



**Brentwood  
Borough  
School  
District**



## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

BY DR. AMY M. BURCH

### Charting the Course and the Meaning of #Brentwoodproud!

Earlier this year a businessman asked me to join him for lunch. We were midway through our meal when he very pointedly posed the question, "What does it really mean to be #Brentwoodproud?" I nearly choked on my chicken avocado salad. Living in Brentwood for ten years and working in the district for nearly twelve, I thought everyone knew that answer! I cleared my throat and quickly realized from his blank expression that he truly did not know about the amazing people and extensive district program offerings. This lunch conversation combined with a board member's participation in a statewide conference led to the birth of Charting the Course.

The Board of School Directors and the Administration have been discussing facility and programming needs for the past two years. Recognizing the importance of including the community in the process approximately one hundred people were invited to our Charting the Course event held in the Spring. The evening included a tour of the middle/high school building, a performance from our high school musical students, and a joint presentation from the Board and the Administration.

The comment most prevalent in the feedback we received was to provide regular updates on the process.

#### ■ IMPROVING THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

The District has been a leader in safety and security in the region. Sallyports were installed several years ago to assist with the visitor access in each of the buildings. Security cameras monitor activity throughout the district. Emergency drill training has been offered to teachers, support staff, administration, and students. Moving forward discussions about the type of replacement windows, especially at the lower levels of the buildings are taking place. Additional cameras will be installed throughout the buildings. School police officers will continue to circulate through the buildings and will also offer classes to our students and staff.

#### ■ REPAIRING AND REPLACING BUILDING ENVELOPES

The most recent renovations took place in the late 1990's. This past year our buildings sustained significant damage from the severe weather. The impact on our buildings was so severe that it caused the district to close for a day. The roofs, windows, doors, and masonry need replaced or repaired at all three buildings. The Board and Administration have been intimately involved in the selection of materials to ensure that the repairs will last for at least thirty years. Phase one of the renovations will take place this summer. The Message from the School Board highlights more in-depth the current condition of the facilities and the summer plans to address the roof at the middle/high school, waterproofing at Moore elementary, and upgrades to the district-wide fire and

phone systems. We encourage the public to attend our monthly board meetings to ask questions and learn more about Charting the Course.

#### ■ STRENGTHENING THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

We also devoted time to reflect on what the District was doing well. We discovered that our alumni have gone on to become attorneys, public school administrators, sports and entertainment media reporters, soldiers, health care professionals, medical professionals, business owners, Fulbright scholars, college athletes, and tradesmen. The Brentwood Borough SD encourages students to pursue their passions and assists with the transition to post-secondary education which may require attendance at a four-year college, two-year college, technical education, or military enlistment. We are seeing an increase number of our students directly enter the workforce because they obtained their certifications and applied for their licenses after attending Steel Center.

Moving forward we recognize our students' interest in exploring newly formed jobs and careers. To meet those demands we must strengthen our educational programming. At the elementary levels we are redesigning the special schedule to operate on a six-day rotation. This will begin with the 2019-2020 school year. The goal is to promote Science Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) opportunities across the curriculum and not in silos. We are encouraging teachers to co-plan and co-teach across content areas. At the middle and high school, we

are adding computer science classes. In the last two years the number of students participating in computer science classes will grow from nine to 275. Through the NMSI grant we were able to increase our AP course offerings. These programs complement our traditional course offerings in math, English and science. Finally, our collaboration with Steel Center for Career and Technical education has creating more career opportunities for our students.

## ■ IMPROVING THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The District must maintain the interior of the buildings. Classrooms are in desperate need of painting, updated flooring, and other general repairs. Our new courses require nontraditional furniture and equipment. Our library space will be updated to enable our students to better access online resources and multimedia equipment. Our plans include further developing our cyber program which could be housed in the middle/high school library.

#Brentwoodproud is the culmination of our entire school community. Administrators establish the framework of curriculum and the professional and support staffs are instrumental in its implementation. The families and students are the reason we exist. The best answer to the businessman's question came from a collection of students when they said:

*"Brentwood is the only school where I can play football and perform in the band at halftime."*

*"We are so close that I know all of my classmates and when someone needs help, everyone pitches in."*

*"My teachers are kind, are willing to listen, and give advice." "They care about us as people."*

*"I am able to design a personalized schedule where I can go to Steel Center in the morning and then return to Brentwood to participate in sports and clubs."*

*"I started my schooling in a larger school district. When I moved to Brentwood, everyone was so nice and welcoming. I didn't feel lost. I never felt that before."*

*"My classes at Brentwood helped me to travel to a place in the world that I would never have been able to go on my own. I will always remember that!"*

Acknowledging our students' successes is what makes us #Brentwoodproud!

Another academic year is finishing up, yet construction work will just be starting as our district begins necessary renovations to our facilities. These many projects will take years to complete, as we have to work around the school year to ensure safety of our students and staff. Your school board is working closely with the administration and architects, engineers, and consultants to make this process proceed as efficiently as possible. We will have some inconveniences at times, but the result will be a school district ready and prepared for generations of students.

Our first round of bond funding has been completed, and the timing was very good for securing investors at a great rate. We saved hundreds of thousands of dollars in interest over what had been expected, reducing the borrowing amount for Phase 1. Part of the savings was also generated by an upgraded rating by Standard & Poors, which resulted from our conscious efforts to improve the budgeting process and carefully review spending in our district. We especially thank our business manager, Jennifer Pesanka, for her exceptional work in tracking our finances and planning for this huge undertaking.

