

August 5, 2020

Dear Brooks Families:

Welcome to another wonderful year at Brooks Museums Magnet Elementary! We are delighted that you have chosen to share your children with us. The start of school for Brooks students will be here before we know it! The first day for students in K - 5th grade will be **Monday, August 17, 2020**.

This school year will certainly be unlike any other! We currently have two options for schooling this year: Plan B Transition and the Virtual Academy. You can find more details about each school environment below.

Virtual Academy

The Virtual Academy is a fully online option that families chose to enroll their child in for the 2020 – 2021 school year. This option provides families the opportunity to progress through the year with consistency, as students will remain in this online environment either for the fall semester, or the entire year. To the extent possible, Virtual Academy teachers will be teachers from Brooks; however, the potential does exist for students to enroll in the Virtual Academy and have a teacher from a different school. This is solely dependent on the number of students that enroll at each grade level and the staffing needs of the school. At this time, 223 Brooks students are enrolled in the Virtual Academy. If you have questions regarding the Virtual Academy, please contact our Assistant Principal, Mary Taylor at mtaylor7@wcpss.net.

Plan B Transition

The district has decided to open under Plan B Transition. This means that ALL students will begin school online (remote learning). This plan allows for students to transition back to in-person instruction as soon as it is practical, given current COVID-19 data.

While we all experienced remote learning from March – June last year, this year’s remote learning will be very different. The primary differences include that students will engage in 5 hours of instruction/activities each day (M – F), 2-3 hours of live instruction will be provided daily, attendance will be taken, and grades will be given. A schedule will be forthcoming.

As your administrative team, we wanted to take an opportunity to remind you of some existing policies as well as to address some changes for the upcoming year.

Orientation Period

Opening schools under Plan B Transition requires that we have a two-week “Orientation Period” for students to get to know their teachers and classmates and to pick-up materials from the school that may be needed to facilitate remote learning. This will take place during the weeks of August 17th and August 24th.

During this time, students may not have 2-3 hours of live instruction daily, however, teachers will work to build up to that. Beginning in week 3 (week of August 31st), students will begin to have 2-3 hours of live instruction daily.

Staggered Entry

At this time, we will not have traditional staggered entry for kindergarten students. Students will be placed in classrooms with their teacher at the beginning of the year like all first through fifth grade students. Assessments that were usually completed during staggered entry will be completed later in the fall.

Meet the Teacher

Given the limited number of individuals that may gather at a time, we will not have a traditional “Meet the Teacher” event. This year “Meet the Teacher” will be virtual, and your teacher will schedule it sometime during the week of August 17th – 21st. Your child’s teacher will email you a letter on Friday, August 14th with a Google Meet link for their upcoming Meet the Teacher. We hope you will plan to attend!

Class Placement Letters

This year we will NOT be sending class placement letters because there is not enough time between the first teacher workday of the year (Aug. 13) and the first day of the school year. You will find out your child's teacher via phone call on Thursday, August 13th or Friday, August 14th. The purpose of the call will be for the teacher to introduce themselves and welcome your child into their classroom. You will receive an email from your child's teacher on Friday, August 14th with a letter explaining how your child will begin school on Monday, August 17th. This will include a Google Meet link for students to join their Morning Meeting on the morning of August 17th. Additionally, the letter will also include the date and time for your teacher's Meet the Teacher event that will take place the week of August 17th – 21st. ***Class placements are not final and are subject to change at the principal's discretion.***

Teacher Assignments

Given the various school environments that we may operate within this year (In-person, Remote, & Virtual Academy), it may be necessary to rearrange teachers to address the needs of all students. Therefore, it is possible that your child may start out with one teacher, and as we transition into another plan, your child may be assigned a different teacher. I will ask in advance that you be flexible and recognize that staffing decisions will always be made to meet the needs of all students.

Potential Return to In-Person Instruction

I am hopeful that we will return to in-person instruction at some point this year. This will depend upon the most recent COVID-19 data for our area. When we do return to school in person, there will be some changes to our day-to-day operations and procedures that I would like to share with you.

Lunch/Recess/MTs

Although breakfast and lunch will still be offered by our cafeteria, students will eat all meals in their classrooms.

Physical activity is an important part of each child's health; therefore, they will still engage in recess. Weather permitting, recess will be a time for students to go outside and play. Playground equipment is off-limits until further notice, but students will be encouraged to play on the track, field, basketball court, or area behind the school. Activities that promote social distancing will be permitted. Students cannot play basketball, football, or soccer, as these games do not allow for 6 feet of social distancing.

Students will still have MTs (art, music, PE, media, science), but the schedule and instruction may look a bit different. Most MT teachers will go to the students' classroom for instruction.

Arrival

Due to COVID-19, we have made several changes to our previous arrival/dismissal/transportation procedures.

When we return to in-person instruction, students may enter the building at 8:45 am, and our instructional day will begin at 9:15 am. ***Families are NOT permitted to walk students to class*** because we are required to significantly limit the number of visitors in the building. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

Carpool traffic patterns for arrival and dismissal will remain the same in the upcoming year. All carpool will start by going down Northbrook Drive to Yadkin Road, which runs into Rampart Street. Cars will turn right off Rampart Street into the Brooks parking lot for carpool. If drivers turn left into the carpool line, they will be redirected. Failure to follow the procedures set forth by the school could result in a letter from the school and/or WCPSS Security Office, as well as a ticket from the Raleigh Police Department.

