

Francis T. Bresnahan Elementary School

333 High Street
Newburyport, MA 01950



Preschool & Kindergarten
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Grades 1-3
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August 15, 2017

Dear Bresnahan School Families,

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year! We hope this letter finds you enjoying this most beautiful summer!

As we write this letter, we find ourselves reflecting on this past school year with fond memories of our Bresnahan students, day to day life at Bresnahan School, and our staff and families who make Bresnahan School the place that it has become. Furthermore, as we prepare for the new year; another new beginning for all of us, we are developing a sense of enthusiasm and rejuvenation for the 17-18 school year. Although there are many summer programs housed here at Bresnahan School, it just isn't the same as the school year. We are moving along with the demands of our summer routines. Believe it or not, summertime is extremely busy here at Bresnahan School as we are developing schedules, hiring new teachers and staff, ordering curriculum resources and supplies and materials, reorganizing classroom spaces, preparing the building for the opening of school, and finalizing classroom placements. Additionally, we host summer programming as well as the YWCA's School's Out Summer Program. Bresnahan School is a happening place all year long! Bresnahan School teachers and staff have been working throughout the summer to ensure a smooth opening of school for students and adults alike. Final details are being planned and enthusiasm is growing as we look forward to a productive, meaningful, rewarding and enjoyable school year. We trust that the preparation that is taking place will ensure a smooth sail ahead and throughout the school year!

BRESNAHAN GOES DIGITAL

Website, School Facebook Page, School Twitter Account

The District and Bresnahan School Websites are updated on a regular basis. For the most up-to-date information, make sure to check the websites regularly. *Please note that we are currently in the process of updating the websites in preparation for the new school year. If you encounter older information that conflicts with dates in this letter, please disregard them. The website will be fully updated within the next two weeks.*

The Newburyport Public Schools website is <http://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us/> and the Bresnahan School website is <http://bresnahan.newburyport.k12.ma.us/>. Every Tuesday, school notices are posted to the website under Take-A-Look Tuesday and emailed home to parents.

We are excited to announce that we will be focusing on a digital presence for the Bresnahan School this year. Returning families may recall that the Bresnahan School Council gathered feedback from a Parent Communication and Climate Survey last year. Through an analysis of the survey, we learned that a majority of parents found the Take-A-Look Tuesday communications and our weekly school newsletter- *The Bucketful of News*- to be too lengthy and involved to retrieve important information and dates quickly. As a result, we have decided to streamline our communication this year. First, we will be retiring the Bucketful of News and replacing it simply with a bulleted list of upcoming events. This will be entitled Bres Dates.

From time to time we will also publish articles of interest under a separate cover that will be included in our new Principals' Blog on our school website. All articles will relate to the Clipper Core Values- Respect, Kindness, Innovation, Perseverance, Responsibility, and Reflection. All articles and Bres Dates will be posted to our school facebook page and new twitter handle. For easy navigation we will include a hashtag in all of our articles. Please google #BresClippers or #BresDates to search for information. We will be sharing more news about our revised communications in the weeks to come.

If you have a Facebook account, please *like us* to receive school announcements and updates. Stay connected! The school's facebook page is called the Francis T. Bresnahan Elementary School and the URL address is: <https://www.facebook.com/Francis-T-Bresnahan-Elementary-School-197221217054919/>. Please also follow us on Twitter at **BRES@bresnbpt** to stay even further connected!

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New Staff

Please join us in welcoming new staff and teachers:

- Gina Anderson- Special Education Team Coordinator
- Nelson Barker- School Nurse
- Laura Bouchard- Kindergarten Classroom Teacher
- Gardner Rulon-Miller- General Music Teacher
- Kaitlyn Zimmerman- Special Education Teacher

We are in the process of hiring recess and lunch monitors and instructional assistants. We will provide another update with additional staff hirings once complete.

Teacher Assignment Notification & Aspen X2 Family Portal

Teacher assignments will be released on Friday, August 18th and will be ready for parents to view in the on-line student database, *Aspen X2*. If you don't have a login and password or you have forgotten your username and password, please email rt-x2@rt.newburyport.k12.ma.us.

