes for both the Student Services Coordinator and the teaching position. I ask that you provide both Laura and Danielle with your support and cooperation as they serve in their new posts until Candy's return sometime in January.

PBIS BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM—STOP/WALK/TALK

I am pleased to report that our efforts to implement the new bullying prevention program adopted by all District 204 elementary schools have been highly successful. Though we sacrificed some academic instructional time to train our students, I feel that the time we spent teaching students how to respond in all three scenarios (victim, perpetrator, and bystander) will ultimately result in a safer environment as well as an increase in the amount of academic instructional time subsequent to the implementation of the program. Though we have communicated the program to our students in great depth and we have made several attempts to communicate the program to our parents, I ask that you take a moment to familiarize yourself with the program by accessing the link on the Brookdale homepage if you have not already done so. The successful implementation of the program relies on continued adult support, both at school and at home.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY (PLC)

The Brookdale staff has spent a considerable amount of time during our "Professional Development Wednesdays" examining the structure and components of a true Professional Learning Community, or PLC. Through our work, we have established a clear Mission (Ensuring Learning Never Ends), set forth a Vision, and begun to develop Collective Commitments and SMART goals to assist us in attaining our vision. The focus of a PLC is learning and doing in order to answer the following four questions:

- What do we expect our students to learn?
- How will we know if our students have learned what was expected?
- How will we respond to those students who have not learned what was expected?
- How will we respond to those students who have already mastered what was expected?

Though the questions seem simple enough, the work that goes into answering them is both exhausting and exhilarating because of the high level of collaboration that is necessary to achieve our goals. I anticipate using our PTA meetings as a forum in which to provide more information about our work as a PLC and I encourage you to attend the meetings to gain a more thorough understanding of what it looks like at Brookdale.



Editor's Note: On Oct. 27, bright and early in the morning, Ryan Christopher Michelli arrived, weighing 7 pounds, 7 ounces and measuring 20.5 inches long! Mom and baby are happy and healthy!

WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

Thank you for everyone's participation in a very successful Walk to School Day. I would like to extend a special thank you to Mrs. Siwicki and Mrs. Winchester for their assistance in the preparation and execution of the events. We hope the event encourages you and your child to continue to WALK to SCHOOL on a consistent basis. Please take some time to visit our Brookdale Blog to see pictures (<http://brookdaleinfocus.blogspot.com/>).



The Principal's Corner

Committee News

REPORT CARDS AND CURRICULUM BASED MEASUREMENTS (CBM) RESULTS

You should have received your child's report card on Friday, October 30, 2009. Within the report card envelopes, you should have also received information about your child's performance on CBM testing in the area of reading. In addition, a letter from Dr. Patrick Nolten, Director of Assessment, Research, and Evaluation for IPSD 204, will be included to help you analyze the information. We ask that you take a moment to look at your child's achievement and familiarize yourself with the data provided so that your child's teacher can assist you in interpreting the information at Parent-Teacher Conferences. Though they should not be the only focus of the conference, an understanding of the report card and CBM data will help you assess the growth and needs of your child. Please contact the main office if you have not received your child's report card envelope.



BUZY BOBCAT STORE

The Buzy Bobcat Store's first two sales of the year were both huge successes! Piggy banks all over Brookdale must have been emptied out! The overall sales totaled over \$250! The November sales are scheduled for the 6th (K-2) and the 20th (3-5). The store opens at 8:30 and closes at 9:00 so if your student would like to shop, please make sure that he gets there early enough to make choices and pay.

Questions? Please contact

Peggy Kolar at pkkolar@sbcglobal.net

Or

Jeanette Curtis at jeanettecurtis@mac.com

WRAPPING PAPER UPDATE

Thank YOU for helping to fund the FUN in Brookdale!

Thank you for your support of the Sally Foster/Gourmet Cookie Dough Sale! Because of our student's and their family's and friends' participation, approximately \$500 was raised for Brookdale from all items sold!

Prizes are in the process of being awarded and the pizza party will be occurring this month for the school's lucky 40 winners. We will announce the winner of all prizes next month, so please stay tuned!