During morning carpool arrival, students will undergo health screenings and temperature checks daily prior to exiting their vehicle. When you pull into the carpool loop, a staff member will approach the vehicle and ask you a series of required health screening questions. Students will then have their temperatures taken and recorded. If students pass the health screening and have temperatures below 100.4 degrees, they can exit the vehicle and proceed into the building. If a child does not pass the health screening, he/she will have to return home immediately. If your child has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, you will be asked to pull up into a parking spot and your child's temperature will be taken again in 5 minutes. If it remains higher than 100.4 degrees, he/she will not be permitted to remain at school, and you must immediately take them home. We are aware that the screening process will likely increase the time you are in carpool; however, we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our students and staff, so we ask for your patience throughout this required process.

Walker students will continue to enter the building from the main entrance. Walker students will undergo the same health screening process. Upon arriving at the front of the building, students must wait outside until the health screening is conducted. If a parent walks with their child(ren), the parent must remain with the student(s) until the screening is completed.

Students arriving on campus via buses, cabs, and daycare vans will undergo health screenings before departing the bus or vendor transportation. If they pass the screenings and temperature check, they can then enter from the Northbrook Drive entrance (bus loop door). If the students do not pass the screening, they will be escorted to our Health Waiting Room where they will wait for a parent/guardian to arrive. If your child has one of the symptoms of COVID-19 or a fever, he/she must be picked up immediately.

Dismissal

In the afternoon, dismissal will begin at 3:45 pm. All children should be off campus by 4:10 pm. In the afternoon, all students picked up in carpool require a transportation tag which is to be hung from the rearview mirror. Please work with your students to learn their tag number as quickly as possible. Parents of students that wish to be considered walkers need to show an assigned walk zone transportation tag to pick up their students in the afternoon. Parents living in the walk zone who are walking up to get their children will form a line at the main entrance, standing six feet apart. A staff member will walkie into the building, and your child will be dismissed from his/her classroom. Walk zone transportation tags may also be used for carpool pick up. **Please note, ONLY families who live in our designated walk zone are permitted to pick up students as walkers.** Students of eligible age (grades 2-5) who need to walk all the way home independently (without a parent) must have a signed release from parents on file with our office. No K-1 students may be released as independent walkers unless accompanied by an older sibling (grades 2-5). Transportation tags will be available to pick-up at the school during the two-week "Orientation Period." More information will be shared later.

Afternoons are very busy in our front office; therefore, all transportation changes must be made by 2:45 pm. If you need to change your child's transportation and you forgot to write a note to the teacher, please call the front office before 2:45, and the office staff will communicate these changes with the classroom teacher. We ask that you do not email the teacher as they may not check it in time to make the appropriate changes. Additionally, please do not leave this information on a voicemail as the front office is very busy in the afternoon, and there is a chance we will not check the messages prior to dismissal.

Parking On & Off Campus

When you visit our school campus, please park in the appropriately designated spots in the parking lot. The City of Raleigh has and will continue to make changes to the "No Parking" signage located on Northbrook Drive. At no time should you park on Northbrook Drive to walk your child into the school. While I know this may be more convenient than using the carpool line, this is not safe and using the carpool line does not take that long in the morning or afternoon. Furthermore, the Raleigh Police Department will be patrolling the area on a frequent basis to write tickets to people not heeding the signs. Please remember this is not done to inconvenience anyone,

rather, it's to maintain the safety and security of our students, staff, and families. Thanks in advance for your support with this.

Cafeteria

Free/reduced lunch applications are no longer mailed to families who received these services last year. They now need to be accessed from the www.wcpss.net website or from our school office. Prior year benefits may be used by students in the new school year *for a maximum of 30 operating days* or until an application for the new school year has been processed, whichever comes first. If you are going to need a free/reduced lunch application, stop by the school office or complete the application online as soon as possible.

Regular lunch prices for the 2020 – 2021 school year have increased. Please note:

Breakfast	Regular: \$1.25	Reduced: Free
Lunch	Regular: \$2.75	Reduced: \$0.40

If you'd like to put money on your child's lunch account, you can do so by writing a check to "**Brooks Elementary School Cafeteria**" or by adding money to their account online at www.MySchoolBucks.com. There is also an app for this program. You will need your child's ID number to enroll. This information can be obtained from your child's teacher.

Medication

Students taking medication (over the counter or prescription) at school must have the 1702 form completed by a doctor. **These forms must be updated each year** and presented to our office prior to the first day of school.

Visitors to our Building

To prioritize the health and well-being of all students and staff in the building, we are required to minimize the number of visitors that enter during school hours. This means parents cannot eat lunch with students, visit classrooms, or come to the office when checking students in or out. To the extent possible, visitors on our campus will be addressed through the intercom system, and office staff will do their best to meet their needs using that system.

Volunteers

At this time, the volunteer registration is closed. We will not permit volunteers to be in the building. We will update this as new information becomes available.

Field Trips

In-person field trips are suspended until further notice.

New Staff

Please join me in welcoming our new staff (current as of 7/21/2020):

Megan Bruce.....Pre-K Teacher

William Cassady.....4th Grade Teacher

Aaliyah Muhammad.....Special Education 1:1 Assistant

We cannot wait to "see" you in a few days! Regardless of the current situation, we know we will have a spectacular school year!

Marie Palmer

Mary Taylor

Principal

Assistant Principal