The link for the family portal is <http://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us/District/Parents/Family-Portal/index.html>. Please indicate that you are requesting your username and password for the Family Portal. Include the following:

Your name

Student's name

Student's date of birth

Student's year of graduation (**Grade 3:** 2027, **Grade 2:** 2028, **Grade 1:** 2029, **Kindergarten:** 2030, **Pre-Kindergarten:** 2031, **Preschool:** 2032)

Once you have accessed your account, please check your emergency contact information. **PLEASE VERIFY that each of your Children's Contact Information is Correct**

1. Go to Family Top Tab
2. Contacts Side Tab
3. Click on Each Contact and Verify that the information listed is correct
4. You must do this for each of your students

IF THE INFORMATION IS NOT CORRECT- Please contact your school's main office to update.

PLEASE NOTE:

To change the **PRIORITY** of the Emergency Contacts please notify your school secretary immediately.

To **ADD** or **DELETE** Contacts you must contact your school secretary immediately.

If you have any changes in Custody please contact your school secretary immediately.

Login or password problems please email rt-x2@rt.newburyport.k12.ma.us

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Opening Schedule

Parent Information Night for Preschool, Kindergarten, and New Grades 1-3 Families: Tuesday, August 22nd 6:00 p.m.

Incoming Parents new to preschool and kindergarten are invited to a parent information evening in the Bresnahan Gymnasium on Tuesday, August 22nd at 6:00 p.m. with Principals Kristina Davis and Amy Sullivan. *The parent information evening is for adults only.*

Clipper Fun Day for Preschool and Kindergarten ONLY:

Thursday, August 24th

(Please see additional information in the attached notice)

Rain Date: Friday, August 25th

Parents and students are invited to participate in a fun day to become acclimated with the school. Come meet new classmates, visit the playground, meet our mascot, "Clipper the Sea Dog," sit on the school bus, and have a snack in the cafeteria. This day is optional for families and designed to help with your child's transition to some of the most anticipated parts of the student day- recess, riding the bus and eating in cafeteria! Please note the time for your child's class listed below. Each class is assigned a specific time, location, and name tag icon (which will be given to your child that morning) so that students can begin to make connections with peers in their classrooms. The kindergarten classrooms are organized along with the classes that they will have recess with during the year so that students may also meet students that they will regularly spend time with during lunch and recess daily. You are also welcome to come at any time between 9:00-1:00 on the 24th but if you want to meet students and parents from your child's specific class, you should come at your assigned time. Please note that teachers will not be present during the Clipper Fun Day. This is an informal day for students and parents only to meet one another prior to school beginning. A formal introduction to the classroom, your child's teacher will occur during the parent and student visitation days.

Preschool- pirate ship playground	Kindergarten- larger playground
9:00-10:00 Miss Sue's AM Class: Green Dinosaur Name Tag Miss Sue's PM Class: Teal Balloon Name Tag	9:00-10:00 Mrs. Carroll's Class: Blue Whale Name Tag Mrs. Gershuny's Class: Purple Mitten Name Tag Mrs. O'Malley's Class: Black Tractor Name Tag
10:30-11:30 Miss Samantha's 4 Day Extended Learning Class: Pink Candy Name Tag Miss Karen's 4 Day Extended Learning Class: Purple Cat Name Tag	10:30-11:30 Mrs. Bouchard's Class: Yellow Apple Name Tag Mrs. Ouellette's Class: Orange Pumpkin Name Tag
12:00-1:00 Miss Tanasi's 5 Day Extended Learning Class: Blue Star Name Tag Miss Giovanna's Full Day Class: Green Frog Name Tag	12:00-1:00 Mrs. Duguie's Class: Red Leaf Name Tag Mrs. Herzig's Class: Blue Shoe Name Tag

Grades 1-3 Meet, Greet, Find Your Seat:

Tuesday, August 29th

Students and their parents are invited to Bresnahan School's Annual "Meet, Greet, Find, Your Seat". Teachers and related staff will welcome students and their families to the Bresnahan School community on Tuesday, August 29th. You will have an opportunity to meet your child's classroom teacher for the first time as well as meet one another, explore the classroom, and learn about basic classroom and first-day procedures. On behalf of teachers and staff, we hope you will be able to join us for this special day. The schedule for the Grades 1-3 meet and greets on August 29th are:

- 12:00-12:30 Grade One Meet and Greet**
- 1:00 - 1:30 Grade Two Meet and Greet**
- 2:00 - 2:30 Grade Three Meet and Greet**

First day of school for Grades 1-3 students

Wednesday, August 30th

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Preschool and Kindergarten Parent and Student Visitation Day: Thursday, August 31st

Preschool and Kindergarten students and their parents are invited for a special visit. On this day you will be able to meet your child's teacher for the first time, explore the classroom, and learn about basic classroom and first-day procedures.

