

Welcome

to

Brunswick

Junior High School



Brunswick Junior High School

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May 19, 2014

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome to Brunswick Junior High School! We are excited to have your child join us for their middle level years. This is a time in their lives where we see tremendous changes and growth, and we want the transition to be a smooth one.

One thing we know about Middle Level Learners is that they are unique! With so much going on in their lives, they need to feel a strong connection to their school and to the adults who work here. With over 500 students, we want to make a large school feel small. To help with this, we have carefully designed a school structure that allows more independence, but also has multiple levels of connectedness so our students do not “fall through the cracks.” With our team structure, advisor program, house system, academic support, enrichment classes, clubs, and sports, there is a place for everyone at Brunswick Junior High School.

In this booklet, you will read about many of the programs and services at our school that make the 6th grade transition a positive experience. Please take a moment to look through this information and to visit our school website. We look forward to meeting you and all of our new 6th graders!

Sincerely,

Walter Wallace
Principal

BJHS Transition and Orientation Program



Welcome 5th Grade Students and Parents to Brunswick Junior High School! Below is a description of our transition program's components. Our goal is to welcome your family to our school and make sure every student is ready to learn from day one!

BJHS Information Nights – There are two evenings scheduled for parents of fifth graders to visit BJHS and learn more about the school. The purpose of these meetings is to welcome parents to the junior high, educate parents about what BJHS has to offer, address parent concerns, and answer questions. BJHS representatives will include the principal, the school counselors, sixth grade teachers, the school nurse and a panel of current sixth grade students.

Transition Forms – Fifth grade teachers complete transition forms for students. The information provides sixth grade teachers with some background knowledge. In addition to academic performance (such as math and reading levels), it includes information about personal organization, leadership, and social skills. We use the forms to ensure balanced teams (a mix of abilities, fifth grade classrooms, gender, etc.). The forms also serve as a reminder for special accommodations a student may require.

Step-Up Day – The primary goal of Step-Up Day is to welcome the soon to be sixth graders to BJHS. It is our intention to reduce fears and anxieties by letting students see who we are and what we are all about. In order to make room for the fifth graders, the eighth graders have a delayed start. Our current sixth and seventh graders will “step up” as well.

Visits to Elementary Schools – A BJHS counselor and/or representative and some sixth grade students visit elementary classrooms after Step-Up Day to answer questions that fifth graders may have.

School Counselors – The sixth grade counselors communicate with the HBS counselors to receive information about individual students. This information is vital to helping students make a smooth transition, as well as having them feel safe and cared for in their new environment.

First Day of School – Seventh and Eighth graders have a delayed start on the first day. This is done to give sixth graders space and time to get acclimated to the new building. The morning begins with an “all hands on deck” approach where all upper grade level teachers assist sixth grade teachers and students. The most important piece of the morning for incoming students is getting assigned a locker and learning how to open it!

Open House – Open House is scheduled for the second or third week of school. It is early because we want to get everyone off to a positive start and on the “same page.”

Team Building – We understand that it takes time to build relationships and create an environment of trust, caring, and respect. Teams are formed by mixing students from the fifth grade classrooms with various backgrounds and experiences. The team itself and the advisor groups within it create smaller communities for our students within the whole school. During the first week of school, teams spend time participating in a number of activities in the spirit of team building. The purpose is to foster a positive classroom environment that emphasizes the Code of Ethics (e.g., name games, “get to know you” activities, and group challenges).

Health forms – Your child will need a physical prior to the start of school. Health forms will be distributed to students on Step-Up Day. If you need one before June 1st, they will be available for parents to pick up at the parent information nights, with the school nurse, or at the main office.

What can parents do to help their child make a smooth transition?

Be positive.

Make sure your child can open a combination lock; practice at home.

Learn about adolescent development. The next three years are a unique and interesting time in your child’s life.

Schedule a physical, so all the forms are ready before school starts.

Make sure your child has the necessary school supplies.

Have your child do some summer reading.

Avoid the “summer slump” - practice math facts over the summer to keep the skills fresh!

