



NEWS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Hello Friends and Family of Bridges PCS –

This year at Bridges PCS we are dedicated to building our cultural capability in order to create the most equitable school community possible for all staff, families and students. The question of how can we make **equity and inclusion** a core part of how we operate was first posed to our staff on April 7, 2017. At Bridges PCS, we value all of the identities that we navigate the world with and take pride in the diversity that exists within our school environment.

In order to build a stronger and more equity community, every voice must be valued and heard. This year, as part of our unyielding efforts to ensure the best educational experience for all of our Bridges students and families, we have been partnering with Teach To Lead (T2L), an organization that provides school leadership development and coaching through an equity lens.

The T2L team is supporting Bridges in articulating and working toward the realization of a shared vision of an equitable, inclusive school community for all members of the Bridges family. We launched this partnership in August with T2L's all-staff training on culturally proficient leadership. After this all-day session, we formed a cross-functional team to lead our school's work to develop and execute upon a set of equity-based goals.

As part of this effort, the T2L team is conducting equity listening sessions with key Bridges stakeholder groups. The listening sessions are designed to provide a 360-degree picture of Bridges as it relates to educational equity. The cross-functional team will use this holistic understanding of our school community to inform the previously mentioned equity-based goals, as well as the strategies we implement to achieve them.

Last month, the T2L team held a listening session for staff members after facilitating a whole-staff workshop that focused on using our REACH values to anchor this work across our community. The team will be back on **Thursday, January 18th** to conduct listening sessions with Bridges families and students. Families will have the opportunity to take the same equity-focused survey that staff members completed and to engage in a candid discussion about the strengths and opportunities for growth for our school community.

We would like to invite all of our parents to participate in this family listening session at the following date and time:

What: Race and Equity Family Listening Session
When: Thursday, January 18, 2018
Time: 8:45-9:45

I look forward to this collaborative work together when creating the most equitable school environment possible for our staff, students and families! I strongly encourage all families to be a part of this essential work by attending the family listening session.

Have a wonderful month of January!

Kristine Rigley
Principal



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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan 8th—Hearing & Vision screening
- Jan. 18—Race & Equity Listening Session
- Jan 19 & 20—Toy & Clothing swap
- February 2nd—APTT Meeting
- February 2nd—Transition meeting with parents of 5th graders.

DIRECTOR'S NEWS BY: OLIVIA SMITH



Dear Bridges Families,

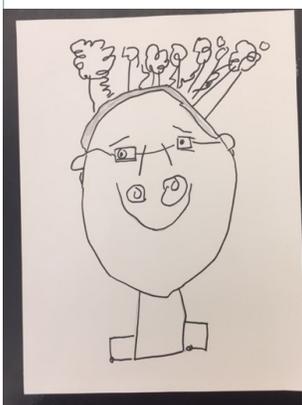
I am writing to update you on the status of our search for a new Chief Operation Officer. Following interviews in December 2017 of three finalist candidates, we have selected and hired Kimberly Campbell. Ms. Campbell comes to Bridges with 14 years of experience in the DC Charter School Community and we are very happy to have her joining our school community. Ms. Campbell will be with us on staff full time as of January 8, 2018.

In addition to this change in staff, we need to inform you that our Director of Operations, Youseth Guzman, will be leaving Bridges in January 2018. Ms. Guzman will be joining the leadership team of a business owned by her family. Ms. Guzman is a founding staff member of our school having started with Bridges PCS in 2005 when we served only 58 students and had 17 staff members. Ms. Guzman's commitment to the Bridges' mission has supported our program's growth and development to what we are today, a diverse and inclusive community serving 400 students and staff by over 120 people. Ms. Guzman will be greatly missed and we wish her the best for her future. Joining Bridges in January in the role of Director of Operations is Georgia Vergos. Ms. Vergos' career has been in the operations and development of high level special education programs in the DC Metro area and across the US.

A panel of Bridges' parents and a cross section of Bridges' staff were part of the interviewing process for both our incoming COO and our incoming Director of Operations. This was done to ensure that stakeholders from across our community were providing input on filling these two important roles for the school.

Please join us in welcoming Ms. Campbell and Ms. Vergos to the Bridges' community. We are very happy to have them join the work done in this building each day to provide an exemplary education to students with and without special needs.

Olivia Smith
Founder / Head of School



STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

January 2018

January each year is when Bridges PCS promotes awareness of the "Child Find" program. **Child Find** is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and requires states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities ages 3 to 21, who are in need of early intervention services or special education services.