The first projects for this summer will address some of the district's emergency capital improvements needed because of flooding and the poor condition of our roofs. Those will be mostly unseen, yet very necessary before other renovations to our facilities. In the fall, a more visible renovation will occur in the current middle school gym with the addition of replacement bleachers and scoreboards. These upgrades will enable the district to make this the primary gymnasium for events. This gives us more flexibility to host WPIAL contests, almost doubles the number of spectators that can attend events, and our plan is to make it more accessible through access to the park parking lots. All projects are done through competitive bidding, to assure that we are getting the best prices available.

If you want to hear more of our plans, we invite you to attend the monthly public-school board meetings, and the schedule of meetings is found on the school website. While there is always routine business to transact, we are happy to hear comments and feedback from the citizens of Brentwood.



ROOFING



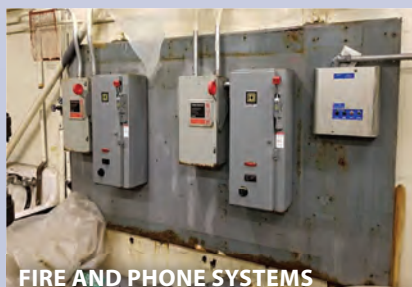
ROOFING



WATERPROOFING



WATERPROOFING



FIRE AND PHONE SYSTEMS



MIDDLE SCHOOL GYM FLOOR



# Preparing Your Child for Kindergarten

Let's face it: Kindergarten isn't what it used to be. The following list is intended to help prepare your child in a variety of developmental areas to make the transition into kindergarten as smooth as possible. Believe it or not, just 15-20 minutes of playing and learning with your child can make a world of difference!

## SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Encourage your child to persist in tasks when encountering a problem by giving him tasks slightly above his current ability level. When your child cannot find a solution on his own, encourage him to calmly ask for help.
- Play board games to practice taking turns.
- Set up several play dates with friends of various ages.
- Allow your child to stay with other trusted adults for a few hours at a time prior to kindergarten (especially if she has rarely been in the care of someone other than mom and dad).
- Tell your child you expect her to clean up after play. You could implement a ransom box for toys left out like this one: [www.madsmemories.blogspot.com/2009/08/moms-ransom-rubbage.html](http://www.madsmemories.blogspot.com/2009/08/moms-ransom-rubbage.html)

## LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

- Verbally give your child specific one-step and two-step directions and encourage him to follow through.
- Read to your child for a combined total of at least 20 minutes each day.
- While reading, point out how to hold a book (right-side up with the spine on the left) and the orientation in which we read the words and look at the pictures (left to right).
- After reading, ask your child what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the story.
- Give your child plenty of opportunities to draw (without coloring books). Ask her to draw the things she sees around her.
- Teach your child the uppercase and lowercase letters and, most importantly, the sounds each letter makes through play and games. Need some ideas? Go here: [www.icanteachmychild.com/alphabet](http://www.icanteachmychild.com/alphabet)

## COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Have your child help you sort items according to color, size, and shape (laundry, blocks, silverware, toys, and other household items work well).
- Teach your child to make various patterns (red, blue, red, blue). Garage sale dot stickers or craft pom-poms are great for this purpose.
- Practice counting aloud to 20 while driving in the car.
- Talk about opposite words (big/little, empty/full, slow/fast)

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT (GROSS & FINE MOTOR)

- Give your child plenty of opportunities for outdoor play: running, jumping, and climbing.
- Play catch on a regular basis.
- Practice skipping.



- Stack blocks together.
- Let your child use child-safe scissors to cut out a variety of shapes.
- Teach your child to write his name (capital for the first letter and lowercase for the remaining letters). To start, write his name using a highlighter and encourage him to trace over it. Be sure that he forms the letters from the top to the bottom.
- Ensure your child is holding her pencil correctly: [www.icanteachmychild.com/2012/06/correct-pencil-grip/](http://www.icanteachmychild.com/2012/06/correct-pencil-grip/)
- Play with playdough regularly. Roll, squish, stamp, and even cut it!
- Encourage your child to cut out various shapes using child-safe scissors.
- String large beads to make a necklace.
- Play with an interlocking puzzle together.

## CREATIVE ARTS

- Always encourage pretend play...occasionally join your child in his fantasy world.
- Teach your child to recognize the following colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, white, brown, and pink. For help, go to: [www.icanteachmychild.com/colors](http://www.icanteachmychild.com/colors)
- Use a variety of materials to let your child paint, draw and explore!

The year before kindergarten is also the time for parents and teachers to think about a child's strengths, talents, weaknesses, and personality as well as how that information will be passed on to the child's new school. Social skills such as feeling comfortable in a group, asking for help when it's needed and knowing personal information (such as name, age, gender) are important skills for young children to develop as they get ready for school. We are looking forward to meeting your Kindergartener.

## Brentwood Borough School District's Little Spartan Kinder Camp

Due to its past success, Brentwood's Little Spartan Kinder Camp will be held again this summer. As our young learners transition to kindergarten, we want to focus on building their self-confidence and fostering their enthusiasm for learning. In preparation for those opening days of school, the Little Spartan Kinder Camp will provide our youngest learners time to familiarize themselves with their new school.

The Little Spartan Kinder Camp is a two week-long learning experience. Children will participate in typical kindergarten classroom activities/routines, tour the school buildings, and learn about their new classmates. This program is free and open to all incoming students who are registered for kindergarten at Elroy Elementary School or Moore Elementary School. More information about the camp is given during kindergarten registration.



## Elroy Moore and the Middle School Children's Choice Awards

The Brentwood Borough School District was represented by several students at the Children's Choice Awards (CCA) and are run by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit and the Carnegie Library for students in Allegheny County. This event is a celebration and mini-competition for students who love to read. Each year, students, librarians, and teachers vote to select a recommended book list. "Sweep: The Story of a Girl and Her Monster", by Jonathan Auxier, "The Cardboard Kingdom", by Chad Shell, and "Ghost Boys", by Jewel Parker Rhodes, were among some of the favorite books the students read.

