PLUG IN: Using Digital Tools to Stay Connected to Your School Community

Blackboard Mobile Communications
Did you know you can connect with your student's school anywhere, anytime, by using your smartphone? Brevard Public Schools believes that effective communication can vastly improve the school experience for educators, parents, and students, by implementing the best school-to-home communication tools available. BPS recently upgraded its previous mobile app to the new and improved Blackboard Mobile Communications App, which integrates with all the school tools parents need—school websites, newsletters, and mass notifications—for a more streamlined communication experience.

Designed to foster parent involvement, the app enables parents to access student grades, receive school news, review school flyers through the Peachjar icon and stay apprised of any emergency situations. Gone are the days of lengthy, unclear robo-calls. Blackboard Mobile Communications lets parents receive messages in a convenient and customizable way, by indicating their preference of messaging format—text, email, or phone call. With the touch of a button, parents can become an active part of the conversation and school community.

"In today’s mobile society, keeping connected to what’s happening in our schools has become easier with our mobile app," said Michelle Irwin, assistant superintendent of Government and Community Relations. "We are excited about the new features that will enhance our two-way communications with parents."

If you previously installed the BPS mobile app, make sure that you accept the update which will automatically upgrade to the Blackboard Mobile platform. Need to download the app? Visit your Apple iTunes and Google Play stores and search for “BPS mobile” or visit your school’s front office for app materials. Start following your student’s school today by scanning the QR code to the lower right of this page, to download the app.

Peachjar
Brevard Public Schools is getting ready to launch a new electronic flyer communication tool called Peachjar.

Peachjar removes the clutter from your child’s backpack to an electronic format found in the district’s mobile app or on its website, where parents can view all school-approved e-flyers. From PTA fundraisers to soccer camps to book fairs, Peachjar helps parents stay apprised of all school activities and events in a convenient, environmentally friendly way.

No action is required on a parent’s part. You will receive a welcome email from Peachjar that includes a username and password. This is provided to give you the opportunity to manage your account and flyer delivery preferences. You do not need to login to receive or view school e-flyers. To ensure smooth delivery of this communication, be sure to add bpsflyers@peachjar.com to your email contacts. When you receive your first e-flyer, be sure to click “always display images.” Peachjar is used exclusively for distribution of school-approved flyers. Your email address will not be shared or used for any other purpose. To view school-approved e-flyers, simply click the Peachjar button on your school’s homepage or access from the mobile app by clicking the Peachjar icon.

Share, Like, Retweet, Repeat
Don’t forget to follow BPS on Facebook and Twitter. BPS uses multiple social media sites to inform, educate and engage our parents, employees and students, about new district initiatives and projects. “Like” our Facebook page (Brevard Public Schools Official) to receive the latest up-to-date district news and to view our educational videos, photos and messages that promote school-based events, programs and recognitions. Next, head over to Twitter and follow us (Twitter handle:BrevardSchools) for timely and relevant quick bits of information.
Insider: Environmental Services Keep Students Safe, Comfortable

This year the edConnect "Insider" feature strives to answer the question, “How do you help students learn?” This issue we caught up with Jim Powers, environmental, health, and safety manager, whose department not only maintains compliance with regulations about workplace requirements, but helps assure that students work in environmental safety and comfort.

1. Why are environmental, health and safety services important to students and staff?

Compliance with regulatory requirements is essential or the District could be penalized. Indoor air quality is important for student comfort and learning. We try to remove physical environmental distractions to assist the teacher in the classroom. We accommodate adequate task lighting for students and staff and safe workplace practices for staff.

2. Can you give some examples?

Animals in classrooms: We realize there is a value to having animals in the classroom, but we need to make sure that the animal is sanitary and not causing illness or a distraction to others.

Drinking water: Underground water lines break frequently because of their age. This can cause a disruption in water at schools. When this happens, we tag water fountains as out of service, deliver bottled water, and perform water testing when service is restored. We recognize it’s important for students and staff to have access to healthy drinking water.

Portable toilets: Several years ago, our department bought trailers that can be hauled by one of our large lawn tractors. These trailer support five portable toilets to use in the event of a water break at a school. One of the toilets is ADA accessible to allow for wheelchair access. This can help keep a school open during a water line break.

Cold/flu season: In several instances the Office of Student Services will call our department when an uptick in absences is seen at a particular school. We send a team to the school to assist the custodial staff with disinfecting the entire campus or a particular area. We make sure the correct disinfectant is being used and implement a procedure to help eradicate the spread of disease. Custodians will do a top to bottom wipe down with disinfectant and high touch frequency areas (like door knobs, telephones, and computer keyboards) will get more frequent attention. Posters and other materials are provided to the school to remind everyone to wash hands to stop the spread of disease.