For more information about BJHS please visit our school website:

www.brunswick.k12.me.us/bjh

Brunswick Junior High School

6th Grade Information

► Team Structures

There are eight sixth grade teachers arranged into two teams. The students will encounter a variety of students within their team throughout the day. The eight sixth grade classrooms are located in the 300 wing.

► House System

A house system can be described as a vertical team. Sixth graders at Brunswick Junior High School will be placed on a team of approximately 80-90 students. The students will stay together for their 7th and 8th grade years with a new set of core teachers at each of those grades. Opportunities to interact with the “other house” will happen during diversified studies, lunch, clubs, sports and in core subjects when appropriate. Getting to know our students and helping them feel connected is the hallmark of a house system.

► Advisors

Once placed on a team, students are assigned to an advisor. The advisor will be the primary contact person at BJHS for concerns and parent conferences. The advisor program has a small teacher-student ratio so that they really get to know each other. Ideally, the advisor is your child’s “go to” person, whose role is to advocate for and guide your child through BJHS. Students begin and end their day with their advisor. Parents and students will be informed of their team assignment and advisor in a letter from the principal that will be mailed home in late August. The counseling department will assign new students who register over the summer.

► Placement

Please refer to the BJHS Equitable Placement Criteria document (available on our school website). We do our best to create teams, classes, and advisor groups that are balanced.

► Lunch

Purchasing lunch is similar to the elementary school procedure. We use the “envelope system” or the “online payment system” for putting money on “their account”. The online payment system website is available at www.mynutrikids.com. Our students report that lunch is better at the junior high because there are more choices than at the elementary school. ☐ Balances from HBS will transfer to BJHS. Our lunch periods are about 20 minutes long.

► Assignment Notebook (ANB)

Students are given an ANB (daily planner) on the first day. It is very similar to the planner students were given as 5th graders at HBS. We spend a considerable amount of time in the first few weeks explaining its use and making it a routine procedure. The ANB is the primary form of communication between school and home. The ANB contains the school handbook and some pages to assist students with class work. The ANB is graded on a Pass/Needs Improvement/Fail basis. Replacement notebooks can be purchased in the guidance office for a small fee.

► School Counseling

Our counselors work with students, teachers, and parents to support the transition to the junior high school and to meet the unique needs of the early adolescent. The school's Code of Ethics creates a basis for further work on topics such as team building, communication, and getting along with others. Supporting personal and social growth to promote school success, the school counseling program emphasizes connections between learning and practical applications in life and work. Program services include individual and group counseling, classroom guidance, parent and teacher consultation, and referrals to community agencies. The working relationship between home and school is an essential part of these efforts.

► Cell Phones

Students are expected to keep cell phones in their lockers during the day. A cell phone policy will be given to students during the first week of school. Please review it with your child if applicable.

► Laptops

Sixth grade teams have several carts with laptops. The one-to-one laptop program begins in grade seven.

► Homework

- ☐ Average amount is 45-60 minutes per day.
- ☐ Expect math and reading/writing regularly.
- ☐ Weekly geography assignments in social studies.
- ☐ Long-term assignments are broken into smaller parts.
- ☐ Homework is assigned for skill reinforcement, lesson follow up, or to prep for the next day.
- ☐ Teachers discuss homework at team meetings and try to prevent overwhelming homework situations.
- ☐ Common philosophy: If one assignment takes 30+ minutes, stop! Something's wrong and we'll help the next day. Families should not be distraught over homework.

► Curriculum

Each class meets every day for approximately 50 minutes.

Language Arts This includes a multi-text approach in the elements of reading, literacy, composition, grammar and oral communication with emphasis on skill development.

Math Students are homogeneously grouped into different levels. Emphasis is on whole numbers, fractions, decimals, geometry, and problem solving.

Science The sixth grade science program is general in nature. Students are exposed to a variety of content areas including life, physical, and earth sciences.

Social Studies This is a multi-media approach in independent study, group work, class presentations and other social studies activities. Curriculum emphasis is studying geography, history, economics, and culture.