After preparing for months, teams from Elroy Elementary, Moore Elementary, and Brentwood Middle School attended the event at Soldiers and Sailor's Hall with GATE teachers, Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Rodriguez. The groups listened to one of the authors, Jonathan Auxier, speak, and also had the opportunity to participate in a STEM activity with volunteers from PBS. One of the teams from Elroy brought home the silver medal from the "Battle of the Books"!

Students who attended from Elroy Elementary:

**Gavin Cornell, Ryan Hull, Rai Levino, Justin Melvin, Logan Metzger, Josh Peters, and Zoe Stromberg.**

Students who attended from Moore Elementary:

**Jocelyn Aston-Reece, Fawn Brendel, Madalyn Bumba, Abbey Fickley, Hudson McKain, Sabnam Pradham, Allison Schruben, and Meghan Schruben.**

Students who attended from Brentwood Middle School:

**Ryan Handlovitch, Joe Klemm, Kyra Laur, Quinn Mc Cormick**

Silver Medal Winners: **Gavin Cornell, Ryan Hull, and Justin Melvin**



## Summer Time Learning

The end of the school year is here, and the smell of sun-tan lotion and chlorine quickly fill our lives. A new school year will begin before we know it. However, during the interim of summer, many kids are at high risk for various negative conditions. Some of these setbacks include knowledge and skills lost, and the loss of structured time. During the summer, it is most likely that all parents will hear the phrase "I'm bored."

There are many summer activities for kids throughout local communities that include public pools, library reading programs, plays and more. Parents can check into their community summer offerings by visiting the local website for resources. For those kids who are not in school or do not attend day camp, below are some fun ideas and free activities to help keep kids busy while encouraging their love for learning.

**Learn how to write a song:**

<http://www.robinfrederick.com/write.html>

**Brain teasers:**

<http://brainconnection.positscience.com/brain-teasers/>

**Become a photographer:**

<http://www.betterphoto.com/photography-for-kids.asp>

**Visit a virtual farm:**

<http://www.sites.ext.vt.edu/virtualfarm/>

**Create a website (yes, this is HTML for kids):**

<http://www.lissaexplains.com/>

**Take a free class about anything interesting:**

<https://www.khanacademy.org/>

**Learn about new sports:**

<http://www.sikids.com/>

**Learn new outdoor games:**

<http://www.gameskidsplay.net/>

**Write a fairy tale:**

[http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/fractured\\_fairy.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/fractured_fairy.htm)

**Create your own holiday:**

[http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/lesson/lesson018.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson018.shtml)

**FREE SUMMER ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS AT LOCAL STORES:**

**Home Depot's Free Workshops (free tickets to events here too):**

[http://workshops.homedepot.com/workshops/?pn=HT\\_WS\\_KidsWorkshops](http://workshops.homedepot.com/workshops/?pn=HT_WS_KidsWorkshops)

**Pottery Barn Kids' Workshops:**

<http://www.potterybarnkids.com/customer-service/store-events.html>

**Apple Store:**

Kids Learn How To Make A Movie: <http://www.apple.com/retail/camp/notify.html>

**Free Museum Ticket:**

<http://museums.bankofamerica.com/>

**Barnes and Noble Online Storytime:**

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/u/online-storytime-books-toys/379003588>

**Kids Bowl Free:**

<http://www.kidsbowlfree.com/>

Summer is a time for kids to play outside, discover nature, and spend time with friends. Kids should have a great amount of free play-time, while enjoying the natural wonders of childhood, playing games and making memories.

## The Importance of Reading for Fun!

A recent report from Scholastic found that the number of students who are reading for fun peaks at second grade and then declines. This is a troubling and concerning finding given the importance of reading. Third grade is a pivotal grade for reading as it marks the shift from learning how to read to then reading to learn. Once students leave third grade they should be able to use reading as a path to learning new things and they should be choosing reading for a leisure time activity. The report found that as children get older, fewer see reading as something to do to for fun and in turn, they are reading less. This trend can negatively impact a student's ability to learn as those who read more learn more and those who read less tend to get left behind.

How do we help kids see reading as an activity for pleasure? There are several ways that we can help children stay interested in reading. One motivator can be letting them select their own reading material; although kids may need help finding a book of interest to them. You do not need to push a child to read a difficult book; let them read a graphic novel or a good comic book. Chapter books and storybooks are some of the most popular formats for students. Magazines are also great options for students. E-books are also emerging as an engaging genre for kids. Almost all students agree that their most favorite type of book is one that they pick out themselves. Children who are frequent readers say they like to read as it helps them understand the world. Reading can also make it easier for them to talk about and understand the world around them.

Other ways to motivate children to read are to model reading for pleasure and to expose students to many print materials. Having access to books is a great way to encourage kids to read. This may mean taking one day a week and visiting the library to check out some new books. Perhaps ask the librarian to help your child pick out a good series or topic of interest as children sometimes struggle with finding interesting books. You may also want to consider setting aside 20 minutes each day where everyone in the house sits down and reads together!

With summer upon us, it is important to encourage children to put down their devices and read even if only for a few minutes each day. Reading helps children connect to their world, communities, and families. Books can open children up to new experiences and teach them about themselves and others. Try to find a few moments to go to the library and pick out some books - for both you and your child and see where a good story can take you!



# New Sunscreen Law

Sunscreen has always been considered an over the counter medication by the FDA and many schools restricted the use of sunscreen during school hours for that reason. Act 105 of 2018, sunscreen self-carry and self-apply was signed into law as of Oct 2018, which allows a student to carry FDA approved non-aerosol sunscreen to school, provided it can be self-applied, without a note from the doctor.