- 8:30-9:00: 4 Day AM and 4 Day Extended Day Preschool Programs**
- 9:00-9:30: 4 Day PM, 5 Day Extended and 5 Day Full Day Preschool Programs**
- 10:00-10:45: Mrs. Carroll, Mrs. Gershuny, & Mrs. O'Malley's Kindergarten Classes**
- 11:15-12:00: Mrs. Bouchard, Mrs. Duguie, Mrs. Herzig and Mrs. Ouellette's Classes**

First day of school for Kindergarten and Preschool students: Wednesday, September 6th

School Hours

<u>PRESCHOOL</u>	<u>KINDERGARTEN</u>	<u>GRADES 1, 2, AND 3</u>
4 Day AM: 8:30 am -11:15 am (Monday-Thursday)	Full Day: 8:20 am- 2:50 pm	8:20 am-2:50 pm
4 Day PM: 12:15 pm - 3:00 pm (Monday-Thursday)	Half Day AM: 8:20 am-11:30 am	
4 Day Extended Learning: 8:30 am - 1:00 pm (Monday-Thursday)		
5 Day Extended Learning: 8:30 am -1:00 pm (Monday-Friday)		
5 Day Full Day: 8:30 am-3:00 pm (Monday-Friday)		

School Calendar

The Newburyport School calendar for the 2017-2018 school year is available on the District homepage or by clicking here: http://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us/documents/Calendars/2017-2018_VOTED-FINAL_2-6-17.pdf. The calendar may also be added to your own personal calendar. Please use the following address to access the Bresnahan School calendar from other applications. You can copy and paste this into any calendar product that supports the iCal format: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/ical/vnh0571od528656t6k4dgju00k%40group.calendar.google.com/public/basic.ics>

Open House Dates

Open House for grades 1-3 is scheduled for Wednesday, September 27th and PK-K Open House is scheduled for Thursday, October 5th. More details will follow in the near future.

Important Dates to get you Started:

- August 18: Teacher Assignments Released
- August 22: Parent Information Night for Preschool, Kindergarten and New Families only
- August 24: Preschool and Kindergarten Clipper Fun Day
- August 25: Rain Date for Preschool and Kindergarten Clipper Fun Day
- August 29: First Day for Teachers and Staff
- August 29: Grades 1-3 Meet, Greet and Find Your Seat
- August 30: First Day for Grades 1-3 Students

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August 30:	First Day of After School for the YWCA School's Out Program
August 31:	Preschool and Kindergarten Parent and Student Visitation Day
September 1-4:	Long Holiday Weekend
September 5:	Preschool and Kindergarten Screening Make-Up Date (by appointment only)
September 6:	First Day of School for Preschool and Kindergarten Students
September 11:	1 st Day of After School Program for the Boys and Girls Club
September 15:	Picture Day, Grades 1-3
September 18:	Culminating School Council Meeting for the 2016-2017 School Council
September 20:	PK/K Picture Day
September 21-22:	Rosh Hashanah
September 27:	Open House- Grades 1-3
September 29-30	Yom Kippur
October 4:	International Walk to School Day
October 5:	Open House – PK/K
October 6:	Early Release
October 9:	Columbus Day Holiday
October 23:	1 st School Council Meeting for the 2017-2018 School Council
October 27:	PK/K Halloween Boo Bash
October 31:	Halloween Parade and Singalong

Important Reminders:

- **BUS SCHEDULES:** Bus schedules are published on our district website a couple of days before the start of school. In preparation for our first day of school, please be sure to check the website for this information.
- **Bus Passes will be mailed home the week of August 14th.**
- **BUS RIDERS:** The first day ride to school is so important! It really gives students a good sense of what their routine will be like, and also alleviate any anxiety that they may have in regards to riding the bus, where to go, what to do. We have great systems in place at school during arrival time for the first couple of weeks to ensure that students feel welcomed, safe, and learn the routine without much stress. The bus drivers apply number stickers on each rider's bus pass that indicate what bus they ride, so riding the bus will really help us monitor and help students at dismissal time. We thank you ahead for your consideration to this matter. Please ensure your child's bus pass is attached to his/her backpack on the first day of school so that your child will receive his/her sticker which will help with the dismissal process and that it is with him/her each day.
- The YWCA will begin their after school program on the first day of school-Wednesday, August 30th. The Y program will be closed on Friday, September 1st as well.
- The Boys and Girls Club will begin their after school program on Monday, September 11th.
- If your child attends either the Boys and Girls Club or the YWCA School's Out Program, please ensure that your child's teacher is aware of his/her daily schedule to ensure end of day plans are executed properly.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

The first day of school for Grades 1-3 students is **Wednesday, August 30th** and Preschool and Kindergarten students is Wednesday, September 6th. **Please carefully review the attached arrival and dismissal procedures for your student prior to the first day of school.**

Confidential Student Health Information

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION REQUIRED

It is of the utmost importance that the Student Health Information on file for your child is up to date and accurate for any emergency situation that may arise.

