

Brookside School

A MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Monroe Public Schools in collaboration with the members of the community shall ensure that all children receive an exemplary education by well-trained committed staff in a safe and orderly environment.

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2023

Dear Parents & Family Members,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 School Year! I hope you all had a relaxing and enjoyable summer. We are excited to open our doors on September 6th and welcome all of our new and returning students. For our new families to Brookside, we are glad to have you become part of our school. The entire Brookside staff looks forward to working with you to make this an outstanding year for your children.

During the last two months, we have been getting the school ready for our students. The custodial staff, office staff, and technology staff have worked extremely hard this summer to prepare the building for the upcoming school year. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the teachers and their dedication to creating such inviting classroom environments that the students will see and become part of on the first day of school.

We have had the opportunity to welcome aboard several well-trained, highly qualified staff members for the 2023-24 school year. Please join me in welcoming the following new staff to Brookside!

Samantha Adams – Literacy Interventionist; **Vicki Fernandes** – Assistant Principal; **Thomas Goletz** – Security Officer; **Moshina Goyal** – Teacher of Grade 4; **Paul Junkierski** – Head Custodian; **Lisa Lally** – Teacher of Grade 3; **Julianna Margadonna** – Teacher of Special Education; **Charlotte McCartin** – Special Education Paraprofessional; **Ariel McIntyre** – LDTC; **Beth Nagle** – Teacher of Physical Education; **Eneudy Perez** – Workstation Specialist; **Jennifer Scarpa** – Teacher of Grade 4; and **Kayla Valvano** – Teacher of Special Education.

The Barclay Brook/Brookside PTA is an important part of our school community. The PTA Officers are as follows: **Jenifer Olcott** (President); **Shereen Guirguess** (Vice President); **Mary Azmy** (Treasurer); **Nichole Molinaro** (Recording Secretary); and **Karen Dziubeck** (Corresponding Secretary). I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Barclay Brook/Brookside PTA for all that you do for our students! It is most appreciated, and our students are very lucky to have you.

Attached to this newsletter is our student arrival and dismissal procedures. Please take a moment to review these procedures. We appreciate your support and cooperation in helping to keep all our students safe!

Each new school year brings with it some anticipation and excitement. The opportunity your children have to grow and develop in all areas is something we hold in very high importance. Please engage with our school as a partner in your child's growth and progress this year. It truly takes a village, and we are eager to work with you to help your child be successful.

Respectfully,

Scott Sidler
Principal

VISIT US ON THE INTERNET AT <http://www.monroe.k12.nj.us>

SCHOOL HOURS

Regular School Day	9:05 - 3:34 p.m.
Four Hour Session Day	9:05 - 1:05 p.m.
Delayed Opening	11:05 - 3:34 p.m.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

Brookside's "Back to School Night" is on September 19 at 6:30 p.m. At 6:30 p.m., Mr. Sidler will give a brief presentation in the cafeteria. Following the presentation, parents will move to their child's classroom for teacher presentations. This is a great opportunity to visit your child's classroom, meet his/her teacher, and get an overview of our educational programs. Please make time to attend this informative evening. Parking is available at Brookside School in addition to the bus lot between Barclay Brook and Brookside.

SCHOOL PICTURES

We have scheduled school pictures for September 20. We have scheduled the make-up picture day for December 5. Information regarding ordering options for our picture day will go home in September.

STUDENT ABSENCES

If your child is going to be absent or tardy, please enter it into Genesis (Parent Portal) so the main office and the nurse can prepare attendance for the day. If you have any questions, please contact the school nurse at 732-521-1101 ext. 7505 or the main office at 732-521-1101. **Please do not enter notes about your child leaving early.** You will need to send a note in with your child or call the main office at the number listed above and follow up with an email. The office staff will then communicate the information to your child's teacher. Please understand if you email your child's teacher directly and they are absent that day, we will have no notification that your child is leaving early.

FREE/REDUCED LUNCH

Applications for free/reduced lunch are available online on the district website under Food Services. If you received services the previous year, you must re-apply each year. If you do not apply for free/reduced lunch on time, the services will end.