Because of this new law, the Department of Education created a Non-Aerosol Topical Sunscreen form that will only require a parent signature and will be kept on file in the health office for the current school year. Any student carrying sunscreen must have a form on file and the form will need to be updated each school year. To make this simple for our families, the Brentwood nurses have posted all the medical forms families would need under their health service page on the Brentwood Borough web site which can be found at [bb-sd.com](http://bb-sd.com). During the summer when sunscreen is on everyone's mind, parents can go to the web page, download the form, sign it and turn it in at the beginning of each school year, along with any other form their child may need for that school year.



So, what happens if your child cannot carry and self- apply their own sunscreen? If you have some concerns about your child being able to apply their own sunscreen, your child can certainly use sunscreen at school, but instead of using the parent form, you must then use our original medication administration consent form that can also be downloaded off the health service page of our website. This form needs to be signed by your physician and brought into school along with the sunscreen of your choice. The sunscreen will be kept in the health office for use as needed.

Our Brentwood health service page is a valuable tool for your child's health and wellness. It is a great way to find out who the nurse is in your child's building and how you can contact her. Our web page has updated medication, physical and dental forms. We have immunization information, along with all the medical requirements mandated by the Commonwealth of PA specific to each grade. Information detailing health offerings such as the flu vaccine, reducing your child's risk of getting the flu, symptoms of strep throat, and information about lice are all available on our page. We update our site as needed to include general wellness guidelines to keep parents of Brentwood informed of current concerns or facts regarding health issues or injury prevention.

We have recently updated our site with a new Food allergy & Anaphylaxis emergency care plan forms, and new Asthma Action/ Medication forms. These forms will be used for all students who require EpiPens or inhalers at school. We also have a new self-carry form if your child would need to carry



their own inhaler or EpiPen. This form would only need a parent signature and will replace the self-carry medication form we have used in the past. We will begin to use these forms for the 2019-20 school year and they will replace the medication forms that we previously used for inhalers and EpiPens.

Our general medication administration consent form can be used for all other medications, both prescription and over the counter. These forms must be completed by the parent and signed by the physician and must be updated each school year.

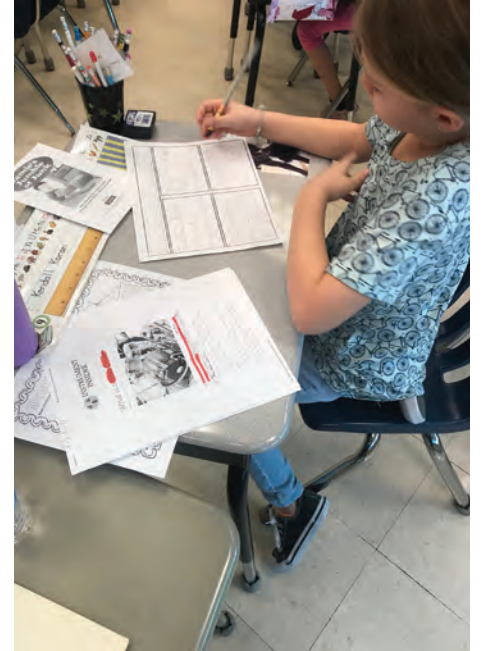
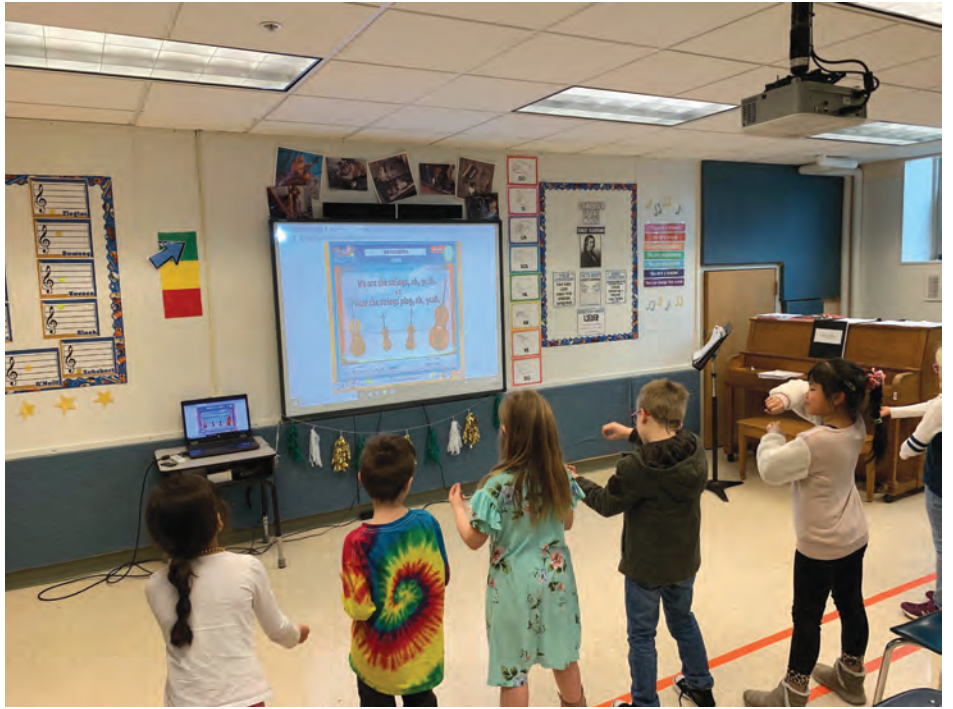
Tylenol, Tums, and Ibuprofen are considered standing orders and are signed for by our school physician, Dr. Pittle, requiring only parent permission. This can be done by completing the student medical form in Skyward which can also be found on the Brentwood Borough web site. When completing this form, it is important to have the most up to date information so that we may contact parents regarding a child's health status, parental permission, or give emergency instructions for an injury.

