



# Bear Facts Newsletter

G. W. Brown School \* Newburyport, MA

## Principally Speaking...

It is hard to believe that the end of September is upon us and that the students are already completing their first month at the Brown School. I am so pleased to see how quickly they have settled into their routines and become familiar faces in our classrooms and corridors. These early childhood years are the most precious as we watch the students grow academically, socially and emotionally more during this period of their lives than any other time in their school careers. I am so honored to serve as their principal and witness their day-to-day triumphs.

I hope you will find the first issue of our Bear Facts School Newsletter informative. It will be sent home on the last Tuesday of each month coinciding with the Take a Look Tuesday program. In this issue please find information about Open House on October 11th, the 1st annual Brown School Boo Bash on October 28th and notes from each of our specialists. Each month I will also include an article relating to early childhood education with some suggestions for helping your child at home. This month's letter comes from the literacy program we are implementing this year in Kindergarten, called 'The Daily 5.' We will be discussing this more at Open House but hope that this background information will give you a bit of insight into how your child's day is structured.

I look forward to seeing you on October 11th!

Sincerely,

*Amy B. Sullivan,  
Principal*

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*...a place where all students learn!*

**Nurse's Office**

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# Brown Art Spot!

## Brown ART SPOT

We must educate our children with the skill they need to succeed in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century economy.

Quality arts education fosters an array of applied skills. The arts are essential for student engagement, learning and creative expression, and play a vital role in the educational development of students. I'd like to share David J. Skorton's Cornell University's president's quote, why teaching the arts and the humanities in schools is NOT a luxury. He writes:

*"They keep and convey our cultural heritage while opening us up to other societies and civilization around the globe. They help us explore what it means to be human, including ethical and aesthetic dimensions. If ever there were a time to nurture those skills in our young people, it is now, when our nation's future may depend on our creativity and our ability to understand and appreciate the cultures around the world as much as on our proficiency in reading and math"*

To begin the school year young kindergarten artists are learning the lingo!

Students are introduced to art vocabulary within the Elements Of Art:

*Line, Shape Texture, Space, FORM, VALUE, Color*

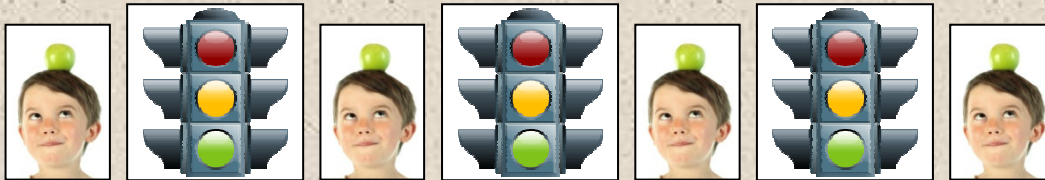
Students have already taken a line for a "walk" and have created many different images that they recognize after they applied color to the inside of their lines.

Students moved onto understanding when a mark on an art surface comes back to the beginning it creates a shape or a form. Students learned how to draw the form of the apple and then connected 2 concepts to create a new work of art: The Apple Traffic light

PopArt---taking ordinary common objects and finding/listing the commonality of both in terms of the elements of art and the attributes of both to make a new work of art.

You may wonder why your child is playing red light green light with their new apple traffic light piece of art!

Being creative, being safe, being healthy!



Looking forward to a wonderful year in art!

*Mrs. Pamela Jamison, M. Ed*  
*Visual Art Education*

*Melissa Squires*  
*Art Specialist*

## Physical Education

**Phys·i·cal Ed·u·ca·tion, noun,**

- Instruction in fitness, skills, and movement;
- Learning how to live a healthy lifestyle;
- The best part of the day!