Families new to the Bresnahan School have recently submitted student health information and emergency contacts, but you will want to log in to the family portal and check it for accuracy. Yearly Health Information forms will be POSTED to PUBLISHED REPORTS over the summer for all returning families. Please do the following:

- Review these documents carefully for accuracy

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- Complete the blank sections and update your child's medical and allergy information
- Make corrections to emergency contact information
- Return the forms prior to the first day of school.

It is essential that we have correct telephone numbers to locate parents/ guardians in the event of an emergency. In addition to making corrections on the form, you must make corrections directly in Aspen X2.

Kindergarten and Preschool Tuition Payments

The first tuition payment was due on August 1st in accordance with the tuition payment schedule attached to this email. Please review the tuition amount for your child's program in the attachment and pay in alignment with the payment schedule you selected when submitting your promissory note. Please note that there is no tuition fee for the Half-Day Kindergarten Program. Also, families receiving financial assistance should have received notification of their annual rate. If you have any questions about your tuition rate or payment schedule, kindly contact my administrative assistant, Lori Morasse, at lmorasse@newburyport.k12.ma.us or at (978) 465-4431, ext. 3125.

The Newburyport Public Schools has set up on-line tuition payments through Uni-Pay Gold.:

<https://unipaygold.unibank.com/Default.aspx?customerid=1077>. All tuition payments for the 2017-2018 school year must be paid on-line. Only electronic checks and credit cards will be accepted for tuition payments. If you have not already done so, please take a moment to set up an account with Uni-Pay Gold and **make your first and second payments by September 1, 2017**. Thank you!

Please note that we do not send bills out each month; rather, we will send basic reminder emails leading up to the beginning of each month stating that tuition is due. A new feature in Uni-Pay Gold enables customers the ability to set up a payment schedule plan which will automatically make deductions in accordance with your payment schedule. We strongly encourage all families to use this new feature. You may also find it helpful to set up your own personal calendar with a tuition reminder/alert and embed the Uni-Pay Gold link into your reminder message.

Please Note: That all tuition payments must be current by September 5th or your child will not be able to start in their program.

Visiting Bresnahan School

Upon arrival, all visitors, including parents, must go directly to the receptionist's office to sign in; Door 1 for grades 1-3, Door 2 for PreK and K. In order for visitors to access the school, all information on the visitor's pass must be completely filled out. Once checked in, visitors will be buzzed into the building by our school receptionists, Ms. Phillips or Mrs. LeBlanc. Please remember to **sign out** before you leave the building as well. This is extremely important as we need to know who is in the building at all times. Your attention to this matter is very much appreciated!

School Lunch Program

As many of you know, our school lunch program is managed by Chartwells Dining Services, a Division of Compass Group of North America. Newburyport School District's Food Service Department provides parents a convenient, easy and secure online prepayment service to deposit money into your child's school meal account at any time. This service also provides parents the ability to view your child's account balance and set up low balance alerts through a web site called MySchoolBucks.com. Student food allergy information, obtained from the school nurse, will also be in the register system, signaling a warning on the cashiers screen for a review of the items on the student's tray. Payments can be made on-line at www.MySchoolBucks.com. When setting up a new account you will need your student's ID# which is available in the School District's Aspen Family Portal listed as the lasid #. You may also make lunch payments by check made payable to Newburyport School Lunch. Please send check to your child's school on Mondays and include your child's full name on the check. Every student is issued a 4-digit pin number to enter at the register when purchasing lunch. This number will remain the same throughout their school years and is also available, if needed, on the Aspen Family Portal. Yearend school lunch balances are transferred to the following school year.

Beginning the first day of school, students may purchase a lunch (including milk) for \$2.75. Students who bring lunch from home may purchase milk for \$0.60 cents. Low-income families may be eligible for free or reduced (40 cents) lunch. Free and reduced lunch applications are sent home and are available in the office. Please see attached information from Chartwell's about the school lunch program in more detail.