We hope that after reading this article you will visit the Brentwood Borough Web page at [bb-sd.com](http://bb-sd.com), click on the health services page and check out our new site, which contains the new information, links and forms. We look forward to a wonderful, healthy school year ahead and encourage everyone to use sunscreen as an important step in preventing skin cancer in the future.

# Cross-Curricular Learning

Teachers across all content areas need to continue to work together to maximize connections for student learning. Isolated learning and instruction are not always the best method for student success.

Cross-curricular learning is happening here, and the teachers are enthusiastic about collaboration. Because our instructors have so eagerly embraced working together, Moore Elementary's first grade has greatly increased its understanding of the four instrument families (string, woodwind, brass, percussion). Mr. Sherman's music class discussed a number of instruments and how they are classified. Mrs. Gironé's art class and Mrs. D. Baker's computer class came together for a STEAM IS4I project, for which the students constructed instruments with a variety of materials. Mrs. Cosner's library class had the students research instruments and mark important facts they found. Mr. O'Connor's gym class engaged in "Drum" yoga as a way to explore the percussion family. Mrs. Steigerwald's, Mrs. Schubert's and Mrs. Vinay's classes had the students engage in a writing project that entailed creating a graphic organizer, editing a first draft, and completing a final paragraph. Students learned how to write a paragraph using a topic sentence, three detail sentences, and a concluding sentence.



**Visit Our Website:**

**[www.bb-sd.com/mooreelementary\\_home.aspx](http://www.bb-sd.com/mooreelementary_home.aspx)**

Don't forget to check out the school website this summer for important up-dates and information. Teachers will have class supply lists posted there. In addition, the web site has a copy of the student handbook and important reminders for families regarding arrival, dismissal and absences. You can even find pictures of all of the fun events that went on this past school year!



## Elroy Elemenatry Kids Of Steel Team

Students in third through fifth grade at Elroy Elementary are taking part in a new youth running program called Kids of Steel. Throughout the program students set exercise goals and created a lifelong love of fitness. The program consisted of students training and running. At the end of the program they accumulated 26.2 miles, the length of a full marathon. Students were offered the opportunity to complete the program at the Kids' Marathon with a 1.2 mile course. The Kids Marathon is one of the largest kid's races in the country. For more information, visit <https://kidsofsteel.org/> to check out the Kids of Steel program, and all the races available.



## Earth Day Poster Contest

The 5th graders at Elroy Elementary took part in an Earth Day Poster Contest sponsored by The National Energy Technology Laboratory in South Park. Students in neighboring schools from grades K-5 were invited to design an original and imaginative theme-based poster to help the NETL spread the word about Earth Day 2019. Eva Pasquarelli showcased this year's theme: "Protect Our Earth, Care for Its Creatures" in a very creative way. Eva's poster won second place and will be displayed at the U.S. Department of Energy headquarters in Washington, D.C. and all NETL sites. Her poster will also be posted on The Earth Day page of NETL's Education website. Please make sure to look at Eva's poster.





## Brentwood Borough School District Partners with PPG to Explore STEM-Related Careers

The Educators and Corporations: Partnership for STEM Learning (ECP), funded through the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and facilitated by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit's Math & Science Collaborative, has allowed a team of Brentwood educators to witness real-life examples of how mathematics, literacy, science and engineering practices featured in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and the International Standards for Technology Education (ISTE) are utilized in the PPG corporation. To begin our partnership, a group of teachers and administrators traveled to Springdale, PA to tour the PPG plant and meet with employees of various careers. The Brentwood team learned about the numerous career pathways one could follow within the PPG organization from the vocational trades of welding, HVAC, and plumbing to the college and graduate level careers of computer programming, chemistry, and chemical engineering. Following the visit, the Brentwood team interviewed community and district stakeholders to better understand the perception of STEM learning in the community, the district's strengths/

needs, and recommendations for future learning opportunities.



Currently, the ECP team of PPG and Brentwood staff are in the planning phase of creating student-centered activities and job-shadowing opportunities to be implemented during the next two school years. PPG has stated that their success is "built on a culture of continuous learning and investment in structured development of programs that support career advancement. Employees are encouraged to learn and grow in their current roles and prepare for new challenges and opportunities." To that end, our goal is to foster the idea of continuous learning and growth while simultaneously providing STEM-related career exposure and exploration for our Brentwood students.

## German PenPals

Brentwood's German II classes were delighted to receive a large brown envelope from Nurnberg (Nuremberg) Germany. It just so happens that a teacher in Nurnberg's Sigena Gymnasium (a preparatory school) is a former German language student from Brentwood and the envelope contained response letters from her Nurnberg students. Victoria Healy who is the Nurnberg teacher and Cindy Hebestreit, the Brentwood German teacher decided this year to begin a Brieffreund (penpal) activity between the two schools.

The Brentwood students laughed as they learned all about the students from Nurnberg. Most of Victoria's students come from other countries such as Bosnia, Turkey, Kosovo and Russia and all the penpal writers soon learned that each had many similar interests such as rappers, the TV show Riverdale and Fortnite. Nearly all the students included an Instagram address with their written letter and with that, opened up even more opportunities to communicate.





## What is the NOCTI Exam?

Steel Center for Career and Technical Education (CTE) has become a popular choice for students who wish to pursue career fields early. There are a variety of programs and options for students to take. One of the best features that Steel Center CTE offers is the option for students to earn industry credentials that can transfer to their careers. This is a fantastic benefit to students to get an early start on their accreditation. May is a significant month of testing for all schools and Steel Center for CTE is no exception.