STUDENT BIRTHDAYS

All class birthday celebrations will be non-food celebrations. Students will still be recognized and celebrated on their birthday through our birthday bulletin board, loudspeaker announcement, and receipt of a birthday book. We thank you for your attention to this matter as this will help us to maintain a healthy and safe school environment for our students.

PARENT ACCESS – FORMS TO ACKNOWLEDGE

In an effort to continue "going green," you will now give permission/acknowledge the following forms (listed below) through Genesis (Parent Access). Please log into Parent Access and acknowledge these forms under the "forms" tab if you have not already done so.

- **Media Consent** – must be completed and is located under the “forms” tab
- **Travel Permission** – must be completed and is located under the “forms” tab
- **Nurse Health Questionnaire** – must be completed and is located under the “forms” tab
- **Code of Conduct** – for review and is located under the “documents” tab
- **IPM Plan** – for review and is located under the “documents” tab
- **AHERA Notification** – for review and is located under the “documents” tab

You can request changes to your contact information and your emergency contacts in Genesis by emailing Patti Manzano at patricia.manziano@monroe.k12.nj.us.

INSTRUMENTAL BAND

The instrumental band program will meet during the school day for individual and small group lessons. Your child will receive their lesson schedule once lessons have begun. Students in grade 4 and students new to Brookside School in grade 5 interested in the instrumental band, please contact Lindsey Burrell, our Instrumental Music Teacher at linds.burrell@monroe.k12.nj.us.

ZERO PERIOD FOR ADVANCED BAND AND CHORUS

The Advanced Band and Chorus program will be meeting in the morning before school begins during zero period at 8:20 a.m. Zero period for Advanced Band will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. Fourth grade chorus zero period days are Monday and Friday mornings; and fifth grade chorus zero period days are Thursday and Friday mornings. Please look for more information to follow in early September.

PTA

We look forward to an exciting year of PTA activities for our students. Families can show their support by joining the PTA, which is a great way to get involved in our school! By attending PTA meetings and volunteering to help with events and fundraisers, you will give the gift of your time! You will also help get your child excited about happenings at school! Please consider getting actively involved in the PTA, we would love to have you!

A NOTE FROM YOUR SCHOOL NURSE (MRS. MARIA DEBELLIS)

Welcome back to a new school year! I look forward to working with you in keeping your child healthy. I cannot do this without your help; please keep me informed about your child's health. Close communication is the key! If you have any health-related concerns, please feel free to call me at (732) 521-1101 ext. 7505 or email me at maria.debellis@monroe.k12.nj.us.

Below is a summary of important information:

Medication Drop Off Days: If your child needs any prescribed medications such as epi-pens, Benadryl, inhalers, etc., please have an adult drop off the medicines in their original, pharmacy-labeled packaging, together with the completed and signed forms by your physician on the following days:

- **Tuesday, September 5 to Friday, September 8, 2023: 10am-2pm**

Attendance: Always report all absences via your Parent Portal on Genesis, or you will receive an automated call to confirm your child's absence. Kindly specify the reason for the absence especially if reporting an illness. All medical notes such as physician notes, physical education restrictions, etc. can be brought to school when your child returns.

Nurse's Questionnaire in Genesis: Kindly review, complete and submit this yearly form so I can monitor any changes in your child's health from the past year. However, always report any changes in their health during the school year by contacting me.

Brookside School Lunch: If your child has a food allergy or dietary restrictions, please indicate that on the Nurse's Questionnaire. If you prefer them to sit at the peanut-free table, please email or call me.

Public Health: Please practice with your children these hygienic habits:

- Washing hands before and after handling food, and after using the bathroom for any reason.
- Covering nose and mouth with their hands or with a tissue if they sneeze or cough, and then wash hands or use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid sending your child to school if they are not feeling well or if they have a temperature above 99 degrees F or if they are nauseous or vomiting. If unsure, please call me.

Preparing For School Routine: Now is the best time to practice these habits to help your children adjust to their school schedules:

- Avoid staying up late and practicing waking up early as if they are going to school.
- Pack 1 or 2 water bottles with their snacks and lunch.
- Discuss with your children their drop off/pick up routine or bus schedule to make the first weeks of school go smoother.
- Take your children food shopping with you and help them choose their snacks and/or lunch if appropriate.