Our goal for Child Find is to educate you about the importance of intervention and special education services for eligible children as early as possible in their development. If you suspect that your child has a disability, you may initiate a free evaluation. Depending on the child's educational needs, the school support team at Bridges, which may include a school social worker, school nurse, speech pathologist, audiologist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist or general/special education teacher will evaluate her/his needs. A determination of eligibility for services is made following the results of the team's evaluation and/or recommendation. The evaluation also assists in determining appropriate school programming, placement, and specialized services, if warranted.

Bridges offers a continuum of programs and services to support all children with special needs. If you suspect your child may have a disability and are interested in speaking with me or another member of the Student Support Services Administrative Team, please reach out to us via email, phone (202) 545-0515, or find us in the school building. Judith Dorvil, Director of Student Support Services, jdorvil@bridgespcs.org

Jenn Fox-Thomas, Assistant Director of Student Support Services, jfox-thomas@bridgespcs.org

Kenneth Brown, Special Education Coordinator, kbrown@bridgespcs.org

Special Education Announcement: January IEP Progress reports.

FYI to all parents of students with Individual Educational Programs (IEPs), look out for your child's IEP progress reports this month. IEP progress reports are sent home 4 times a year to document the progress a child is making on her or his individual plan. You should receive a copy after January 16, 2018.

NEWS FROM THE PTO

Dear Parents, Guardians and Friends,

Thank you for making the first half of the 2017-2018 school year a success!

While every single member of the Bridges' community contributed to this success, the Bridges PTO gratefully acknowledges those who donated time, money or energy toward our big wins of the year:

- FLEX Academies afterschool program
- Picture Days
- Family Pizza & Movie Night
- Staff Appreciation Breakfasts
- The Room Parent program
- T-shirt sales
- Music & Arts Fundraiser

We are looking forward to our first PTO meeting of 2018 which will take place on **Thursday, January 4 at 6 p.m.**; childcare and Spanish translation will be provided. All parents and guardians of Bridges students are automatically part of the PTO - no fees or sign-up required.

Also coming soon in 2018 is our annual **Toy, Book & Clothing Swap**. Join us in the Multi-Purpose Room on **January 19, from 1p.m. – 3 p.m. or January 20, from 11a.m. - 2 p.m.** to donate your gently used children's toys, books and clothing and pick up new-to-you FREE items for your kids.

-The Bridges PTO



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Hola Familias / Hello Families,



School Calendar Update:

February 2nd is the new date for Academic Parent Teaching Teams (APTT) meetings and Parent Teacher Conferences (PTC)

Health screenings Information:

Vision and hearing screenings are being conducted on January 3rd, 4th and 8th for all students attending Bridges Public Charter School.

Dental screenings will be done on Wednesday, January 24th. Application forms went home on Wednesday, January 3rd. The services will be provided by Big Smiles Dc dental services. The services will include: cleanings, x-rays, fluoride treatment and sealants as needed.

Attendance Update:

Attendance matters all day every day. Please be informed that the attendance rate of Pre-K students impact the overall performance target of the school on the rating of attendance. Parents should notify the school by 9:00 am on the day of the absence by phone call (202) 545-0515 or email (attendance@bridgespcs.org). Parents must provide a written note each time a student is absent from school. The written note can be submitted via email to attendance@bridgespcs.org or dropped off in hard copy at the front desk.

Early Childhood Information

Early Childhood data day was done on December 19th. Please reach out to your classroom teacher if you need an update about your child's performance on the assessments given; LAP – Learning Accomplishment Profile.

New Protocol: Signing out with the school nurse--- (Inform all designated Pick up Person)

Students who are ill and are sent home by the school nurse will now need to be signed out with the school nurse. The adult picking up the student will need to show a picture ID and the individual will also need to sign themselves out of the building at the front desk. These measures are being put in place to ensure that all our students are safe and we know who is taking a student out of the building.

Student Development Focus-----Number Identification Development Activities:

How can you help?

Help your student identify number names and formation around them.

Help your student distinguish larger vs smaller numbers by using the terms greater/less than.

Read a story every night, have the students retell the story identifying what events happened in the story and the sequence of each event. Develop language and listening comprehension skills. Use the terms first, second, third, when sequencing a story

Consistently narrate or talk about the activities you are doing e.g. "I'm setting the table; I set one fork for ...and one cup for" this helps children to develop their skill of memory, sequencing and accounting detail.

Please stay in contact with your classroom teacher and check Tuesday folders for school information.

Danette Dicks,

Assistant Principal