One of the ways that students can earn industry certification is through participation in the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute better known as NOCTI. The NOCTI exams were established in 1966 by the US Commissioner of Education. NOCTI was created to establish a third party CTE assessment for states. Steel Center for CTE for example, is mandated to have a third-party assessment to measure student growth and outcomes based on the industry standards and credentials. The NOCTI exam has been the most popular and standardized way of measuring student performance. The goal of NOCTI is to provide a valid and standardized evaluation tool to measure student employability in CTE programs.

According to Kern (2009), NOCTI provides over 170 standardized technical assessments in a variety of occupational fields. The test is comprised of two parts. The first part is a written exam focused on the career area. The second portion of the test is a performance task. The students are required to have content knowledge as well

as being able to perform tasks in their career field. Kern (2009) also reported that CTE students who score at or above the prescribed benchmark on the written and performance sections of a NOCTI test pass may receive the Pennsylvania Skills Certificate. Students who take one of the other Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) approved tests are also eligible to earn a Pennsylvania Skills Certificate.

Other PDE approved assessments and certifications include industry specific groups such as Cisco, CompTIA, ASE, Penn DOT, Pennsylvania Department of State, State Board of Cosmetology, Personal Protection Consultants and many others. PDE developed the Pennsylvania Skills Certificate to recognize career and technical education students who have demonstrated above average skills and knowledge in their chosen occupational field. Results are also used to create accountability for the School



Performance Funding initiative. The Pennsylvania Skills Certificate was ultimately established to enable students to prove their job skill competence to potential employers.

Brentwood Students who pass the NOCTI exam have all of the opportunities that have been discussed. The NOCTI exam is truly a test that matters for Steel Center CTE students and one that is beneficial to their chosen career fields. Steel Center for CTE works diligently to prepare students for these exams and takes great pride when students are successful.



## Dr. Larry Kushner Memorial Scholarship Awarded at Brentwood Middle School

Jamie Kurtz, an 8th grader at Brentwood Middle School was selected as the first recipient of the newly established "Dr. Larry Kushner Memorial Scholarship".

Dr. Kushner was vital in developing the first true middle school in the Brentwood Borough School District and served as the Principal of the middle school from 1999-2011. Unfortunately, after a courageous battle with cancer, Dr. Kushner passed away in February 2019 at the young age of 64. The annual memorial scholarship was established by Dr. Kushner's family, friends, and colleagues to honor his memory and celebrate all of the contributions he made to the school district and particularly to the students and staff at Brentwood Middle School.

Jamie was chosen for the scholarship from a group of 9 amazing applicants who wrote essays describing important life lessons they've learned in the middle school, including themes such as responsibility, honesty, and "being yourself". All 9 applicants attended a breakfast with the middle school staff members who served on the scholarship committee as well as members of Dr. Kushner's family. Dr. Kushner's brother, Terry, thanked the students for their efforts in applying for the scholarship before presenting Jamie with the award. Jamie will be using the funds from the scholarship to attend the Pittsburgh CLO program "Into the Woods, Jr." this summer!

The Brentwood Middle School staff would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the scholarship fund and allowed us to keep Dr. Kushner's memory alive by providing a wonderful learning opportunity to one of our students!



## Brentwood Middle School 7th Graders Become the Teachers

"You really don't understand something unless you can explain it to a second grader" and "We truly learn 95% of what we teach others." These two axioms were on full display as 7th graders from Brentwood Middle School led an 'Astronomy Extravaganza' for 2nd grade students at Moore Elementary School.

Middle school science teacher Kristin Papariello came up with the idea for the event and worked with Leslie Miller from Moore Elementary to bring the students together. The 7th graders choose "big ideas" from their astronomy unit and used Power Point presentations and hands-on demonstrations to teach the content to their young audience as they rotated from one station to the next. Some of astronomy topic that were explored were Ocean Tides, Moon Phases, Solar and Lunar Eclipses, and How Rockets Work.



After the small group presentations, the elementary students had the opportunity to explore the world of augmented reality through the use of merge cubes. Nick Caponi, 7th grade social studies teacher at the middle school, has used the devices in his classroom and was excited to share them with the students from Moore. When viewed through a Smart phone camera, the merge cubes allow 3D imagery to appear and the students were able to explore a model of the solar system and access information about each planet with a simple tap of the screen.

A special thank you to Ms. Papariello, Mr. Caponi, Mrs. Miller, and especially to the 7th grade students from Brentwood Middle School and the 2nd grade students from Moore Elementary for a wonderful day of fun and learning!

## LEAD Assembly at Brentwood

Social media, drugs and alcohol, bullying...these are all issues that can present challenges for kids as they navigate through their teenage years.

Allegheny County District Judge Ron Arnoni and National Youth Speaker and author Brad Killmeyer addressed each of these topics during a recent presentation for students in grades 8-12 at Brentwood Middle/High School. As a Brentwood graduate and former mayor of Brentwood, Judge Arnoni told the students that he feels a special obligation to help them make good decisions and avoid the negative consequences that poor decisions can bring.

Judge Arnoni and Mr. Killmeyer recently established the LEAD program to "inspire students to achieve their goals." The acronym LEAD stands for Leadership, Education, Accountability, and Direction. During the assembly, Judge Arnoni and Mr. Killmeyer used statistics, videos, and real life situations to educate the students about the impact that their decisions can have on themselves as well as their friends and families. In addition to discussing the dangers of negative behaviors, Judge Arnoni and Mr. Killmeyer also presented the students with the 5 D's that they consider "Keys to Success": Direction, Distractions, Decisions, Discipline, and Development.

After the presentation, the students had an opportunity to ask questions of the guest speakers. When asked his favorite part of being a judge, Mr. Arnoni responded that this position provides him with an opportunity to help people. By taking time to meet with students across the region to present the LEAD program, Judge Arnoni and Mr. Killmeyer are certainly making an effort help students to be their best!