Please contact Debbie Snyder at 630-428-3089 or dsnydermjt@wideopenwest.com or Amy Hausman at 630-961-1210 or khausman@wideopenwest.com with any questions about the sale.

Thanks again for your support of this fundraiser to provide programs and events at Brookdale to make school life fun for your child(ren)!

ESCRIP UPDATE

We've added 11 more families to the eScrip program! The Brookdale PTA receives a percentage of purchases from Dominick's and several other merchants. Even Adamo's Pizza is a participating merchant, so if you were signed up on eScrip and purchased pizza for the Family Dinner Night, your purchases counted. It only takes a few seconds to sign up, and you only have to sign up once. Even grandparents and other relatives can get in on this fundraiser! We have several participants who are purchasing groceries from as far away as Louisiana, and Brookdale PTA is benefiting! Our August check totaled over \$50, and only 55 families were participating. Even if you don't shop at Dominick's often, every little bit counts. We had several families that only shopped there once, and we received about \$1. If every family at Brookdale signed up, shopped once, and we got \$1, we could've raised almost \$400! This is such an easy fundraiser, so please sign up at www.escrip.com. You only have to register once, and the PTA will continue to benefit from your purchases. If you have any questions about this program, contact Stacey Ramsey at 630-778-1849 or srams66@wideopenwest.com.

BLOGGING IN

Have you checked out the Brookdale Blog on the website yet? Many individual classrooms have their own individual blogs that teachers update periodically and there is also a whole—school blog that contains pictures of events that go on at Brookdale. Walk to School Day is currently playing. Check it out at [http://brookdaleinfocus.blogspot.com/!](http://brookdaleinfocus.blogspot.com/)



OFF TO MARKET DAY!



Market Day
A fundraiser like no other.

October Market Day was another success! We raised over \$151.00 for our school. Congratulations to Cindy Minch who won the raffle of the Chocolate Chip Cakes. Market Day is a great way to feed your family quick and nutritious meals and snacks while supporting your school all at the same time. Please contact me anytime with questions: Tricia Smith 630.416.3255 or email triciareg98@wowway.com.

BOX TOPS UPDATE

We just submitted our first batch of Box tops for Education for this school year and sent in over 4000 box tops! This submission earned the Brookdale PTA a total of \$463.00! Keep those box tops coming because our next submission date is 2/28/10. We're hoping to make it to the \$1000 mark this year!



ENRICHMENT

The enrichment committee would like to thank those who volunteer to help during the enrichment hours. We can't do enrichment classes without volunteers and they stepped up to assist: Shazia Anwar, Vicki Lynch, Darcy Hutzler, Christine Weiss, Anton Eleazar, Sonali Pandit. Thank you so much for your time!



LOOKING FOR LEADERS!

The PTA has openings for Committee Chairs. Please consider taking the opportunity to volunteer your time and efforts to the PTA. In addition to running valuable events and fundraisers for the school, it's a great way to get to know other parents, staff and students at Brookdale. The open positions are: Silent Auction, Title 1, Special Needs PTA representative and Fall Family Fun Night. For more information, please contact Melissa Winchester at melnme1997@yahoo.com or 630-717-0375

FALL FAMILY FUN NIGHT

The 5th annual Fall Family Fun Night was held on Friday, October 2nd with over 85 Brookdale families in attendance. The evening was headlined with Family Feud, co-hosted by Principal LeCrone and Joe Tabisz. In keeping with previous years, the school was buzzing with Bingo, Pictionary, Jenga, board games, word games, duck duck goose, a reverse relay and an energetic family relay race. Everyone enjoyed this event geared towards **playing with your family!**

Congratulations to the following families who were big winners..