I thank you for your collaboration and always feel free to reach out to me with any concerns!

MESSAGE FROM TRANSPORTATION

Bus assignments will be available in Parent Access. No bus passes will be distributed. An email notification will go out to parents when their child's bus assignment is available. In addition, transportation general information and reminders will be available on the District website under "transportation."

Here are a few reminders for parents of children who will be riding the bus to and from school. Please remind your child that their **safety** is our priority. Students should remain seated and buckled in throughout the bus ride which helps our drivers ensure that all of our kids have a pleasant and safe trip on the bus. Your help in reinforcing this message with your child is greatly appreciated!

Students are required to always ride their assigned bus and are to get on and off at their assigned bus stop throughout the year. We cannot honor any change requests. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. In addition, please remind your child that no food or drink is permitted on any school bus – for allergy and sanitary reasons. Also, children should refrain from using any scented sprays or hand sanitizer while riding the bus. Thank you for working with us to help keep your children safe!

VISITORS TO BROOKSIDE

Our school district requires all visitors to identify themselves and state the purpose of their visit upon entering our buildings. **Visitors are required to sign in at the security desk at the main entrance with a photo ID and wear their visitor's badge in a prominent place.** We instruct our staff to question anyone who is not wearing a badge. **Visitors are also required to sign out at the security desk when they are leaving the building and return their visitor badge to security.**

PARKING PROCEDURES

Brookside parents and visitors must use the visitor parking spots and/or an unmarked parking spot. **If you are picking your child up at dismissal in lieu of the bus, you should park your car on the side parking lot –the circular driveway is closed during student arrival and dismissal.** Please give yourself ample time to park and to sign your child out with security. Thank you for helping us provide a safe environment at dismissal.

SCHOOL LUNCH

Brookside School uses a computerized electronic lunch system. This automated system is very successful in moving students through the lunch line more rapidly and giving them more time to eat as well as easing the ability for parents and students to pay for lunch in advance. Parents can send either cash or a check payable to Monroe Township Board of Education in any amount desired. Please keep in mind the cost for lunch daily is \$2.65 and can be calculated weekly or monthly by the number of full school days that month; lunch is not served on half days. You can credit any denomination to your child's account for their use at lunch. Any snack purchased will be an additional debit to the account, so make allowances if you want your child to purchase a snack. **If you want any restrictions noted on your child's account regarding a maximum daily spending limit or no additional purchases aside from regular lunch; please note this when sending money to fund the account.** When an account balance is getting low, the cafeteria cashier will remind your child. If a student has a negative balance on their account, your child can purchase lunch only – no snacks.

Please note, should you not want to take advantage of the automated system described above, your child can purchase lunch with cash:

Student Lunch - \$2.65

Milk - 80¢ Student

2nd lunch - \$3.75

Federal guidelines for child nutrition programs require that a student take a fruit or vegetable with their lunch to qualify as a school lunch. **If the student fails to take a fruit or vegetable with their lunch, the meal is considered an a la carte sale which is often more expensive and less nutritious.** A complete lunch includes a choice of entrée (with bread or grain), vegetable of the day, two servings of a fruit, salad or vegetable and choice of milk.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- September: 1 District Opening/Staff In-service/School's Closed for Students
 4 School's Closed
 5 Staff In-service Day / School's Closed for Students
 6 First Day of School for Students
 11 Patriot Day – Wear red, white and blue
 15 4-Hour Session for Staff and Students
 19 Brookside Back to School Night @ 6:30 pm
 20 Picture Day / Board of Education Meeting; Public Session begins @ 7:15 pm
 25 School's Closed
- October: 9 School's Closed
 18 Parent/Teacher Conferences for K-5/4-Hour Session for Students/Brookside
 Evening Conferences/Board of Education Meeting @ 7:15 for Public Session
 19 Parent/Teacher Conferences for K-5/4-Hour Session for Students
 20 4-Hour Session Day for Staff and Students
- November: 6-10 School's Closed
 15 Board of Education Meeting @ 7:15 for Public Session
 22 4-Hour Session Day for Students and Staff
 23 School's Closed
 24 School's Closed