



THE BRIER BULLETIN

May 20, 2008

Greetings Brier Families,

Thank you all so much for joining us at our Brier Arts Festival and Open House! What an amazing sense of community, family involvement and appreciation for the arts and learning! It was great to see those of you who were able to make it in for the event! I have to give a huge amount of credit and thanks to our Brier Elementary PTA board and families who were absolutely incredible with helping us to prepare, organize the event, and fill our tummies with yummy treats! The weather was the beautiful, the art is amazing, and seeing our community come together is so incredible! Thank you Brier Families!

I wanted to share with you all an article I recently read in a monthly newsletter I receive from the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). As spring is here, and we are coming to the home stretch for the end of the school year, too often I've seen students get ready for summer long before the last day of school actually arrives. It is so important that we work together to continue our focus on teaching children to be self-managers and creating a sense of continued learning during the home stretch! Responsibility is crucial during this time of the school year. Although it takes an entire childhood to learn, here are some ideas to think about this spring (borrowed from NAESP):

Make them Calendar Girls (and Boys). Give your child his or her own calendar. Have children mark when a test or project due, or when a sports or group activity is scheduled. Each child's calendar should be posted in a visible spot, and get them in the habit of checking it every day—either adding new events and deadlines or crossing off things they've completed. Another idea is to mark exciting events that your son or daughter may be looking forward to in order to stay motivated and inspired! A calendar helps our kids to get excited about the future!

Keeping Track. As tempting as it is to help out your children if they forget their lunch or homework or put off an assignment until too late, those mistakes can be excellent tools to teach responsibility for all kids. If your child needs to borrow lunch money (because he/she lost it or misplaced it), make sure it is paid back from his or her own savings. If the project is due the next day, fight the urge to step in and help get it done. Children only need a few such lessons, and some serious follow-up discussions from their families and teachers, to realize that it's not worth it to be irresponsible.

Helping Others. No matter what your child's situation in life, there are always others in greater need. Get your child involved in helping those less fortunate by working through community, school, or religious groups that focus on community service. Show that you believe in what you're teaching by volunteering yourself as well. Modeling by those adults who our kids love and look up to is an incredible force for making positive change in our students' lives.

Pet Smarts. Taking care of the family pet is an excellent way to learn responsibility. Children quickly learn the consequences if they forget to take the dog out, forget to feed the

cat, or let a caged pet stay out unattended. Your children need to know that their pets depend on them.

Get to Work. Assign weekly chores to everyone in the house, rotating them so that, eventually, everyone has a turn at doing the dishes, putting away laundry, and taking out the trash.

Save for the Future. Financial responsibility is easy to teach if you start when your children are young. From their very first birthday money, teach them to set aside a certain amount for the future. A good rule of thumb is to put half away for savings and save half for spending. This way they'll have money for those things they want right away or things they'd like to buy in the future.

Consider Matching Funds. If your children are saving for something that's a big-ticket item, consider setting up a matching fund, where, if they earn the first half, you'll chip in the second. Even though it sounds like the same concept as saying you'll split the cost with them, it's actually more effective to have them demonstrate to you first that they've worked and saved enough to pay for their share. Finally, remember that the only way to teach your children responsibility is to model the behavior yourself. Make sure they know that they can depend on you to follow through on promises. Help them see that you value your contributions to your job, your community, and your family.

Ideas are always fun to share and think about. This was a great article and hopefully by sharing, it will create thinking within your family. You are all amazing! Enjoy our long, sun-filled days of spring! Have an incredible week Brier Families!

Spring Smiles,

Tori Thomas

P.S. One last request for any baby food jars you might have at home! We haven't received any yet and would love to be able to fill this request for our artist in residency experience that starts on Thursday! Thank you!

The on-line Brier Bulletin has changed!!! It is now available on our school maintained website, both past and present issues! Paste this link into your favorites: <http://staff.edmonds.wednet.edu/brier/default.html> and you are ready to go! Please notify the school office if you no longer need a paper copy. *Thank you for saving us time and cost by opting out of receiving a paper copy.*

Calendar of Events

5/20 Anti-bullying Assembly 2:30 Gym

5/20 PTA Volunteer Social - Library @ 6:00-7:00pm

5/20 PTA General Membership Meeting Library @ 7:00pm
5/21 FT VeCera, Gray, Hemphill - Third Place Books 9:15-11:45
5/22 5th grade camp parent meeting 6:30-7:30pm in Library

5/23 NO SCHOOL - TEACHER IN-SERVICE DAY

5/26 NO SCHOOL - MEMORIAL DAY

5/27 FT - Kubinski & Lafferty @ Pilchuck Recreation Area 9:20-12:30pm

5/28 FT - Parker @ Olympic Sculpture Park 9:30-1:30pm

5/30 School Spirit Day - Dress up like the 70's

6/2 STARS Performance at Whittier Elementary/Seattle Center 9:45-3:15pm

Information for Families

Carnival - Friday, June 6th @ 5:30pm-8:30pm. The Carnival is coming up fast and there are still Volunteers needed. The Carnival sign up book is now located in the office. Please see the attached flyer for more information. Thank You for volunteering!

The Carnival Committee

Coins for Kids

Brier Elementary Rocks! We raised a whopping \$ 1,112.08 for the Clothes for Kids organization. If you are not already familiar with them, all the money goes to helping families right here in our school district. Clothes for Kids supplies children in need with two seasonal wardrobes each year and even though our fundraiser is over, you can send a donation to them anytime. This is one of those rare organizations where you can have a real impact in your own backyard, so to speak!

A big thank you to the kids in Mr. Overleese's 5th/6th grade class for giving up recess and lunch to help with posters and counting money but mostly...

Thank you to our kids and parents for opening their hearts and donating to a very worthy cause!

ONE WARM COAT DRIVE UPDATE

Dear Brier Elementary Families,

We would like to thank everyone for donating to our One Warm Coat Drive. It was a huge success! We collected over 200 new and used coats for needy families. Your generosity didn't stop there. We also received donations of other clothing, including hats, scarves, gloves, and even a snowsuit! All of these donations will definitely make a difference in the lives our neighbors in need.

Thank You,
Girl Scout Troop 233



ONE WARM COAT