1st Place Family Feud – Palmquist and Guerrieri families

2nd Place Family Feud – Amgaabaatar Family

1st Place Relay – Plos Family

2nd Place Relay – Varzino Family

3rd Place Relay – Heger Family

This year, our local businesses really rallied around the event with very generous donations. In addition to the winners above, there were prizes galore including 12 Reverse Raffle winners, a Karaoke rental raffle and prizes for all of the games. **Thank you, thank you.....please show your support and visit these businesses right in our backyard!**

Adamo's Pizza

Buffalo Wild Wings

Great American Bagel

Red Robin

Applebee's

Caribou Coffee – Route 59

Hollywood Palms

Sarpino's Pizzeria

Atlanta Bread

Chili's

Last Call Sport's Bar and Grill

Spicy Pickle

Boston Chicken

Colonial Café

McDonald's – River Road and Cantera

Sweet Tomatoes – Route 59

Braconi's Pizza

Culvers

Ogden 6 Theaters

TGI Friday's

Brookdale Music

Danny's Pub

Potbelly's - Cantera

Target – Route 59 and Cantera

Brunswick Zones

Go Roma

The Pita Place

Texas Roadhouse

Thank-you to all of the volunteers for the evening: Brian LeCrone; Joe Tabisz; Lisa Burke; Christine, Benjamin and Jackson Weiss; Nadine and Jacob Drilling; Melanie Brown; Peo, Tim and Eric Olofsson; Connor and Kate Follin; Sujaya Haran; Paula Reidy; Ruth Sheahan; Kate Reiman; Jason Snyder; Connor Markiewicz; Nicholas Watkins; the Venkataraman family; Jade and Avery Eriksen-Russo; Emily Rodriguez; Beth Reiman and the Lifesavers team.

A very special thank you to Sandy Follin and Nancy Olofsson who served as co-chairs with Linda Watkins.

FAMILY DINNER NIGHT OUT



Supporting Brookdale Elementary PTA Never Tasted so Good

Where: Go Roma Warrenville (630)-393-7662
28361 Diehl Rd
When: Tuesday, November 17th
Time: 11:00am-8:30pm

20% of all proceeds will be donated to
Brookdale Elementary PTA

**Please Bring This Flyer To Go Roma
for your contribution to count**

*Come in or carryout Go Roma's great pasta, salads,
pizzas & panini. While enjoying your meal you will be supporting the*



Find this event and more! Become a fan of Go Roma on Facebook

RESILIENCE, SELF-ESTEEM, MOTIVATION, AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Bonus info!

Nequa Valley recently hosted a speaker by the name of Dr. Robert Brooks and I am so glad that I decided to attend. He is down-to-earth, honest, and warm. With all of the pressures that we and society place on children today, Dr Brooks is a voice of reason and calmness. I have put his bio from his web page below and the link to his web page is <http://drrobertbrooks.com/>. If you ever have the chance to hear him speak, I would definitely recommend taking advantage!

Dr. Robert Brooks is one of today's leading speakers on the themes of resilience, self-esteem, motivation, and family relationships. During the past 30 years, Dr. Brooks has presented nationally and internationally to thousands of parents, educators, mental health professionals, and business people with a message based on encouragement, hope, and resilience. He is renowned for the warmth and humor he uses to bring his insights and anecdotes to life.

He speaks to business, school, community, and parent organizations on such subjects as "[Effective Leadership: Developing Emotional Intelligence and Resilience in Ourselves and Others](#)," "[Creating a Positive Work Environment](#)," "[Raising Resilient Children and Adolescents](#)," "[Raising a Self-Disciplined Child](#)," "[Fostering Family Closeness and Respect](#)," "[Working with Angry and Resistant Youth: Strategies for Fostering Motivation, Self-Discipline, and Resilience](#)," "[The Power of Mindsets: Creating a Positive School Climate](#)," "[Touching a Student's Mind and Heart: The Mindset of the Effective Educator](#)," and "[The Power of Mindsets: Nurturing Motivation, Hope, and Resilience in Children with Special Needs](#)."

Parent Survey Summary

Last Spring parents of Brookdale Elementary were asked to complete a written survey based on family educational experiences during the 2008-2009 school year. The objective of the survey was to measure how the entire school staff and parents are working together toward individual student academic achievement. The key points of the survey concentrated on two areas: **communication and involvement**.

We were pleased to hear from 229 families (55% of Brookdale families). This is a 33% increase in responses from last year!

Overall, the results of the survey were positive and shows us that parents and staff are working together to benefit our children.

The "involvement" portion of the survey received positive results from the majority of responders stating that yes,
 an adult in the family reviews homework, assists with test preparation and/or reads with the children regularly
 Brookdale staff reaches out to all families regardless of their level of participation in school programs
 Brookdale staff works effectively to support families and their children in learning at home activities including homework

The table below is a summary of parent involvement in school events. These results are compared to previous survey results from the 2007 - 2008 school year.

