

The Brier Bulletin

Brier Elementary School — Home of the Bobcats

November 2009

Greetings Brier Families,

The rain has slipped in, the wind is howling, we're grabbing coats and scarves, and we all know that we are in the midst of fall! It's already November, and no doubt about it, we are in for a terrific month of learning! Thank you to all of our families who were able to join us for our student conferences last week. Student conferences are invaluable to share student progress, communicate learning goals, the vision for the learning throughout the year and create the vital connection between home and school. I also would like to say a special thank you to those of you who were able to attend Mr. Parker's literacy training on October 20th. Mr. Parker has done an amazing job of putting together family friendly resources that provide information about our literacy instruction at school and how all of our families can assist your child(ren) in literacy using similar skills, strategies, and vocabulary. We hope that all of our families find these resources to support the work you each do with your child(ren) at home and we also hope that these resources support the work many of you do when volunteering at school.

In the month of November there is a heightened awareness of giving thanks, and I want to say "Thank You" to all of our Brier Families for supporting our non-student days throughout the year and allowing our staff to come together around student learning. This time is precious to all of us, and we use every minute of it with all of your children in mind. This year, we are continuing to dig deeper into the structure and implementation of the readers' workshop model in all classrooms. This structure allows for students to learn reading skills, strategies and processes through whole class, small group and individual practices inside the classroom setting. In the area of reading, the workshop typically begins with a mini lesson focused on explicit teaching of a particular skill, strategy or management routine. During a mini-lesson, often students are pulled to the carpet for explicit teaching by the teacher or work is done with students at their seats with a focused learning target being modeled and shared by the teacher. This lesson leads into providing students time to practice while the classroom teacher works with small groups of students, as well as, individual students to work with them at their instructional levels in order to continue to advance all students' reading practices and strategies. During time to practice you will see students reading in "Just Right" books. Students may be writing in literacy journals and extending their learning from the mini-lesson. This time to practice is vital to students' success as readers. Following this time to practice, often the class will have an opportunity to reflect on their learning from the day and share their thinking and learning with their classmates. Throughout this workshop time in the classroom, our teachers are consistently monitoring student progress and assessing student growth. In the workshop, you'll see specific evidence of assessment through reading conferences, running records, and teacher observation. We've started our year creating classroom environments that promote mutual respect, student responsibility, and ownership. Classrooms that are rich in literature, environmental print, and show evidence of student thinking and learning are the types of classrooms we all strive for and you can find throughout our school. Throughout the year, we will continue as a staff to learn together about this structure and how to work within this structure to ensure the most effective learning for all students. You are all so very fortunate to have such competent and confident teachers working and learning with your child(ren). Our Friday time together as a staff is invaluable to the work we do as professionals and again, we thank you for your support. Every experience during this time works to provide the most productive, engaging, and supportive school we can be for our Brier Bobcats!

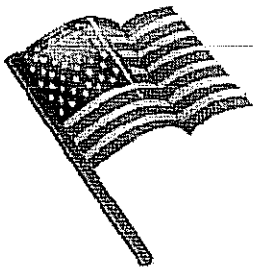
Brier Families, enjoy the experiences, opportunities and gatherings that November brings. Stay warm and stay healthy! Have a wonderful month of November.

November Smiles, Tori Thomas

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Please do not allow your child/children to arrive at school prior to 9:10am. The only reasons a student may need to be here prior to 9:10am may be because he or she is involved in: Beyond the Bells, a before school program, or is eating breakfast at school. If your student is planning on eating breakfast with us here at school, he or she can head into the gym for breakfast at 8:45am, and he or she will remain supervised in the gym until 9:15am. Maintaining a safe school is our number one priority at Brier, and students arrive prior to 9:10am, we do not have the supervision available for them and we compromise student safety. Just a reminder, childcare is available through our Beyond the Bells program before and after school, however there is a process for placing your student in this program. Please join us in an effort to maintain a school of safety and security for our students and staff by working with your student to arrive at school at the necessary time. Beyond the Bells phone number is (425) 431-2094.



VETERANS DAY ASSEMBLY—NOVEMBER 10TH AT 3:00PM: Please turn in your Veterans Day stars into the office. Veterans Day is intended to thank and honor all those who served honorably in the military—in wartime or peacetime. In fact, Veterans Day is largely intended to thank living veterans for their service, to acknowledge that their contributions to our national security are appreciated and to underscore the fact that all those who served—not only those who died—have sacrificed and done their duty. Please invite your family and friends who are Veterans to our assembly on November 10th.

