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Briarlake Elementary PTA Newsletter

First Week of School 2011-2012



*Welcome back Beavers! We are off to a fabulous start!
A few reminders as we all get back in the swing of things:*

Curriculum Night has been changed to Wednesday, August 24th. This is a parent only event so line up your childcare now! If you did not pay your PTA membership dues at Open House please email Christy Van Horn at christyvanhorn@mindspring.com. We kindly ask that each adult in the home join the PTA. \$5 per adult. We are proud to be one of the very few schools that has been able to boast 100% participation for many years. A strong PTA helps make our school exceptional, so let's keep it up!

If you did not purchase your planners and/or spelling dictionaries, please see Dana in the front office. These items, along with lots of other goodies, will also be for sale in the School Store which opens next Friday, 8/19. We have ordered additional Briarlake t-shirts which will be available to purchase at Curriculum Night and later at the School Store.

Drive-thru (formerly called "carpool") typically takes about 2 weeks to start running smoothly. We ask for your patience and understanding as buses learn their routes, teachers learn which students are riding or walking, and parents learn the ropes. Some reminders: 1) Turn cell phones off while on school property in the drive-thru line. 2) Do not turn left into our driveways - there are 'NO LEFT TURN' signs and we need to obey them. 3) Name signs will be sent home soon. Be sure to display them in your front windshield - idea...use a plastic skirt hanger to attach the sign to and hang it from the mirror while you are in the drive-thru line.

What's new? Check out all the details below.

Curriculum Night is coming August 24th. Note the date change and mark your calendars
Boosterthon Fun Run is coming soon!
PTA is looking for some good men and women - see below for Volunteer Opportunities!

PTA Officers:

Co-Presidents: Vanessa Erens & Sarah Cook
VP Programs: Elesha Mavrommatis & Melissa Forster-Green
VP Fundraising: Amy Kirsch & Lisa Spivack
Treasurer: Heather Leahy
Secretary: Trish McElfresh

News



Message from the Principal

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year! I want to take this opportunity to welcome you back to Briarlake Elementary and tell you how excited I am about the upcoming school year! I would also like to personally welcome all of our new families to Briarlake. We have planned a number of interesting educational activities and family events for this school year. You can see all of these wonderful events located in the Family Handbook on the 2011-2012 Briarlake Calendar of Events. We are very excited about our Fall Fundraiser! The Boosterthon Fun Run will not only raise money to enhance your child's learning but will teach your child lifelong skills focused around leadership, character and fitness!

I want to personally thank the faculty and staff for their dedication to Briarlake! They spent many countless hours working this summer to prepare for this school year. In addition we would like to welcome our

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[Briarlake Elementary Website](#)

[Briarlake School Calendar](#)

[DeKalb County Schools Website](#)



Important Dates

August

Wed., August 24
5-8 pm Curriculum Night

Thurs., August 25
1pm School Council Meeting

Sat., August 27
Campus Beautification Day

September

Monday, 9/5
No School-Labor Day holiday



newest family members to Briarlake:

Ms. Calhoun, S/PID Paraprofessional
Ms. Amanda Ward, Interrelated Teacher
Ms. Mary Buehl, Interrelated Teacher

Again, thank you for entrusting your children with us as we embark on this school year! Briarlake is a School of Excellence because of the caring, dedicated staff and the involved parents and larger school community. I look forward to working with you as we strive to provide the highest quality education that maximizes their potential and prepares them for the future! I look forward to getting to know each family. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at 678-874-2502.

Sincerely,
Ann Culbreath
Principal

Briarlake Elementary School Foundation

Your Briarlake Elementary School Foundation (BESF) will be holding two informational meetings on Tuesday August 30th 8-8:30am and Thursday September 1st 6:30-7:00pm. Please plan to attend and let your voice be heard. We will also be available during Curriculum Night. Thank you to everyone who stopped by the Open House booth and participated. We hope you are excited about the upcoming projects for the teachers and students. If you have not purchased your magnet, please visit the [website](#). We are striving for 100% participation.

Safe Routes to School

Thank you everyone who got the school year off on the right foot by walking to or from school. Did you notice our new walking path from Briarlake road around the back of the playground/parking lot and up to school behind the cafeteria? If you haven't walked to or from school yet, please give it a try. Studies show that children who walk to school are better behaved and perform better in school. And you find out the most information about your child's day as you walk home together.

Even if you can't walk all the way from home, you can still get the benefit of walking by parking on a neighborhood street and walking from there. On Monday, we counted 67 cars lined up in the afternoon drive thru line before the line even began to move! If you park on Silvestone and walk to school, it will take two minutes each way. This is much faster than waiting in a line of cars, and much better for the environment. For those of you who do wait in your cars, thank you for following the drive thru line rules and not using cell phones or texting while your car is on. We are looking forward to seeing you out of your car!