	07-08	08-09
PTA Meetings	49%	34%
August Meet and Greet	76%	66%
Curriculum Night		75%
Grade Level Field Trips	73%	49%
Classroom Parties	80%	69%
January Family Reading Night	38%	33%
February Open House	90%	63%
Student Fine Arts Performances	60%	45%
PTA Events	82%	53%
Other	15%	25%

*The difference in percentages from 07-08 to 08-09 were affected by the increased number of respondents.

The time and date of events prevented many of us from attending school events. It is a goal of the school staff to determine when these events can be offered to allow for more participation.

The “communication” portion of the survey indicates the majority of parents feel favorably that,

The school newsletters are informative

Brookdale staff responds to questions and concerns in a respectful and timely manner

Three areas for development include,

Brookdale staff adequately communicates to parents expectations for academic performance

Brookdale staff does a good job communicating with me about my child’s progress in school

Brookdale staff adequately communicates to parents expectations for behavioral performance

Of the 229 surveys received 56 surveys included additional comments. Each comment has been read and given consideration.

Thank you for participating.



Ten Tips for a Successful Parent-Teacher Conference

- Ask your child if there is anything that he would like you to discuss with the teacher.
- Jot down everything that you want to talk about at the conference.
- Arrive promptly or a few minutes early.
- Begin with positive comments about the teacher or classroom.
- Avoid lengthy discussions of topics that are not related to the purpose of the conference.
- Be open-minded to suggestions from the teacher.
- Keep your emotions under control.
- Take notes about what has been discussed to share with your child.
- Express appreciation for the conference.
- Do not stay beyond your allotted time.

Conferences are scheduled for:
Tuesday, Nov. 4, 4:30-8PM
Thursday, Nov. 10, 8-3, 4-8:30


TYSON LABELS AND BOX TOPS

The Brookdale PTA is once again collecting labels from the Tyson Project A+ program. It is simple to contribute...just find the label on the Tyson wrapper, cut out the "A+ 1 2 3" top section of the label and send it to school with your child. Each qualifying label is worth \$.24! Thanks for all your help. You can check out the Tyson website at <http://projectaplus.tyson.com> for a full list of products. If you have any questions, please contact Barb Marshall at rmarshall8804@wowway.com or 357-7761.



The PTA is also once again collecting Box Tops for Education labels. This is very simple to contribute to as well.... Just find the Box Tops symbol on the many products that qualify, cut it out, and send it to school with your student. The list of products containing Box Tops for Education is on the Brookdale website at http://www.ipds.org/Uploads/brookdale_box%20Tops.pdf (Wow! This link is great! There are so many products!). If you have any questions, contact Stacey Ramsey at 630-778-1849.

ESCRIP AT DOMINICK'S

 If you have not already done so, please consider registering your Dominick's Fresh Values Card online at www.escrip.com. When you do, Dominick's will donate a percentage of your purchases to the Brookdale Elementary School PTA each time you use your Fresh Values Card! It is very easy to do - just go to www.escrip.com and follow the instructions. Dominick's will donate up to 4% per shopping trip when your Fresh Values Card is used. Once you've registered, you don't have to do anything else. You have to shop anyway so why not make it benefit the PTA?! If you have any questions about this program, you can contact Stacey Ramsey at 778-1849 or e-mail to srams66@wideopenwest.com.



"SEARCH" FOR MONEY!



What if Brookdale School earned a penny every time you searched the Internet? We can, if you use GoodSearch.com, a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, and we can earn money for Brookdale school.

Just go to www.goodsearch.com and enter Brookdale School (no additional information) in the "Who Do You GoodSearch For?" box. (Two "Brookdale Elementary" schools are currently listed, so be sure to pick ours.) After that, search as you normally would. Spread the word to friends and family – Brookdale earns money from every search! Please take a minute to visit Goodsearch.com, or make it your home page. It's an effortless way to raise funds for our school.

This publication is produced and paid for by the Brookdale Elementary School PTA.

2009-2010 PTA Executive Board

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