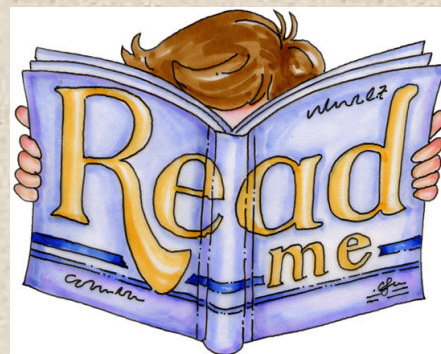
September was an exciting month in Physical Education. Kindergarten students have already learned some new vocabulary. We are learning about personal space and to perform a safety stops. Students have also learned how to travel by gallop. Ask your child to show you the three different levels of low, medium, and high!

*Ali Pappas*  
*Physical Education Teacher*



## Library Notes

Thank you for welcoming Brown School Library books into your homes! Please encourage your children to share their book choices with you. When you read together your child is learning about language as well as enjoying content. When you naturally hold the book right side up and progress from left to right you are modeling very basic concepts of print. Throughout the year students will learn some library fundamentals. Already they are demonstrating a working knowledge of circulation (borrow a book/return a book) and care for shared materials (keeping books in a safe place at home and returning them on time). Enjoy books together!



*Judy Avery*  
*Librarian*

## Nurse's Notes

Welcome to a new school year at the Brown School. My role as the school nurse is to keep the Brown School Community healthy, safe and ready to learn. Periodically I will be working with the PE teacher on special topics such as hand washing, using tissues, and cough etiquette.

I will notify you as soon as possible by letter if there is a health issue affecting us at the Brown School such as head lice, strep throat, influenza, etc. I am always happy to assist you with any health issues your child may have or any questions you may have about the health office. Please notify me if there are any changes in your child's health status.

Please be aware that we recommend closed toe shoes with backs for safety reasons. Flip Flops are not allowed as they are not safe for children going up and down the stairs and climbing on the play structure.

Thank You  
*Lynne Rurak, RN*  
*School Nurse*



## Website Information

The school website is <http://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us/brown>. Our technology integrator, Gail Ramsay, makes updates to the website as well as helps maintain teacher's classroom webpages. Kindergarten students also meet every other week with Mrs. Ramsay in the computer lab with their classroom teacher to use integrate technology into their learning. When you visit our website, you will notice 5 tabs across the top: Contact us, About Us, Brown Events, Class Pages, Curriculum and Resources. Parents will find the Brown School Calendar posted under Brown Events and teacher webpages listed under class pages. The Curriculum tabs and resources contain many links to websites and information geared to early childhood education which you may wish to use with your child at home. In addition, the website has links down the left column for the monthly lunch menu, X2 Family Portal, Take Home Tuesday, Early Release Information, the Newburyport district calendar, and tuition information. On the homepage we also post important upcoming dates and there is a link to bring you to the new website for the new elementary building project at <http://www.newbres.org>. Please check it out!!



# Early Release Days 2011-2012

**5 Day Extended Day Preschool & Full Day Kindergarten— 12:10 p.m.  
No School for 4 Day PM Preschool**

October 6	December 1	February 2	May 3
November 3* <i>Brown School only</i>	December 23	March 1	June 7
November 23	January 12	April 5	

**AM 1/2 Day Kindergarten  
Extended Day Dismissal—12:10 p.m.**

October 6	December 1	January 12
November 23	December 23	

**No School for PM 1/2 Day  
Kindergarten**

October 6	December 1	January 12
November 23	December 23	

**No School for AM 1/2 Day  
Kindergarten**

February 2	April 5	June 7
March 1	May 3	

**PM 1/2 Day Kindergarten  
Extended Day Dismissal—12:10 p.m.**

February 2	April 5	June 7
March 1	May 3	

## October 2011 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
2	3 Principal/Parent Coffee Hour 9:0a.m. Brown Library Parent Volunteer Day 10:00 a.m.	4	5	6 Early Release Day— Dismissal at 12:10 p.m.	7	8	
9	10 No School Columbus Day 	11 Open House 6:30 p.m. 	12	13	14 Spirit Day! Wear  Brown or Brown School t-shirts	15	
16	14 Picture Day for PreK: 3, 5, 5 ext day K: Full & 1/2 day 	18 Picture Day for PreK: 2, 4 day 	19 PTO Meeting 7:00 pm Molin Library	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30	31 Spirit Day! Mixed-up/ Backwards 	 <small>From Moms Break</small>					

# Open House

## Tuesday, October 11th 6:30-8:00p.m.

Please join us on Tuesday, October 11th at the Brown School for our Preschool and Kindergarten Open House!!



