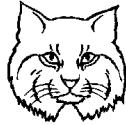


The Briones Banner



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Happy Holidays!

Winter Break Begins
December 20th!



Calendar

Dec 17	Early Dismissal – 1:30 pm
Dec 20 – Jan 3	WINTER BREAK – NO SCHOOL
Jan 4	Back to School
Jan 4 – Feb 3	Kindergarten Registration
Jan 11	Briones Night at Pizza Chicago
Feb 12	Briones Ice Skating Party

President's message

We are moving very quickly into the holiday season, and everything starts to speed up at this point. So hold on and get ready for the ride. Hopefully, you and your families will find time this holiday season to remember what this season is all about. Amidst all of our commitments, the true meaning can get lost. As a PTA, we have been working with several ideas to offer opportunities for Briones children to give. We have a few things in the works, but nothing final yet. Please check backpacks for information regarding these and other ideas in the days to come.

Teacher Gifts

I have also been asked quite a bit these days about gifts for teachers and what to do. Since I am a 9-year veteran, I guess I have a lot of experience. First of all, teacher gifts are not mandatory, but should be given from the heart. Our teachers work hard to make each child's experience here at our school a good one. If you do choose to give, there are a few options. Your

class can give a group gift, students can give individual gifts, or you can pick an item off of the teachers' wish list for their classrooms. The wish lists were created at the Harvest Festival, and while many of you generously donated to the teachers already, I believe that there are others of you that didn't know these lists existed. The lists are attached to this Banner as well as a purchase form. Any form of appreciation that you choose to show will be welcomed by the teachers.

The Master Maid

The PTA held its first assembly of the year, and it was a fabulous one. A theater group called Word for Word came and performed the story "The Master Maid". This group was extremely entertaining for the children and teachers. These forms of enriching experiences for our children are made possible by your donations

to the PTA's assembly and enrichment fund. I heard many children talking about this performance later in the day, and several teachers have informed me that their students wanted to talk about it and to reread the story several times. Halimah sent this thank you:

"Suzanne, thanks to you and the PTA for following up on this idea and bringing Word for Word to Briones. My class loved it, and we continued to immerse ourselves in the story 'The Master Maid' for days afterwards."

Be sure to talk to your kids about this performance.

Primary Assemblies

Speaking of assemblies, our Thursday morning assemblies are set to start at the beginning of next year. The PTA has decided to support these assemblies financially and physically. If you have never been to one of these assemblies for K-3 grades, you are in for a treat. Every week, the assembly is hosted by a different class. The students from that class perform poems, songs, or plays, and everyone recites the Pledge of Allegiance, sings the Bobcat song, and receives Bobcat awards (an award given to each child over the course of the year that highlights everything your child is doing well). The PTA feels that these assemblies are such an important part of what makes Briones special that we decided to put them into our budget. If you have any interest in helping with these assemblies, please contact me.

Our Principal

Our principal, Gary Dalton, just celebrated his 5th year as Briones principal! It has been our pleasure to have someone like Gary at the helm of our school. As I have seen first-hand this year, a principal's job is never done. You must wear many different hats and be able to change

them at a moment's notice, from dealing with the Superintendent of schools to talking to 4th graders that need some discipline. We are very grateful for everything Gary has done for our school and we look forward to many more years ahead!

Thanksgiving Pies

The teachers were overwhelmed by the generosity of the Briones community when they walked in to find over 70 delicious pies to choose from. Thanks to Carolyn Cooper for

Thank You!

organizing this teacher treat and for wrapping all the pies and making them look so beautiful. Up next, we will be doing a cookie exchange for the teachers. Debbie Sutherland will be calling or emailing you soon. Please say yes when she calls!

As you head out to enjoy your holidays, remember to slow down and enjoy it all. We will be back in school before you know it!

That's all for now.

—Suzanne McKenna, PTA Co-President. mckennafamily5@aol.com
856-4192

FYI

At Briones

Return to School on Tuesday the 4th

After a nice long Winter Break, school will begin again on Tuesday January 4th. No school on Monday the 3rd.



Morning Drop-Off Times

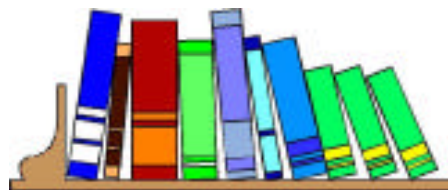
Just a reminder, there's no adult supervision on school grounds in the mornings until 8:05. So please don't drop off the kids unsupervised before that time. Thanks!

Check Lost & Found

Please check our Lost & Found rack before you leave for the holidays—any articles remaining in Lost & Found over Winter Break will be donated to the PTA Wardrobe. You never know what you'll find! Look for the Lost & Found rack in the MP Room or right outside the door.