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Health and Wellness Policy

We will continue to adhere to the Newburyport Public Schools Health and Wellness Policy. Please do not provide your child's class with food for birthday celebrations. If you have any questions, please refer to the policy on line at http://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us/documents/District/Departments/Health%20Services/wellness_policy_10-7-08.pdf

Here are some ideas for birthday celebrations that will make your child feel special:

- Purchase a book for the class and dedicate it in his/her honor (e.g., "Dedicated to *Teacher's Name* Class for *Your Child's Name* Xth birthday.") Wrap the book for your child to open in class. The teacher or parent can sit with the birthday child and read the book to the class. All the students could sign the book.
- Do you and/or your child have a special talent or interest that you could share? A short yoga lesson, singing songs or playing an instrument, simple origami or paper flower making, a special collection, etc.—these could all be shared with the class as a special treat in honor of your child.

Attendance/Tardiness

If your child is going to be absent, please call the main number at (978) 465-4431, option 2 for the PK-K office or option 3 for the Grades 1-3 office and then choose option 1 to report your child's absence. When returning to school after an absence, please send a note to your child's classroom teacher stating the reason for the absence. Absences of more than 5 days require a doctor's note upon return. Great attendance helps students develop excellent habits which can be linked to student achievement. Please avoid scheduling vacations during school time. It is disruptive to learning and it sends students a mixed message about the value of school.

A student is considered late if arriving after 8:20 a.m. for Kindergarten - Grade 3. When a student is tardy, he/she must be signed in at the office with either Ms. Phillips, PK/K or Mrs. LeBlanc, grades 1-3. Classroom attendance is sent to the office immediately and the late slip informs the teacher that the child has checked in at the office. Parents of students with excessive absences or tardiness may receive a communication from the principal. Please see the Student/Parent Handbook for the district's attendance policy. Parents of late arriving preschoolers must report to the PK/K office at door #2 to sign their child(ren) in with Ms. Phillips.

Summer Reading

We anticipate you and your child(ren) have been engaged in reading this summer. Please ensure your child(ren) have read the required reading book as noted below. It is important for you to know, that during the opening weeks of school, classroom teachers and students will engage in summer reading activities focused on the required reading:

- Grade 1 – *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes
- Grade 2 – *A House for Hermit Crab* by Eric Carle
- Grade 3 – *Someday a Tree* by Eve Bunting
- The book may be read by your child, with your child or to your child. Please have your child return this book on the first day of school. There will be a \$7.00 replacement fee if the book is not returned in September. Happy Reading!

Volunteering at Bresnahan School

We greatly appreciate the support of parent volunteers throughout the school year. We recognize parents as vital contributors to our school community who enhance our programs and have a strong impact on our offerings. We encourage all parents to consider volunteering in some capacity during the school year. There are many ways to become involved whether it is helping out in your child's classroom, helping to prepare for a special event, or chaperoning a field trip. State law requires that all volunteers complete a CORI form in order to volunteer in your child's classroom. Many parents were able to complete their CORI application during screening. If you were not able to do so, please see the volunteer attachment provided in this email that provides step-by-step directions for how to complete one.

Additionally, the Newburyport School Committee policy requires any volunteer who has direct and unmonitored contact with children to be fingerprinted. This generally occurs in two instances:

1. If you are going on a day or overnight field trip;

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2. If you are a lunchroom volunteer and will be bringing children out to the playground. Parents who volunteer in the classroom DO NOT need to be fingerprinted, as there is always another adult present.

This new policy was implemented during the 2014-2015 school year. If you are interested in chaperoning a field trip, we strongly encourage parents to book an appointment this summer to be fingerprinted as it sometimes takes a while for us to receive the results and we will need parents available to chaperone some of our fall field trips. Attached is more information about how to book an appointment. Massachusetts has contracted with MorphoTrust for fingerprinting and you may make an appointment on-line at the website: www.identogo.com to complete the fingerprinting at one of the local fingerprinting locations. The nearest two locations are in Haverhill and Methuen.

For the 2017-2018 school year, we will be simplifying the volunteer registration process for actually signing up for volunteering opportunities at the school. Stay tuned for a separate communication about volunteer sign-ups.

We're only a few weeks away to yet another new beginning. We hope your children are looking forward to their return to school. We know we certainly are!

Warmly,

Kristina Davis

Kristina Davis
Principal, 1-3

Karina Mascia

Karina Mascia
Assistant Principal, 1-3

Amy B. Sullivan

Amy B. Sullivan
Principal, PK-K