

Parent Guidebook for Brooks Elementary School

2023-2024 School Year



Inspire ALL students to achieve their greatest potential

Dear Families,

Welcome to Brooks Elementary School!

On behalf of our staff, I would like to welcome your family to Gwendolyn Brooks Elementary School. Our year will be filled with continued growth and learning for all. The Brooks staff is committed to inspiring all students to achieve their greatest potential. In addition, we will provide a safe and positive learning environment for all of our students. This is framed in our Tiger Trait initiative where we teach all children to be safe, responsible and respectful.

We fully encourage and welcome your participation in our efforts to make your child's experience at Brooks one that is educational, enjoyable, memorable, and successful. Please join us in a partnership by monitoring your child's academics at home, attending school functions and volunteering in our building. We welcome you to volunteer in our classrooms, LMC, and to support our building wide PTA efforts.

On behalf of the Brooks staff, I invite you to fully participate in our school. With our combined efforts, we can provide the highest level of academic and social emotional learning for our students.

Sincerely,
Terri Russell
Principal

Table of Contents

Arrival / Dismissal	4
Art / Music / PE	5
Attendance	5
Before and After School Care	5
Birthdays	5
Book Fines	5
Breakfast	6
Bus Expectations	6
Bus Information	6
Cell Phones and Electronic Devices	6
Chromebooks	6
Communication	6
Communicating Your Concerns	6
Digital Citizenship	6
Early Dismissal / Late Arrival	6
Extracurricular Clubs and Intramurals	7
Food / Snacks / Water Bottles	7
Forgotten Items	7
Grading and report cards	7
Homework / Make-up Work	7
LMC (Library Media Center)	7
Lost and Found	7
Lunch	8
Money	8
Office Hours	8
Parent Involvement	8
Parent Teacher Conferences	8
PBIS Expectations	9

Playground Guidelines	9
Recess Conditions	9
School Hours	9
School Security	10
Toys at School	10
Visitors/Volunteers	10

Arrival / Dismissal

MY CHILD IS A BUS RIDER

- You can find your child's bus route and pick up/drop off times in Synergy. They will be posted in mid-August.
- Your child can ONLY ride the bus he or she is assigned to.
- The bus may arrive 5 minutes on either side of the pick up time/drop off time. Please recognize the routes may be running late for the first couple weeks of school, as drivers learn their new routes.
- If your child is assigned a bus, but will not be a bus rider on a particular day, you MUST send a note to the teacher to change transportation plans.

MY CHILD IS A WALKER/BIKE RIDER TO SCHOOL

- Children walking or bike riding, who cross Stonebridge Blvd., must cross with the crossing guard. Please do NOT allow your child to cross elsewhere.
- All children walking/biking to school enter door #1 at 8:50. Please do not arrive early, as there is no supervision.

MY CHILD IS A WALKER/BIKE RIDER HOME

- All walkers/bike riders will exit door 2. Children walking or bike riding, who cross Stonebridge Blvd., must cross with the crossing guard. Please do NOT allow your child to cross elsewhere.

MY CHILD IS A CAR RIDER

- The car drop off and pick up line is located in the teachers' parking lot on the north end of the building. Please enter the circle drive where you will find 2 lines. These 2 lines will ease into one lane, right before drop off. It's just like the Portillos line and we ask you to take turns and be patient!
- Once you see the car supervision, your child will exit your car and walk in door #12 to the classroom. This is a "kiss and go" line. Please do not get out of your car. Our Supervisors will take good care of your child!
- Children MUST exit the car on the passenger side for their safety.
- At the end of the day, students will wait along the circle drive. They will walk to your car when you enter the single pick up lane.
- During the posted hours, you are not allowed to make a left hand turn out of the teacher parking lot.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Any changes in transportation must be communicated to the child's teacher AND the office, in writing. If you are making a change the day of, please call the school office BEFORE 2:30. Last minute changes create anxiety for our students and a potential wrong dismissal plan.
- We have significant supervision. Please know your child is in good hands. We have additional supervisors the first week of school to assure the safe arrival and dismissal of our students.

- If you are dropping off or picking up your child, you must use the circle drive as instructed above. You are not allowed to use the Granger parking lot.
- The front lot is for BUSES only. Cars are not allowed during arrival and dismissal.

