



Bridges PCS January Newsletter

Principal's News By: Kristine Rigley

Hello Friends and Families of Bridges PCS – I am excited to welcome you back to school and into a new year of learning and exploration! First, thank you kindly to all of our families who completed the Parent Feedback Survey! **We gathered feedback from 106 parents.** Please look for the results and action steps based on this feedback in the February newsletter.

January 19th marks the end of the second quarter marking period which means Academic Parent Teacher Training meetings (APTT) and Parent Teacher Conferences (PTC) are right around the corner!

At Bridges, we understand that school alone cannot be the sole source of learning for our students and believe students do better in school and in life when their families are engaged in their education. Over the past few years, Bridges has formed a partnership with the Flamboyan Foundation to develop a strong collaboration between our school and our families that drives student achievement.

According to the Flamboyan Foundation, teachers are only with children an average of 14% of their time, so it is essential that families reinforce

messages about learning outside of school. We aim to support families in doing so by providing you with timely, individualized and actionable information about what your child is learning in school, how they are learning it and what you can do to support their learning at home.

APTT meetings and Parent Teacher Conferences will be held in the afternoon on Friday, January 27th. Please connect with your classroom teacher when scheduling a time to meet. Childcare on this afternoon will be provided. Parents are expected to attend at least one in-person PTC per school year.

The most important roles parents play in your child's success include having high expectations, constantly reinforcing the value of education, guiding children through important decisions, and advocating for them. I am hopeful that the opportunities to learn more about your child's educational development through the APTT and PTC meetings meet your expectations. I am looking forward to seeing you in attendance either at your child's APTT or PTC at the end of the month.

Have a wonderful month of January!

 Kristine Rigley, Principal

January 2017

Copies of the School Newsletter & School Menus are available under the Information section

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Director's News By: Olivia Smith

Hello Bridges Families,

Happy New and Welcome back to school parents and students! We hope that everyone had a wonderful winter break and was able to spend time with family and friends.

With the start of the New Year Bridges is beginning our Open House sessions for prospective families for 2017-2018 school year. If you have friends or neighbors interested in learning about the program, please encourage them to call the school to register for a 9:30 am Friday morning Open House session. During the Open House families will learn about the school program from our Principal and Assistant Principal, tour the building and spend time in a classroom. Current Bridges' families who would like to attend an Open House session are also always welcomed.

In preparation for next school year during the first week of February we will be distributing to families a Registration Commitment Forms for the 2017-2018 school year. This is a 1 page hard copy document that you can complete at the reception desk or send back to school in your student's backpack to the classroom teacher. Bridges uses the Registration Commitment Form information to determine how many spaces will be available to offer out in the lottery per grade level for the next school year. We also use the form to help us know how many siblings will be applying / enrolling for the next school year. If you are a Parents / Guardians with an age-eligible sibling (for any grade level) who would like the sibling to attend Bridges for the 2017-2018 school year you must do an application online at the website www.myschooldc.org. The on-line application is now available and must be completed by March 1, 2017. When completing the on-line application you must indicate that it is for a sibling of a currently enrolled Bridges' student to receive the "sibling preference" in the lottery. You must also list Bridges PCS as your 1st (first) choice school on the application. For any Parent / Guardian who would like assistance with completing the on-line application for a sibling, you can make an appointment with one of our Front Desk Administrative staff people, Ms. Mary and Ms. Gomez. Please speak with them directly to schedule an appointment or call (202) 545-0515.

Families of currently enrolled students who want their children to attend Bridges PCS next school year (2017-2018) do not have to do the on-line application. You will complete re-enrollment paperwork this spring to secure your students space for next school year. Re-enrollment paperwork will be distributed in April 2017. If you have any questions or concerns about this information or any other matters and would like to speak with me, please email me or give me a call. I can be reached at osmith@bridgespcs.org or (202) 545-0515. Thank you, Ms. Olivia

Upcoming Events:

- January 16th—NO SCHOOL—Martin Luther King Holiday
- January 20—NO SCHOOL—Inauguration Day Holiday
- January 27th—APTT Meetings and Parent/Teacher Conferences. (Half day for students)

Student Support Team

During December we celebrated Inclusive School's Week and it was another reminder of how awesome it is to be a part of the Bridges community! Students, staff, and families participated in various activities throughout the week both before school and during morning meetings. All students participated and learned about the many diverse ways students in our community access learning. They learned how to use communication devices, different ways to communicate with people who speak other languages, and about the various abilities students have.