Library Volunteers Needed

Our hard-working librarian, Laura Losier, could really use some volunteers in the library. Are you free on Mondays from 12:40 to 2:25? Help is also needed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 8:15 to 9:00 or 10:20



to 11:00. A weekly commitment is appreciated. If you're available to help, please contact Laura Losier (llosier@pausd.org) or Debbie Clark (dixiedebsue@yahoo.com).

Save the Date For Ice Skating!

Mark the date now on your calendars for the annual Briones ice skating party. It will be at the Winter Lodge on February 12, from 5:30 to 7:30. This is lots of fun for the whole family. Look for more information to come in future Banners. You won't want to miss it!

Used Soccer Uniforms for Oaxaca

Once again it's time for the annual collection of soccer uniforms to send to the children of our Sister City, Oaxaca, Mexico. Neighbors Abroad, Palo Alto's Sister City organization, with the help of Girls Scouts of Palo Alto, is placing a box for the uniforms in the Briones office from December 1st to 15th. Please send clean shirts, shorts, and socks. Please do not send shoes or shin guards as they are too bulky to pack efficiently. Thank you for your help.

Around the District

A Uniquely American Musical!

The Gunn High School Choir is presenting "ScroogeMart: A Uniquely American Musical" on Wednesday and Thursday, December 15th and 16th at the Spangenberg Theatre at Gunn High School. Shows begin at 8:00 pm. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$8 for children. For more information, call 354-8287. Should be fun!

In the Community

BiLi the Mime Performs This Weekend

Two shows are scheduled, on Friday December 10th and Saturday December 11th at 7:30 pm at Cubberley Theater in Palo Alto. The performances are fundraisers for the International School of the Peninsula of Palo Alto. Each show is approximately an hour and a half with no intermission and is recommended for adults and children aged 8 and up. Advance tickets are recommended and are \$18 (adult) and \$12 (children under 14) and can be obtained at the School (151 Laura Lane, Palo Alto), by calling the school at 251-8520, or by downloading an order form at www.istp.org. Also visit www.bilithemime.com.

This Month's Great Gatherings events:

- Jan 7
Japanese Matsuri Festival
(Kids)
- Jan 13
PJ Storytime in Library
(Kids)
- Jan 15
Family Treasure Hunt
(Families)

Barron Park Holiday Party and Parade

Don't miss the Barron Park Neighborhood Holiday Party and Donkey Parade on Saturday, December 18th. The parade begins at Bol Park at 2:30 pm, rain or shine, and ends around 3:15 at Barron Park School, with singing and refreshments in the MP Room for everyone. Come join us!

Registration for Palo Alto Girls' Softball

PAGS has opened registration for the 2005 Palo Alto Girls' Softball season! Early registration is on-line, and it's fast, easy, and convenient. Just check the web site at www.paloaltogirlssoftball.org—it provides everything you need to register. For more information, call 361-0743 or send email to registration@paloaltogirlssoftball.org.

Tryouts for Stanford Lightning Girls' CYSA Soccer

Is your child ready to play soccer on a competitive team with a great coach committed to building skills while having lots of fun? If so, the Stanford Lightning Girls Under-10 team is

adding players for the season beginning in April 2005. We're looking for committed and dedicated girls born after July 31st, 1995. Tryouts (attend at least one) are Saturday and Sunday January 8th and 9th and January 15th and 16th, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm at Greer Park, field 5 in Palo Alto (corner of Colorado and West Bayshore). Bring soccer cleats, shin guards, soccer ball, and water bottle. To learn more, call David at 888-6418.

Rent Your Ski Clothes This Year

The PTA Wardrobe is a clothing resource operated by the PTA Council of Palo Alto. Clothing from infant through adult sizes is available, free of charge, to any family in the PAUSD who needs it.

If you're heading to the snow this winter, you can rent cold-weather clothes from the PTA Wardrobe. A well-stocked selection of jackets, coats, ski bibs, boots, gloves, and other related wear in adult and children's sizes is available. The price is \$15 per child and \$20 per adult for a two-week rental.



The PTA Wardrobe is located at Jordan Middle School, 2263 Middlefield Road, and is open from 2:00 to 5:00 pm on Wednesdays and from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays. You can also call them at 858-0654. The Wardrobe is closed on PAUSD holidays. Donations of clothing are welcome and appreciated!

Items included in the Briones Banner are presented as a community service. The Briones PTA and PAUSD do not necessarily endorse any of the programs mentioned here. For more information about any item, please check to see if complete flyers are available in the school office or are posted on the bulletin board just outside the school office