► Academic Support

BJHS has a math and reading support program that provides instruction and interventions to students. Our Response to Intervention (RtI) program is offered to those who are recommended and qualify.

► Late Bus

One of the most important aspects of your child's education is the completion of schoolwork. We realize that many of our students could use extended time to receive assistance from their teachers or homework advisor. Should your child be identified as someone who would benefit from additional support, transportation home may be an issue.

To help solve this problem, we offer a late bus so students can get the assistance they need and also get a ride home. Your child will be able to catch their regular bus home at 3:30 when the buses pick up students at Coffin School. Our teachers will provide them with passes on the days they stay after school.

Diversified Studies

Art (One semester) A multi-media approach is used to provide students with experience in drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture. Students use art journals to document their work in written and visual form. Art history and art appreciation are introduced through hands-on assignments.

Foreign Language (One semester) Students are introduced to the French and Spanish languages and cultures.

Music (All year) The general music curriculum includes instruction in World Drumming, Music Composition, and Music History from the Civil War to 1980.

Physical Education (All year) A variety of topics is covered, many of which are co-educational. The emphasis is on developing sequential skills, modified or lead-up activities, and the understanding of basic fitness concepts. A physical fitness test is administered in the fall and spring. Students are expected to change clothes for class.

► **Band and Chorus are electives** - We strongly encourage participation. Students participating in Concert Band need at least one year of instruction on their instrument. Students with no previous experience can elect Beginning Band. Chorus has no prerequisites.

► **Common Assessment** – In September and again in May all students are administered the NWEA assessments in both reading and math. Since this is done at every grade level, teachers, parents and students may view progress over time. During the spring, students will also participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment. This test is designed to measure progress toward the Common Core State Standards.

► **School Safety**

Brunswick Jr. High School has a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO). The school practices safety drills with students and has a crisis management plan in place. Specific questions related to this topic should be addressed to the SRO or principal.

► **Automated Attendance Phone Calls**

If a student is marked absent in advisor class or another class period a call will automatically be made to the primary phone number listed in the SchoolMaster database unless you have notified the office of their absence. You will be informed which period(s) that the student has been reported absent. Students must bring written notes for ALL absences regardless of phone communication.

► **Communication** – Parents and teachers communicate often through email. Each team sends a bi-weekly newsletter that includes curriculum updates and upcoming events. The school publishes a monthly school newsletter called the *Husky Herald*. This is available online and archived on the school website.

► **School Website** - <http://www.brunswick.k12.me.us/bjh/>

► **Parent Involvement** – One of our goals is to involve the parents and caregivers of our students, as well as other members of our community, in the life of the school. Due to the nature of middle school students, parent involvement may take a different form from that of elementary school. A group of parent volunteers meets every Thursday and helps with “Teacher Prep” (copy, cut, laminate, etc.). Teachers may request assistance for editing, workshops, field trips, and special events.

► **Family Link**

The Family Link system is a unique way for parents to check on their child’s academic progress. Parents will be able to view their child’s attendance, current marks, grade history, and messages. This is a useful communication tool and can be accessed from any computer using the internet. This information is secure and confidential. BJHS will send you a letter in the fall with login directions.

► **Grading**

Report cards are issued every eight weeks. Progress reports, issued at mid-quarter are done through the Family Link system. Progress can be checked online. Paper progress reports can be run by teachers at a parent’s request.

Grading Scale

A+ 98-100

A 93-97

A- 90-92

And so on.....

F 59 or below

I- Incomplete, W- Withdrawn, P- Pass

Effort and Behavior Scale

1– Exemplary 2 – Good 3 – Satisfactory

4– Needs Improvement 5 – Unacceptable

SSR Grading Scale

E- Exceeds, M- Meets, DNM- Does not meet

► **Recognition Award and Honor Roll**

For a student to be on the Honor Roll they must have all As and Bs for that quarter and SSR needs to be Exceeds or Meets to qualify. For a student to receive a Year 1 Recognition Award they must have all As and Bs in their final grades for three of four quarters for the year; this must include quarter 4. To receive a Year 2 Recognition Award they must have all A’s and Bs in their final grades for three of four quarters for two years; this must include quarter 4 in year two. Finally to receive a Year 3 Recognition Award they must have all As and Bs in their final grades for three of four quarters for three years; this must include quarter 4 in year three.

► Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)

Each day our students have Sustained Silent Reading for approximately thirty minutes. Students are expected to have a personal reading book that is at their independent reading level. This allows students to increase fluency and interest in reading. Specific student schedules that include electives or specialized instruction may not have SSR.

► Peer Partners Program

Eighth graders who demonstrate positive leadership and communication skills may participate in our Peer Partner Program. They help facilitate the transition to BJHS and then meet regularly with an assigned sixth grade group of students throughout the academic year.

► Activities

A variety of activities is offered to students. These activities occur before and/or after school.

Intramural Sports: Seasonal activities for BJHS student participation

Interscholastic Sports: Seasonal competition with area schools

Library: Available until 3:00 PM after school with a pass

Student Council: Meets weekly

Math Team: Competition with area schools

History Huskies: Prepare exhibits for History Day competition.

Music: Auditioned instrumental and vocal groups

Drama Club (i.e. school play)

Civil Rights Team

Art Club

Homework Club (teacher recommendation)

Dance Club

Robotics Club

Creative Writing Club

Chess Club

Destination Imagination

Yearbook Committee

Science Club

Climate Club

Juggling Team



BJHS INTRAMURALS

FALL: Flag Football (Co-ed)

SPRING: Floor Hockey (Co-ed)

BJHS INTERSCHOLASTICS

FALL: Boys' and Girls Soccer 7th & 8th grade only (must try out)

Girls' Field Hockey (open)

Co-Ed Cross Country (open)

WINTER: Boys' and Girls Basketball 7th & 8th grade only (must try out)

Co-Ed Cheerleading 7th & 8th grade only (must try out)

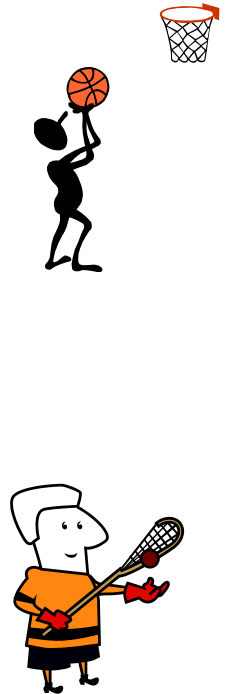
SPRING: Boys' Baseball 7th & 8th grade only (must try out)

Girls' Softball 7th & 8th grade only (must try out)

Co-Ed Track (open)

Boys' Lacrosse -7th and 8th graders only

Girls' Lacrosse -7th and 8th graders only



Grade 6 School Supplies

Must Have Materials

PENS (black or blue ink)

PENCILS

ATLAS*

BASIC CALCULATOR

4-5 POCKET FOLDERS

1-2 1½ inch BINDER



Suggested materials

string bag

glue stick

protractor

colored pencils

scissors

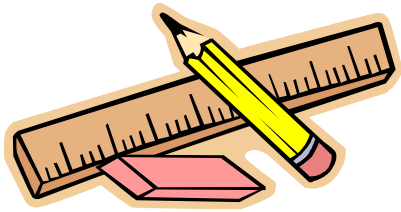
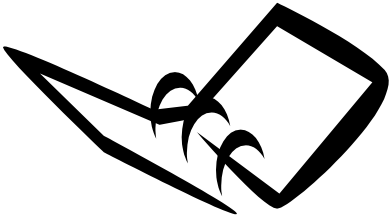
highlighter

black ultra fine point markers

loose leaf paper

dry erase marker (math)**

spiral notebook – single subject (science)**



Some teachers may request additional supplies specific to the needs of the class.

*The school sells the atlases; please wait until September to purchase

** Birch Team only