Keep Our Fish Happy

We are looking for a new parent or two that would like to help out with the school's fish tank. We are hoping to find someone that is not only willing to help out with it this school year but possibly take over the job next school year. Please contact our Fish Lady, [Heather Halligan](#), if you are interested. Our fish friends will thank you!!



Clean Air Campaign

Wow! Have you seen all the families walking to and from school this week? The weather is fine, and it's a great way to start off the year. Research shows that kids who walk to school are better able to focus and have a more positive attitude during the school day. Plus, it saves time and gas, provides a little quality time with the kids, and reduces air pollution. Keep it up!

Briarlake is officially a Clean Air Campaign school. If you do use the drive-thru lane, please turn your engine off until the line starts moving, and refrain from cell phone use to keep our kids safe.



Volunteer Opportunities

Siblings & the Bus

To minimize congestion and confusion in the halls at dismissal, please plan to have students meet their younger siblings at their buses rather than at their classrooms. We have bus logs that will be checked to ensure that every child who rides a bus gets on in the afternoon.

Briarlake Elementary
School
3590 LaVista Road
Decatur, GA 30033
Office: 678-874-2502
Clinic: 678-874-2507

Send email to :
[Briarlake PTA](#)



Anyone interested in joining a PTA committee?
Anyone want to have fun, make friends, be an active participant in their child's school? If you do, please join one or more of our PTA committees.

Committees include: Green Team, Fall Festival, Field Day, Book Fair, Used Book Sale, Science Team, Safe Routes to School, Hospitality, Teacher Appreciation, Building and Grounds, Fish Tank, School pictures and

MANY more!

Sign-up sheets will be available for the last time on Curriculum night or email the PTA anytime.



Spirit Wear

Due to popular demand, we have placed another order for the ringer-style shirts, so if you haven't already purchased your spirit wear, plan to bring cash or check to Curriculum Night on the 24th.

After Curriculum Night, shirts can be purchased

at the School Store. Supplies are limited so make sure you get yours now while the style and size selection is good. Shirts are \$12 each. Plan to wear spirit wear on Fridays, Spirit Days, field trips or anytime you just feel like showing your Beaver Pride!



Healthy Habits

During the chaos of a new school year, it's easy to put aside your best intentions. But now is the best time to start the year right by committing to healthy habits like plenty of exercise and good-for-you snacks. Starting a routine such as walking to school even one day a week can add up to real health benefits by the end of the year. Join the Healthy Habits email list by contacting

[Brigitte](#) and watch these e-blasts for tips and

volunteer opportunities throughout the year.

Events



Boosterthon Fun Run Coming - Sept. 15th

It's all about Fun, Fitness & Fundraising. Students get pledges towards the number of laps they will run at the fun run to raise much needed funds for the school. The two weeks leading up to the run, students learn about fitness, leadership skills and character building. This year's theme is Epic Adventure. The PTA has done a lot of research on this new fundraiser and talked with many other local schools that have already done it and everyone says "It was

a big success. The fun run was a blast for all the kids!" So get ready for a new and exciting way to support Briarlake Elementary. More information will be coming each week.

Curriculum Night - August 24

General Session: 5:50-6:05pm followed by 5 min break to get to next session

Session I: 6:10-6:55pm

* All homeroom and Special Area teachers will be available both sessions

* Fifth grade will meet in the Media Center

* Ms. Fields and Ms. McMillan will meet in Ms. McMillan's gifted classroom

* Administrative Team and Common Core State Standards Team Representatives will meet in Cafeteria (both sessions)

Session II: 7:00-7:45pm

*All sessions will be repeated

Walking School Bus

The Walking School Bus leaving from Briarlake Baptist Church will be on Wednesday mornings, rain or shine, departing at 7:45 a.m. for the 5-minute walk to school. This leaves plenty of time for students to arrive at school before class. Parents, students, siblings, doggies, etc. are all welcome to join us for the walk each week! For more information, please contact [Valerie Ringo](#).

Green Team

If you support helping our kids have a cleaner and healthier world through simple daily habits, you support the Green Team. We can really use your help even if it's once-in-a-while, evenings, and when you can. Especially needed is a recycling coordinator to help empty classroom paper bins and teachers' lounge recycling once a week. Email [Brigitte](#) to join our email list and see where you can fit in, or to volunteer for something specific.

Dekalb Emergency Preparedness Festival

For more information on the September festival see [attached](#).

Sincerely,

Vanessa & Sarah

Vanessa Erens & Sarah Cook , PTA Co-Presidents
Briarlake Elementary PTA

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Briarlake Elementary PTA | 3590 LaVista Road | Decatur | GA | 30033