### Open House Agenda

- 6:30 p.m.**      **General Session**  
**Welcome and Introductions by**  
**Dr. Marc Kerble, Superintendent**  
**Amy B. Sullivan, Principal**  
**Introduction of Staff**
- 7:00 p.m.**      **Session 1: Visit your child's classroom for an overview of Kindergarten curriculum, classroom routines, questions and answers**
- 7:30 p.m.**      **Session 2: Visit your child's classroom and/or Return to the gym to meet with specialists**

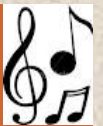
## Brown School Spirit Days

Brown School Spirit Days are days when students can dress up and show their school spirit. The Brown School Bear also makes a special guest appearance at school on Spirit Days.

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>October 14:</b>  | <b>Wear Brown or Brown School t-shirts (available for sale at Open House)</b> |
| <b>October 31:</b>  | <b>Mismatch/Mixed-Up/Backwards Day</b>  |
| <b>November 18:</b> | <b>Crazy Hat Day</b>  |
| <b>December 22:</b> | <b>Pajama Day</b>   |
| <b>January 20:</b>  | <b>Crazy Sock Day</b>   |
| <b>February 14:</b> | <b>Fancy Dress-Up Day</b>   |
| <b>March 16:</b>    | <b>Wear Green Day</b>   |
| <b>April 4:</b>     | <b>Red Sox Day</b>  |
| <b>May 25:</b>      | <b>Red, White and Blue Day</b>  |
| <b>June 4:</b>      | <b>Tie Day Day</b>  |



## Music Notes



Welcome to Kindergarten music! We have our music class on Mondays or Tuesdays here at the Brown School for 45 minutes in the music room.

The first 4 lessons have been very nice! We have learned how to stand and sit on the risers as performers! We are learning the rules of the music group concerning respect and safety. We have practiced how to start together, stay together and stop together when we sing and move and play rhythm instruments. We are listening, singing and self-assessing ("same" or "not the same") to learn how to sing in tune when using our voice correctly. We have also played hand drums to practice the concepts of rhythm and beat. We dance to the beat of various songs, listening as we move.

In October, we will begin to learn how to read music. Literacy in music should run parallel to learning language. We will read basic rhythmic symbols on the staff board and perform both rhythmic and beat patterns and melodic patterns while we sit in the singing circle. Every time we read, sing and play a piece of music it helps to be ready for the later grades in their music classes. In Grade 3, all students read music and play the recorder. In Grade 5, all students read music and can choose to play a band instrument. The lessons in Kindergarten are critical in developing good reading and performance skills. We are having fun making music and becoming skilled musicians!!!

*Mrs. Sue Conte*  
*Ms. Lidia Pavlov*

# Literacy Notes



One of the best activities parents can do as partners in their child's education is read aloud books. When children hear books read aloud, they begin to learn different purposes for reading, why reading is important, and a great deal of new words, new ideas, and dream about faraway places.

If you haven't already, establish a reading routine in your home. Reading aloud before bedtime, during breakfast, audio books in the car, as part of rest time, during snack, waiting for a sibling at an event, or any time that makes sense in your household are all ideas to consider fitting in such valuable time.

When reading a book with your child, you can:

- Let them hold the book and turn the pages.
- Talk about different parts of the book such as the front, back, title page, first page, and last page.
- Take your time reading. Do not rush.
- Point to the words as you read. Help them to see that there are spaces between words, that you read from the top of the page to the bottom, and that you read from left to right.
- Ask them to think about the story as you read it.
- Point to the pictures and talk about them.
- Read expressively: talk the way the story's characters would talk; make sound effects and funny faces; and vary the pitch of your voice throughout the story to make it more interesting.
- Encourage them to ask questions about the story's characters and events.

Talk about the book and relate it to their personal experiences.