## Brentwood Middle School Students Offer Solutions

A group of 8th graders (Lindon Arboleda, Katelynn Handa, Jamie Kurtz, Rachel Levandowski, Myranda Mackoff, Kenny Pfeil, Gabrielle Sedlar, Rylee Sell, Candler Smith, and Sam Tujague) at Brentwood Middle School participated in an essay contest where they were asked to offer solutions to address veteran homelessness in our communities. The essay contest was sponsored by American Legion Post #935 in Baldwin. Student solutions covered a broad range of topics including things like creating new social programs for veterans, attempting to increase the role of American Legions in local communities, and focusing on the mental health of veterans as they reintegrate to civilian life. Students worked to complete the essays on their own time; all materials and requirements were made available to them electronically using Microsoft Teams. This allowed students to work on their essays when it was convenient for them and did not interfere with other extracurricular activities or school-related functions. Students stayed after school one day to complete peer reviews of the essays; showing a true team approach even though their essays would be judged against their peers' work. The students would like to send a special "thank you" to Big Guys Pizza (3600 Brownsville Road; 412-892-9672) who donated pizzas for students during their peer review session.





## Artist

Bailey Wertz (10th grade) student received two Gold keys and One Silver key in the highly prestigious Scholastic Arts and Writing competition. She was recognized at a ceremony at CCAC North. Her artwork hung at an art show at CCAC among other students in our region. Due to her achievements, she qualifies for the opportunity to go to a national competition in New York City. We are so proud of Bailey and look forward to her future with us at Brentwood.



## Brittney Cook and Quintasia Streeter Honored at SHASDA Conference

Each year the South Hills Area School District Association (SHASDA) holds an annual conference where students are honored with the SHASDA Extra Effort Award. SHASDA has long recognized that there are students who come through our schools who face obstacles and challenges that not every student face as they make their way through high school. Often these students are not recognized by the conventional honors, so SHASDA established this annual award to give credit to students who have worked hard to be successful in their respective schools. The philosophy for the award has remained the same. This award recognizes students who have demonstrated significant improvement in student performance and/or have overcome obstacles in attaining their present status. The criteria may include improvement in grades, achievement test scores, attendance and outstanding improvements in academics as well as the practical and fine arts. This year Brentwood High School was pleased to honor Brittney Cook and Quintasia Streeter. Brittney is going to pursue a degree in child care following high school. Quintasia



**Brittney Cook**



**Quintasia Streeter**

is planning on pursuing further education in criminal justice with the hopes of becoming an attorney. We wish Brittney and Quintasia the best of luck as they move on from Brentwood High School.

## Tell Me a Digital Story



Hunter Donovan is a student on a mission with a passion for Broadcast Media. He is working hard and demonstrating initiative in seeking out local resources to help propel him toward his goal of a successful career in broadcast media. As a student at Brentwood High School, he enrolled in the district's art, yearbook, newspaper, and video production classes but he knew wanted to learn more.

A friend told him about an organization called the Steeltown Entertainment Project and Hunter looked further into the group based in the South Side of Pittsburgh. Steeltown Entertainment supports film and digital media arts in Pittsburgh. Their mission is to bridge art and industry with a pathway from education to employment. According to the company's website, they develop diverse content creators with training, mentoring, equipment and networking opportunities.

Hunter had to apply to be a part of the organization. He interviewed, was accepted, and he has worked with the company for the past year and a half on a three day a week basis. Hunter states that what he likes most about the program is the social environment and developing friendships with like-minded creative people. There are other students in the program who come from several other local school districts who are interested in media and entertainment-related careers.

Steeltown Film Academy draws on its partnership with teaching artists and professional mentors to teach a curriculum of the basics of digital media arts – what they refer to as SCALE: storytelling, camera, audio, lighting, and editing. The curriculum is more than 100 hours of hands-on and collaborative learning and uses

the latest digital media technology. Each class produces their own short film by the end of the session.

Upon successful completion of a Steeltown Film Academy, students can apply to the Steeltown Teen Film Crew. The Teen Film Crew gets paid while they continue to build their skills creating promotional videos for clients. The teaching artists work with the students as a team – just as they would in a professional agency. The Teen Film Crew can be hired by clients in the Pittsburgh community who are looking to get a message out to the public.

Hunter is also involved with Reel Teens: Pittsburgh. The Reel Teens: Pittsburgh is a web series created by high school students with a passion for film and digital media arts. Students are from different schools, different neighborhoods—showing you Pittsburgh through their eyes. The Reel Teens were recognized at the Elly Awards which honor filmmakers in Pittsburgh. Several of the Steeltown Entertainment videos can be viewed on YouTube.

At the age of 17, Hunter is fast on his way to achieving his career goals. He plans to attend a post secondary program to further hone his craft. He is busy taking SATs and completing college applications, but he has many great experiences and professionally developed projects to reflect in his resume and professional portfolio.

## CALLING ALL SUPERHEROES

In honor of Autism Awareness month, Easterseals hosted a SUPERHERO PARADE. The day was designed to celebrate special needs students, their parents, and the teachers who work with these special youngsters. Easterseals operates three area schools in the north, south and east communities of Pittsburgh and specialize in providing Early Intervention support to children ages 3 to 8. They provide educational services to students diagnosed with Autism and Multiple Disabilities. Each young child's program is individualized and tailored to each child's specific needs. For information on how Easterseals can make a difference in a child's life, contact Laurie Chiodo, Education Specialist, at 412-281-7244 ext 1287.

Autism Awareness month was started by the National Autism Society in 1970. Their goal was, and is still today, to bring about a better understanding of autism which impacts 1 out of every 59 children in the United States. Autism has steadily grown over the last twenty years and is the fastest growing developmental disorder. There is currently no cure for autism, but through



treatment, symptoms related to autism can greatly improve and in some cases be completely overcome, but early intervention is the strongest factor.