Edmonds School District Gifted Programs are for students who take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT6) and are identified as "gifted or highly capable". The pace of the instruction is designed to meet the needs of students who learn very quickly and can process information at much higher and more abstract levels. For more information go to district website edmonds.wednet.edu - Parents - Other Educational Resources, [Highly Capable Programs and Services](#), and click on any of the three programs listed below. Same information on the web site will be handed out at parent meetings.

Challenge Gifted Program - Grades 1-6

Gifted Middle School Program - Grades 7-8

International Baccalaureate - Grades 9-12

Grades K-7 Parent (only) meeting - Nov. 3, 6:00-7:00pm, Terrace Park Elementary

Grade 8 Parent/Student meeting - Nov. 5, 7:00-8:00pm, Edmonds-Woodway High, Great Hall

Grades K-5 Challenge Test - December 5 - *Referral due November 23*

Grades 6-7 Gifted Middle Test - January 9 - *Referral due December 18*

Grade 8 IB Test - December 12 - *Referral due November 30*

Call or email Nancy Gilbertson 425-431-7157, GilbertsonN@edmonds.wednet.edu for more information on gifted testing.



News Flash

Cantare: The Brier Elementary 5th and 6th grade choir, Cantare, practices Tuesdays and Thursdays during 2nd recess. If you have any questions, please contact Barb Oakley at (425) 431-3842.

STARS: Practice days are as follows from 8:20-9:10am

Monday, Nov. 9th - Unicycles,

Tuesday, Nov. 10th - Juggling, Jump Rope

Tuesday, Nov. 24th - Juggling, Jump Rope

Wednesday, Nov. 25th - Unicycles

Brier Pride Pledge...

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

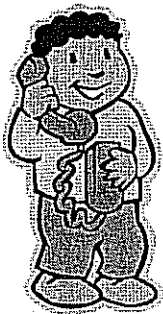
I am ready to learn and
will encourage others
to be successful because
learning comes first!

- **Volunteering at Brier Elementary:**

If you'd like to volunteer at school—you will need to complete the volunteer disclosure statement and the Washington State Patrol forms found in the Volunteer Handbook. It takes 1-2 weeks to process. If you would like to drive on a field trip, you will also need to complete the Private Transportation form and will need to obtain a drivers abstract from the Department of Licensing.

- **Office Reminders:** Please, remember to call the attendance line when your student(s) will be tardy or absent. This helps Brier Elementary know that your child is

safe. The number is (425) 431-7854. Also, remember to send a note to the office regarding early dismissals. A "Request for Excused Absence" form (for absences other than illness) needs to be completed for 2 or more days. Please see the Annual Update packet and complete the form and return it to school when needed.



- **Student Meal account:** How can I pay for my student's meals? Visit MyLunchMoney.com to add money to your student's lunch account.



Important Dates



No School: Nov. 6, 11, 26 & 27

Photo Re-takes: Nov. 9

**Veterans Day Assembly: Nov. 10
3:00pm**

Hearing Re-checks: Nov. 16 & 17








Parent and Volunteer Literacy Resources are now available online.

Download grade level summaries, a guide to literacy instruction at Brier Elementary and reference cards to help with fluency, figuring out unknown words, writing and comprehension.

They can found at: <http://staff.edmonds.wednet.edu/brier/Fluency.html>

For questions please contact Todd Parker at parkerto@edmonds.wednet.edu

NOVEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 Daylight Savings Time Ends	2 Primary Recognition Assembly 1:45 Intermediate Recognition Assembly 2:45	3	4	5	6 No School Teacher Professional Development Day	7
8 National School Psychology Awareness Week (9th-13)	9 Picture Retakes 	10 Veterans Day Assembly 3:00pm	11 No School Veterans Day 	12	13	14
15	16 Hearing Rechecks	17 Hearing Rechecks	18	19	20	21
22	23 Challenge Referrals are due today	24	25	26 No School Thanksgiving	27 No School	28
29 	30		<i>Fall</i> 			



Winter Break is December 21–January 1st
NO SCHOOL