Most of all, make this an enjoyable time for you and your child to foster a love of reading and curiosity about the larger world.

*Emily Russin,  
Literacy Coach*



## PTO and Volunteer Opportunities

The elementary PTO meets monthly at the Molin School Library on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The next meeting is **Wednesday, October 19th at 7:00 p.m.** The Elementary PTO website is [www.newburyportpto.com](http://www.newburyportpto.com).

**The parent volunteer program is up and running.** If you have not signed up yet, please go to the district webpage at [www.newburyport.k12.ma.us](http://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us) and click on the link for Parent Volunteer Registration. Teachers will contact their room liaisons and use the list of parents signed up for the volunteer program for various activities throughout the year. All parent volunteers must have an up-to-date CORI on file with the school department.

Lastly, our Kindergarten teachers are looking for some volunteers to help on the first Monday of the month at 10:00 a.m. in the library to together around a table to cut, collate, glue, etc. It would be a nice opportunity to meet new friends and help your child's teacher at the same time. Some simple jobs would be to cut out laminated papers, separate Weekly Reader newspapers, create paper books by collating and stapling papers together.



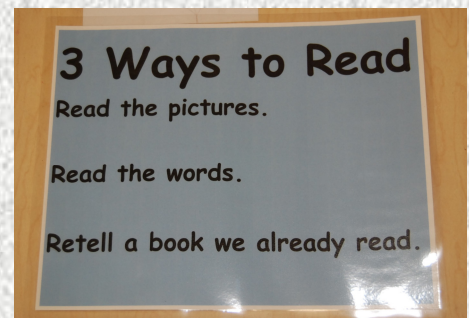
## The Daily 5 “Read to Self”

This past summer the Brown School Kindergarten teachers attended a workshop to help build literacy independence in students. They became deeply engrossed in discovering what research says most benefits students as they become readers, writers and lifelong learners. As a result, the structure of our literacy blocks may look and sound new to parents.

It won't be long until you hear your child talking about “The Daily Five,” which is a way of structuring the reading block so every student is independently engaged in meaningful literacy tasks. These research based tasks are ones that will have the biggest impact on student reading and writing achievement, as well as help foster children who love to read and write. Students receive explicit whole group instruction and then are given independent practice time to read and write independently while the teacher provides focused, intense instruction to individuals and small groups of students.

When it is fully up and running (which will take a few months) students will be engaged in the Daily Five, which are comprised of the following literacy centers:

- ◆ Read to Self
- ◆ Read to Someone
- ◆ Work on Writing
- ◆ Listen to Reading
- ◆ Word Work



There are very specific behavior expectations that go with each Daily 5 component. The students spend our first weeks working intensely on building the students reading and writing stamina, learning the behaviors of the Daily 5 and fostering a classroom community. The teachers will also spend time learning about individual student's strengths and greatest needs as a reader in order to best plan for each student's instruction.

One thing you may notice is a decrease in the number of worksheets your child brings home. While worksheets keep students busy, they don't really result in the high level of learning we want for Brown School students. Instead, students will be taught to select “Good Fit Books” or books they can read, understand and are interested in, which they will read during Daily 5. They will be spending most of their time actually reading, which research supports as the number one way to improve reading.

We will discuss the Daily 5 and literacy independence more at Open House on October 11th!

## How Much Do Students Read? (continued)

## Plus 10 Minutes per Day . . .

Percentile	Minutes per Day	Words per Year	Minutes per Day	Words per Year	Relative Amount of Reading
98	65.0	4,358,000	75.0	5,514,628	115%
90	21.1	1,414,000	31.1	1,990,122	147%
80	13.2	885,000	23.2	1,280,260	176%
70	9.6	643,000	19.6	960,768	204%
60	6.5	435,000	15.5	691,618	282%
50	4.6	308,000	14.7	604,359	313%
40	3.2	214,000	13.2	496,582	413%
30	1.3	87,000	11.3	375,899	869%
20	0.7	47,000	10.7	290,757	1,529%
10	0.1	6,700	11.1	204,998	11,100%
2	0.0	249	10.0	90,338	268,000%