## Natalie Murrio wins the Brentwood, Baldwin, Whitehall Chamber of Commerce Scholarship

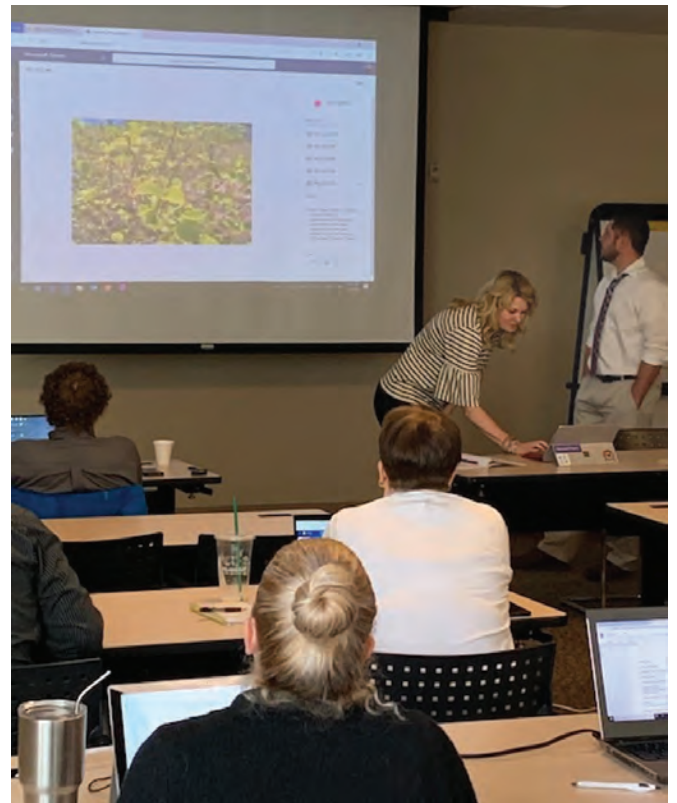


Brentwood High School and the Brentwood Borough School District has had a long-standing partnership with the Brentwood, Baldwin, Whitehall Chamber of Commerce. The school district is a proud member of the chamber and Dr. Burch serves on the Chamber Board of Directors and Officers. Each year the Brentwood, Baldwin, Whitehall Chamber of Commerce sponsors a \$1,000.00 one-time scholarship for a student at Brentwood High School and a student at Baldwin High School. Natalie Murrio was this year's recipient from Brentwood High School. At the Brentwood, Baldwin, Whitehall Chamber of Commerce luncheon Natalie gave a speech about her educational journey and her future educational plans that include being accepted to Westminster College. At Westminster College, Natalie will major in mathematics and science and will continue her basketball career. Natalie hopes to pursue a career in physical therapy. Natalie is involved in a multitude of clubs, sports, and activities at Brentwood High School. She will graduate with High Honors in the Class of 2019. We congratulate Natalie on winning the scholarship and wish her the best of luck in her educational future.

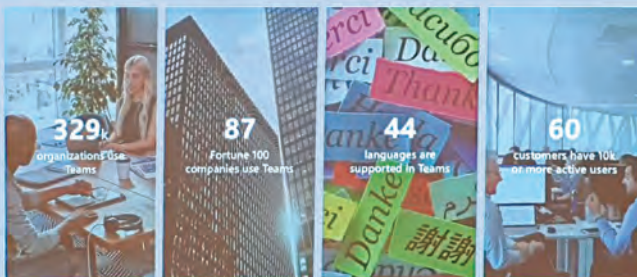
## TECHNOLOGY NEWS

### Collaborate, Adapt, Create - Microsoft Learning Event

The Allegheny Intermediate Unit held a Microsoft Learning Event for school districts in Allegheny County. Brentwood Borough School District was asked to send two leading teachers that are currently utilizing the Microsoft Office 365 Suite with their students. Mrs. Jennifer Hughes, Middle-High School Digital Media Teacher, and Mr. Nicholas Caponi, Middle School Social Teacher, shared their experiences with using the Microsoft Office 365 learning tools. Mrs. Jennifer Hughes explained how she uses Teams and Conversations Tools to assign work for students to complete. Students know to come into class prepared to go to Mrs. Hughes' Teams page for that course and view the conversations area for classwork for the day. This works well for make-up work for students who are absent. Students can turn in work or continue documents using the Conversations tool. Mr. Caponi explained how he uses the Files Tab in Teams to post class notes for current and previous classes. These files can be used for review of tests or if students are absent, they can find out what was completed in class. The greatest thing about assignments in teams is that students can't lose assignments, everything you save



Teams is the fastest growing business app in Microsoft history



on Teams is saved directly to student accounts, send feedback write away, and monitor student work from anywhere. Helps students stay organized. Teachers use the date and time stamp to see when assignments have been turned in. Microsoft Office 365 is an overall great experience for teachers and students to collaborate and share information.



## Interact Club Brentwood High School

Interact students at Brentwood High School held their annual campaign for Pennies For Patients. They helped raised \$1500 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Mrs. Kiryk's class raised \$475 and won a lunch from Olive Garden.

The Interact Club, at Brentwood High School, collected shoes for the people of Nicaragua. Shoes for Nicaragua is a project that collects slightly used shoes for school -aged children. Students helped collect 205 pairs of shoes.

The Interact collected 80 pairs of glasses for Hopeful Ways. Hopeful Ways provide medical and humanitarian services and educational opportunities to the people of Nicaragua. Their vision is to reduce preventable blindness and help preserve vision and visual function through refractive, medical, and surgical efforts.



Pennies for Patients



Pennies for Patients



Shoes for Nicaragua