Art / Music / PE

Each student will receive instruction in the following special areas:

Grades K-5 Art - 50 minutes total per week

Music - 50 minutes total per week

PE - 25 minutes three times per week

Hot Weather – If there is a heat advisory issued by either WGN or the National Weather Service, PE class will not administer any cardio testing or cardio activities

Necessary materials, supplies and gym shoes (rubber-soled “tennis shoes”) that cover their heels and toes are required to participate. Please refer to the supply list posted on the website.

Attendance

Gwendolyn Brooks staff will monitor each student's attendance and punctuality and inform parents or guardians of chronic absenteeism or truancy. Research indicates there is a direct correlation between consistent attendance and student achievement. Therefore, every attempt should be made to assure prompt attendance, barring illness.

The most efficient way to report an absence is in Parent Vue. Please use the notes section to indicate the reason for absence. (Example: Illness, vacation, family day) Families may also call the office at 375-3200, and then press #3 by 9:10 a.m. The school office will contact families of a student which has not been reported.

Before and After School Care

The Right At School Program provides day care on site. If you are interested in their service, please contact them directly at www.rightatschool.com/.

Birthdays

Each teacher recognizes our student birthdays within the classroom. In addition, our school recognizes all student birthdays by announcing names over the intercom system and giving a birthday pencil to each student. **No birthday treats or gifts (i.e. balloons) for students are permitted at school.** Invitations to birthday parties are to be handled by parents. Please do not send invitations to be handed out at school. This helps to avoid hurt feelings which result for those children who do not receive an invitation. We invite you to visit the LMC site for Birthday Book Club Information.

Book Fines

LMC/textbook fines will be indicated in Push Coin.

Breakfast

Free breakfast provided to all students under the Covid Act, has expired. Students who choose to eat breakfast at school will be charged on their account. Further information about breakfast and lunch can be found at the link below.

<https://www.ipdsd.org/Subpage.aspx/FoodServices>

Bus Expectations

Students are expected to demonstrate Tiger Pride on the bus, which is an extension of the school day. Safety, Respect and Responsibility are expected at all times. We review those specific bus expectations with our students each year. We use our Tiger Trait recognition system to acknowledge good behavior on the bus as well.

Bus Information

Bus numbers, along with pick up/drop off times will be published in Parent Vue in the middle of August.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Your child may have a cell phone or SMART watch at school. Phones should be silenced and in your child's bag. Smart watches should not be used during the school day to make calls or text. Parents will be notified if electronic devices become a distraction at school.

Chromebooks

Each student will have his or her own chromebook. Kindergarten students will leave their chromebooks at school to be charged each night. Students in grades 1-5 will bring them home each evening for charging.

Communication

It is crucial for our families to keep email addresses updated in Parent Vue. The majority of "whole school" communication occurs via email or website posts (www.brooks.ipdsd.org) . Each week, the Principal sends a weekly email message with important information and calendar dates.

Communicating Your Concerns

<http://www.ipdsd.org/Subpage.aspx/WhereToGo>

Digital Citizenship

Each year, your child will receive digital citizenship lessons which help students safely and effectively navigate the digital world. More specific information is available through your child's teacher.

Early Dismissal / Late Arrival

If your child will be arriving late to school or needs to leave early, please call the school office or send a note/email to the teacher AND office.

Extracurricular Clubs and Intramurals

There are two types of clubs/intramural activities. One is Brooks based; led by Brooks staff members. Examples include sports intramurals, chorus, art clubs, academic clubs, etc. In addition, third party vendors can rent space after school to provide enrichment activities for our students.

Food / Snacks / Water Bottles

Students are encouraged to bring a healthy snack each day. Each teacher provides time for his or her students to eat their snacks. Water bottles are also allowed. If a specific room has food allergies which require alternative snack choices, you will be notified.

Forgotten Items

If your child has forgotten items at home, the parent may drop them off after the start of the school day. Once buzzed in by the office, immediately inside door #1, you will find a shelving unit with slots designated for dropped off items. Please clearly label the item and put it in any open slot. The office staff will make sure items are delivered.

Grading and report cards

Grades are an evaluation of student achievement of grade level objectives. Teachers use frequent and ongoing evaluation tools in determining a student's grades. Report cards and math profile of progress can be accessed through Parent Vue.

