



Bridges PCS December Newsletter

Principal's News By: Kristine Rigley

Hello Friends and Families of Bridges PCS – Happy holidays! This holiday season I am focused on gathering feedback from all stakeholders to learn what our school community is thankful for and where our areas of growth should be. We strive to create a learning environment that meets the needs of everyone by seeking, accepting and acting on informal and formal feedback regularly. Your feedback will support me when tracking progress towards our yearly goals, celebrating successful practices, and building towards additional actions.

One method of gathering feedback will be through a parent survey we will conduct in December and in May. The survey will focus on the following areas: school-family relationships, communications, student support, and school mission/vision alignment. You will also have the opportunity to provide additional comments and feedback to address any area you feel is not addressed within the survey questions.

Another method of gathering your feedback will be through parent listening sessions. Dur-

ing this time, families will have the opportunity to complete the survey in person and share out any additional information regarding the growth and development of the Bridges PCS program.

Staff at Bridges completed their own survey in October. And, we are holding staff focus groups to provide in-person feedback opportunities and are sharing the findings with staff.

One exciting aspect of gathering feedback from all stakeholders is the idea of making continued improvements at our school. Bridges PCS will continue to evolve as we grow, with the unrelenting mission of meeting the needs of 100% of our students. We are committed to listen to feedback, try different approaches, and apply various ideas to adapt and be as successful as possible.

I look forward to hearing from you all in-person or through our parent survey, which will be shared out separately.

Have a wonderful month of December!

Kristine Rigley, Principal

December 2016

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Director's News By: Olivia Smith

Greeting Bridges families!

It was wonderful to see so many parents and extended family members join us for the Bridges' Family Meal of Thanks on November 23rd just before the Thanksgiving holiday. If you were not able to attend this year, we hope you can join us next year for this multicultural potluck meal. This December we hope that you join us for activities happening at Bridges such as the celebration of **Inclusive Schools Week (Dec. 5 – 9)** and **The Winter Extravaganza on Wednesday, December 21st**. The Winter Extravaganza is a celebration of winter and community and each classroom will do a skit or song. Pre-K and Kindergarten classes will perform from 9:30 am - 11:30 am and the Elementary classes (1st – 4th) will perform from 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm.

Bridges' Annual Winter Time Fundraising Campaign has begun. All donations, small or large, are valued and greatly appreciated. The school is working to raise money for Phase II of the playground, finishing the Pre-K and Elementary spaces and also building out the infant and toddler play area. We are also raising money to purchase new furniture for classrooms for the 2017-2018 school year.

There are several ways families and friends can support the school. On-line donations can be made through the Bridges website at the "Support Us" page at <http://bridgespcs.org/support-us/>. Donations in the form of checks and cash can also be dropped off at the front desk. On-line shopping with Amazon can help raise money for Bridges. Same prices, same products, same service. When you shop Amazon through the **Amazon Smile link**, Amazon gives 0.5% of every sale. This link can be used to set up shopping at Amazon in support of Bridges PCS: smile.amazon.com/ch/73-1681983. Or as a Federal Government Employee, support Bridges PCS through the **2016 Combined Federal Campaign**. Donate online at the CFC's e-Giving program. Bridge's CFC number is 97434.

If you have friends or family members who are interested in donating to a non-profit corporation during the holiday season please refer them to school's website, www.bridgespcs.org. All donations are 100% tax deductible.

Thank you for considering making a donation to Bridges PCS this holiday season.

Olivia Smith
Founder/Director

Upcoming Events:

- 12/5—12/9 - Inclusive Schools Week
- 12/7 @ 8:45 AM—PTO Meeting
- 12/21—Winter Extravaganza. Pre-K—Kindergarten classes -9:30 am - 11:30 am. Elementary classes (1st– 4th) - 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm.

Special Education Corner

Inclusive Schools Week

Coming up, December 5-8, we will celebrate the inclusion of special education, cultural heritage, and language preference during **Inclusive Schools Week!** Here are the activities we have planned at Bridges, under the theme: "Share Your Gifts"

Lobby:

"Share Your Gifts" banner that all students, families, and teachers can add to
Interactive information board in the lobby, which will

- ✦ Include examples of the various ways all students are included at Bridges
- ✦ Allow families a space to show where they come from, showing the diversity of Bridges

Include vocabulary that many people may have heard but do not necessarily know the meaning of (e.g. IEP).

Class Lessons:

Various class activities by members of the Student Support Team (e.g., Occupational Therapist, Special Education Teacher, Social Worker) to increase awareness and understanding of

- ✦ How people learn in different ways and may need accommodations to help their bodies
- How people speak in various languages and come from different places around the world

PTO News

Update from the PTO

Between the Playground Build, T-shirt sales, Picture Day, Family Pizza & Movie Night, our Room Parent program, the Toy Swap, and more, the PTO is active and here to serve our community. Have you gotten involved yet? Not sure how? Here's a list:

1. **Join us for Meetings:** Our next PTO Meeting will take place on **Wednesday, December 7 at 8:45 a.m. in Room 304**. Please join us, or consider signing up for one of our committees to get involved even if you can't make it to meetings.
2. **Join our GoogleGroup:** It's easy to stay informed by joining our GoogleGroup. Simply go to groups.google.com, search for BridgesPCSFamilies, and Request to Join.
3. **Join our Directory:** The Directory is a free and an easy way to access contact information for other families in our school community. Whether you are trying to organize a birthday party or a class event, the Directory can give you all the contact information you need PLUS a complete calendar of school and PTO events and activities. Go to www.schooldirectoryupdate.com and click "Join as a new family." You will receive an email with your login information.

Early Childhood Education News

Early Childhood Education News

ECE Activity Update:

All ECE teachers at Bridges have been evaluated by the School Readiness Consulting team through the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). This evaluation is intended to assess the quality of the Early Childhood program being delivered at Bridges. The evaluation tool being used to conduct this quality review is called the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). This tool is used nationwide to assess the quality of Early Childhood programs, measuring our schoolwide Performance Management Framework as part of the expectations set forth by OSSE.

Parents' Corner

Student Development Focus Part 3

The importance of Play in a child's development: Research has shown that play can be a context for learning; children like to play, it brings joy, and it's within this context that learning can take place. Children can learn while at play through their own experience, through interaction with peers, and through their interaction with adults. Play supports the development of language, reasoning, problem solving and social emotional skills, as children interact with peers. The idea that play provides a context for learning and development in education is similar to the use of play therapy for children coping with traumatic experiences; in both cases play provides a natural, comfortable setting for young children to develop. Founding Fathers in the Early Childhood field, such as Froebel, Montessori and Paley, have said that play is children's work. It is also adult work as we must understand the role of play in the lives of young children, and how to nurture and utilize play as we help in the development of our children.

Things you can do at home:

Provide toys that can facilitate role playing. For example -- telephone, toy vehicles, building blocks, career costumes, different types of clothing, cooking utensils, art materials, etc. Children will act out what they have learned.

Join children as they role play; allow them to take the lead.

Encourage "play dates" at home or in a public play area.

Give children alone time to play. Observe silently and then ask questions about their play afterwards.

Ask children questions that do not require more than a one word answer. Have them describe or tell you about what they do and why.

Danette Dicks,
Assistant Principal

Special Needs Parent Group

There will be no Special Needs Parent Group (SNPG) meeting in the month of December. Stay tuned for meeting dates and activities after the holidays. Have a safe and wonderful holiday season! If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact the SNPG Chair, Tracy Clarke at tracyedge@aol.com or [202-236-0445](tel:202-236-0445) (cell).