

September 2020 Newsletter

Building Blocks Learning Center

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Welcome Back!

We're looking forward to a wonderful start to the school year! Our aim has always been to provide our school students with a safe, nurturing, and inviting learning environment. Our programs will continue to offer high quality and creative, age-appropriate activities. We have carefully designed a thoughtful framework which addresses the special precautions, methods, and operations we must adhere to, in order to safely function during this global pandemic. We are diligent, cautious, and thorough. And, we ask for the same from our school families. We want to safely open and stay open, and we need the dedicated help of each and every school family to do so.

The purpose of this monthly electronic newsletter is to highlight current and future school-wide happenings. Please save and refer to it for important school information. Specific dates and details are noted. I do my best to keep it as brief as possible, but feel that keeping our families fully informed is a priority. Please set aside a few minutes to read through it thoroughly and don't hesitate to contact me with questions.

Enjoy the first few weeks of school. Listen as your children share their new stories and celebrate the joys of starting school again!

Here are some reminders:

- Before you leave for school, please self-monitor for ANY symptoms. Take temps and conduct a full assessment. Children who are displaying any symptoms of illness are to be kept home. Follow-up screening will take place upon arrival to school.
- The car line is the only way to arrive and depart BBLC for the time being (unless you are walkers from nearby residences or bus riders). No parking in the lot and walking up.
- Please send your child's white BBLC folder to school each day and empty it each afternoon.
- Keep your cell phones on and with you; this is the most convenient way I have of reaching you, if needed.
- Remember to have your child use the bathroom right before you leave for school. For safety, all staff members need to be at their posts until the arrival door closes, and are not available to bathroom your child during the arrival process.
- Try to keep your goodbyes simple and sweet, and stick to your "goodbye plan". Uncertainty can arise when you deviate from your said plan.
- In addition to a set of extra clothes in the backpack, **a back-up face mask should also be included**. Name label everything!
- For students, no one-piece rompers (too difficult in the bathroom) and hair securely off of eyes.
- Please be extra patient as we all learn new routines and get accustomed to school life once again!



Donation Item of the Month--Paper Towels



Each month, BBLC will highlight a specific item for donation. These items help to keep our students healthy, safe, and comfortable at school. This is always absolutely voluntary. If you choose to donate, simply send/bring in the named item with your child. Throughout the month of September, we will be collecting **rolls of paper towels**. Please consider donating a roll or two. Thank you so very much for your consideration and generosity. Each child who donates will have his/her name entered in the monthly drawing to win a Scholastic story book to add to the home library!

Dismissal--ID Needed

Even if you've been with BBLC for years, we are respectfully asking that every adult who comes to pick up a child have his/her photo ID in hand and ready for display at pick-up for the first few weeks of school. New class assignments most likely mean new teachers, who may not easily recognize parents and caregivers (especially with masks on). We will be taking our time at dismissal, doing all the checking and identifying we need to. Masks for all are required, but we may ask adults to lower their masks for a few seconds for identification. Having photo ID in hand will help move this process along more smoothly.

Oh, NO! We're LATE!!

If you miss the open arrival door, please pull your car up to the driveway's exit. Bring your child to the left-most front door, near the courtyard and the Little Library, in the front of the building. This door will be clearly and brightly marked. Call the phone number posted and I will come to the door and screen your child for arrival. Because of COVID precautions, we will NOT be utilizing the main doors under the bridge. If you need to pick up your child early for an appointment, please give us advanced notice and use this door, as well. Masks are required and photo ID should be ready to display for pick up.

A word about masks...

Thank you for practicing mask wearing. I was very impressed at Playground Days! The more acclimated our students are to wearing them, the smoother our school days will run. **Make sure the mask fits well**--nice and snug--it's just not comfortable to wear things that are droopy and floppy. We've got a little more time before school starts, so please have children continue to practice wearing their masks. Try doing so for a particular activity--like a walk around the block or for a tv show. Then, add more and more time, little by little. Hopefully, after a good amount of practice, wearing masks will be like wearing socks--we won't even seem to notice them! As a reminder, we will have mask breaks at various points throughout the school day. An elastic cord will go home with each child at classroom orientation. This cord will keep the mask around your child's neck when not in use (mask breaks/snack/outdoor recess). Please keep track of this cord and remember to attach it to your child's mask each school day. Replacements can be found on Amazon--here's the link:https://www.amazon.com/BBTO-Adjustable-Anti-Slip-Dust-Workers-Food-Workers/dp/B086P91HKW/ref=pd_ybh_a_54?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=TZHZD4QDZYAF5XG5X7XJ



The Driveway Loop

Starting Monday, 9/14, all classes will be in session. Patience and cooperation with the driveway loop are appreciated; we have many new families doing this for the first time. The morning arrival door will open at 9:00 sharp. If you are the first car in the parking lot, **please do not enter the driveway until 9:00**. The arrival door is open until 9:15, so you might want to plan to arrive a bit later than 9:00 to avoid the initial rush. The afternoon PreK class is asked to enter the driveway promptly at 12:30, and the door will remain open until 12:40. **Please remember that the driveway is a no phone zone and to hold your child's hand.** We will review the specific logistics of arrival and departure with you at classroom orientations.

School Bus Safety

There are three yellow school buses that transport our Kindergartners to BBLC each morning and home each afternoon. The buses stop at the side entrance of our building, on Church Street. It is state law that cars must stop both in front of and behind stopped buses with flashing lights. Please adhere to this law and do not pass a stopped bus. If you are in the parking lot, awaiting your turn into our driveway loop, **please do not attempt to squeeze in behind the bus** -- wait until the bus has turned off its flashers and pulled away. Also, please make sure your car fits **completely** in our driveway and doesn't "hang off" into Church Street, blocking the buses or car traffic. The safety of our students is an absolute priority. Thanks for your cooperation with this important issue.



Important Dates

August/September
31 Kindergarten Staff In-Service

- 1 Kindergarten Orientation (parent/student)
- 1 Check email for electronic invoice for tuition; follow the prompts for payment
- 2-3 Kindergarten Full Days (with bus service)
- 4&7 No School; Labor Day Long Weekend
- 8 September tuition due
- 8/9 Preschool Staff Inservice Days; K in session, full days going forward
- 10/11 Classroom Orientations for all Preschool Classes (parent/student)
- 14/15 First independent days for preschool classes
- 28 We are OPEN (even though CB is closed)



Thanks so much for your attention. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am available both by phone or email. And of course, if your child (or you!) is a bit teary at drop-off, please call, as I am happy to check on him/her and give you a full update!

Looking forward to a safe, fun, and productive September with you and your little ones! Let the magic of school begin...

-Michele Burchell, Director