Homework / Make-up Work

If a student is ill, the parent may request homework on the 3rd day of the absence. Make up work should be turned in within a reasonable timeframe following the child's return (usually 1-2 days for each absence. (District information coming about isolation cases)

If your child is vacationing, homework will be provided upon his or her return. Homework is not sent in advance of a vacation or travel schedule.

LMC (Library Media Center)

Please click on the link below to view a plethora of information about our LMC (library)

<https://sites.google.com/ipdsd.org/brooks-lmc/>

Lost and Found

We maintain a Lost and Found in our multi-purpose room. Students are frequently reminded to check the Lost and Found for missing items.

Lunch

Each grade level is assigned a lunch/recess period. It consists of 20 minutes for lunch and 15 minutes for recess. Free lunch for all, previously funded by the Covid Care Act, is no longer in place. Your child will either purchase a lunch each day or bring his/her own lunch to school. If your child will eat lunch at school, please use Push Coin to add money to his/her "Meal" account. Use the link below to view the menu so your child has selected a lunch choice prior to the start of the school day.

<https://www.ipsd.org/Subpage.aspx/FoodServices>

Money

Brooks uses Push Coin for all school related fees (field trips, birthday books ect.) Please do not send cash to school with your students.

Office Hours

The Brooks School Office is open Monday through Friday from 7:45-4:15

Parent Involvement

We fully encourage and welcome your participation in our efforts to make your child's experience at Brooks one that is educational, enjoyable, memorable, and successful. Please join us in a partnership by monitoring your child's academics at home, attending school functions and volunteering in our building. We welcome you to volunteer in our classrooms, LMC, and to support our building wide PTA efforts.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are an important part of the home/school partnership because parents can learn more about their child's progress and growth at school. Parent/teacher conferences offer two formal opportunities, one in the fall and one in the spring, for parents to obtain information about their child.

In the fall, you will receive an on-line link to sign up for conferences. Spring conference invitations typically include a letter from the teacher, if a conference is needed.

Please be reminded that these are "formal" conference times. You may contact your child's teacher at any time regarding questions or concerns.

PBIS Expectations

We believe that the most successful schools have teams of educators who actively teach students how to be respectful, define behavioral expectations, monitor and follow up on student behavior and acknowledge appropriate behavior. Therefore, at Gwendolyn Brooks School we have implemented a Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) system. PBIS is a proactive system approach to preventing and responding to classroom and school discipline problems. Emphasis is directed toward developing and maintaining safe learning environments where teachers can teach and students can learn. The purpose of the PBIS approach is to provide schools with the capacity for systematic planning and problem solving when preventing and responding to problem behavior.

As part of our PBIS system Brooks holds all students to three expectations:

1. Be Respectful
2. Be Responsible
3. Be Safe

Playground Guidelines

Every student has a lunchtime recess, weather permitting. In addition, all grade levels have unstructured time within their school day. Students may use the playground or recess equipment that is provided. If a child brings his/her own ball, we are not liable for its loss. Recess expectations are based on our school wide plan of safety, respect and responsibility. These expectations are reviewed and modeled by certified staff and the lunchroom supervisors.

Recess Conditions

All students are expected to go outside for recess unless otherwise indicated by weather conditions. Students will be going outside provided the temperature/wind chill is above 5 degrees. Decisions are made based on the information provided by the local weather service. It is important that students come prepared to go outside for recess each day. Appropriate clothing items are needed and are expected.

School Hours

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 7:45-4:15

Student Hours: M/T/Th/F 9:05-3:35

W 9:15-3:35

School Security

School staff are trained for various scenarios related to school safety. In addition, our students will participate in age appropriate crisis drills throughout the course of the school year. Thank you for reviewing and supporting the following:

- When visiting our building, **you must be buzzed in door #1**. State your name and reason for your visit. Directly enter the office to conduct your business. Parents/guardians are not allowed in the main section of the school if they have not signed in the office.
- While it may seem rude, close door #1 immediately behind you, even if other people are approaching the school. We will kindly let them in when we determine they are here on school business.
- All other school doors are locked during the school day.

Toys at School

Toys and trinkets should remain at home in order to avoid disruption to the educational environment.

Visitors/Volunteers

We value and appreciate volunteers. Please contact the school office about volunteer opportunities.

All volunteers are expected to:

- Sign and submit the Volunteer Application Form
- Sign in and wear a visitor tag while volunteering
- Maintain strict confidence about students and staff
- Refrain from using your cell phone while working with students