This year, we expanded our program to add more special education classes that focus on the common core curriculum more effectively and consistently. We added specialized supports varying in intensity level for students with more significant academic, medical, and/or socio-emotional needs. Our goal this year is to significantly increase the amount of time students with special needs are spending in the General Education classroom during the most beneficial and appropriate times based on their individual learning profile. We are meeting this goal and Inclusive Schools Week was a great time to celebrate this success! At least 90% of our students with special needs in our non-cat (special education) classrooms are actively engaging in read aloud, project work, and/or parts of the day that increase positive social interaction, such as recess and specials. Our General Education teachers work hard to ensure all students feel welcomed and supported in their classroom as a community member. We also make sure to provide the necessary student support staff to increase positive participation in the classroom. We are proud of our teaching staff and Related Service Providers for all their efforts to make Bridges an even more inclusive environment than it already is!

For the month of January, Bridges is promoting awareness of the "Child Find" program. It a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and requires states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities ages 3 to 21, who are in need of early intervention services or special education services.

Our goal for *Child Find* is to educate you about the importance of intervention and special education services for eligible children as early as possible in their development. If you suspect that your child has a disability, you may initiate a free evaluation. Depending on the child's educational needs, the school support team at Bridges, which may include a school social worker, school nurse, speech pathologist, audiologist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist or general/special education teacher will evaluate her/his needs. A determination of eligibility for services is made following the results of the team's evaluation and/or recommendation. The evaluation also assists in determining appropriate school programming, placement, and specialized services, if warranted.

Bridges offers a continuum of programs and services to support all children with special needs. If you suspect your child of having a disability, please contact Christel Guillen, Director of Student Support, for assistance (cguillen@bridgespcs.org).

PTO News

Update from the PTO

Save the Date for the **Winter Dance Party**, which will take place on **Saturday, February 11** in the Bridges Multi-Purpose Room! There will be food, dancing, crafts, face painting and more!

The Bridges PTO is active and here to serve our community. Have you gotten involved yet? There are no fees, anyone can get involved at any time. Not sure how? Here's a list:

1. **Join us for Meetings:** our next PTO Meeting will take place on **Wednesday, February 1 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. We will also have a coffee hour in the lobby on Friday, February 3 from 8-9 a.m. in case you want to stop by and ask any questions about what you might have missed.
2. **Join our GoogleGroup:** Its 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 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 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.

Don't miss out on all the fun PTO stuff to come in 2017, consider getting involved now!

Early Childhood Education News



ECE Activity Update:

All ECE teachers at Bridges have started working on Study topics with students. Some of the topics include trains, insects, breakfast, and airplanes. Students have taken field trips to experience these topics first hand and teachers have invited an outside resource to show and talk with students about them. One class will be going to IHOP so the students can experience various breakfast items as a meal. Overall students and teachers are enjoying the Study topics. Bridges will be providing more professional development for our ECE teachers around how to further develop their knowledge and skills around engaging in creative and in-depth study topics to extend student learning.

Parents' Corner

Student Development Focus Part 4

The importance of Nap Time in a child's development: Napping is an essential part of a growing child's day. A nap helps children recuperate from the day's activities, stimulates growth hormones, makes antibodies that protect them from infections and diseases, and helps them learn better, and improves memory. Nap time is one of the daily rituals that can become a very stressful rather than relaxing time for both child and adult. To eliminate the stress associated with nap time, activities can be done to gradually build special routines that help children to slow down and get to a place where they want to rest.

Things you can do at home:

- Never rush a child to sleep. Build in a routine of helping a child to use the bathroom before going to sleep.
- Have the student wash his/her face
- Have a nap time story book ready.
- Play music that is relaxing
- Dim the lights
- Provide a blanket
- Provide a favorite comforting toy to remove distractions from the environment.

Make these actions a consistent routine and way of slowing students down to get them to want to rest.

Danette Dicks,
Assistant Principal

Special Needs Parent Group

Happy New Year from the Special Needs Parent Group! We're looking forward to a new year of SNPG sharing and exchange along with informative meetings and workshops. We are in the midst of finalizing our Special Needs "Open House/Mid-Year Check In" event for January ... fliers will be posted with confirmed time and date in the very near future. (Our January event will replace our regularly scheduled meeting.)