3. What are some key new initiatives in your department?

Parents worry about the threat of violence in the classroom so campus security is a high priority that is changing cultural standards. With security expectations, we are learning to achieve balance between keeping students and staff secure with a hardened perimeter of school buildings while still providing a safe and efficient egress from the building in the event of a fire. We provide consulting services to school administrators about their fire exit drills and work closely with District Security to achieve this balance.

4. How do you help students learn?

In addition to the ways mentioned above, our department is heavily involved in science experiments that involve chemicals. We look at science research plans and methods used for handling dangerous chemicals. I had no idea our secondary students were so advanced, even delving into human cancer cell research. It’s been an interesting challenge for me to research the chemicals they use.

Jim Powers
Experience:
Almost 20 years in Environmental Health and Safety department – Brevard Public Schools
Over 20 industry certifications include Six Sigma Fastrack
Numerous memberships in professional organizations
Bachelor’s degree, Florida State University
Associate’s degree, Saint Leo University
It's a new school year with a new direction, new purpose and newly organized leadership structure. What does this mean for the staff and students of Brevard Public Schools?

We have worked diligently this past year identifying top challenges and priorities for Brevard Public Schools based on feedback from our stakeholders and data to drive our decisions. We then intentionally designed a new strategic plan to lead us into the future. To effectively accomplish our initiatives, we also aligned our resources – both human and financial in a district level reorganization.

To ensure efficient and effective operational support to our schools, the Division of Financial Services has been segregated into two distinct functions. The Division of Operations will provide oversight of Purchasing Services, Transportation, Food & Nutrition Services, and Strategic Planning. The Division of Finance will focus its efforts on budgeting and accounting services to maximize each dollar in support of our children’s education.

The Office of School Choice is now the Division of Equity, Innovation and Choice, expanding its function to focus on program growth and equitable access for all students. The Office of Community Relations has become the Division of Government and Community Relations to include legislative and government affairs and centralized customer care.

Our largest change has been in our approach to academic leadership. Through thoughtful evaluation of how to serve our schools most effectively, we have eliminated our Area Offices and the Office of Curriculum and Instruction and repurposed resources from each to develop the Secondary Office of Leading and Learning and the Elementary Office of Leading and Learning.

In conjunction with the Divisions of Student Services and Equity, Innovation and Choice, key objectives with associated strategies have been identified. Their combined focus will be to protect instructional time, build educator capacity, and create equitable supports and discipline for students. What we expect to see as a result of these efforts include teachers who feel supported with a stronger sense of positive morale. This should lead to improved teacher retention, student behavior management, equitable educational options for all which will ultimately result in increased student engagement and achievement.

There is no higher purpose for our district than to provide the highest quality administrative team to lead our academic initiatives. Likewise, to do this requires focused strategies from our other divisions to support all Leading and Learning operations. In future editions, I will highlight key objectives from our support divisions designed to support our schools. These are highlighted in our new strategic plan, which can be located at www.brevardschools.org and will also be presented to the community in future forums.

**Strategy matters.** Our new strategic plan is essential to our mission and is the driving force to ensure we consistently provide the highest level of academic options for our students. Watch for upcoming community forums to hear more about our strategic plan.

**There is no higher purpose for our district than to provide the highest quality administrative team to lead our academic initiatives.**
School is back in session. The increased congestion with school related traffic increases the potential for roadway conflicts. The following safety tips will help to insure a safe start to the 2016-17 school year.

**Motorists:**

1. Be aware of signage that indicates school crossings or reduced speed zones. Reduce speeds accordingly and be vigilant in watching for children who might enter the road unexpectedly.

2. Obey commands of crossing guards. They are there to help students, give them the space they need to cross safely.

3. Allow extra time to get to your destination. School bus stops and increased traffic will create delays in your commute. While these delays occur throughout the school year, they are typically worse during the first 2-3 weeks of school while everyone is adjusting to new schedules and routes.

4. Avoid distractions. Your phone can wait.

5. Passing a stopped school bus is dangerous and illegal. Visit [www.FloridaSchoolBusSafety.gov](http://www.FloridaSchoolBusSafety.gov) if you are unsure of the law relating to stopped buses. (See below as well.)

6. If driving your child to school, use the designated parent loop. It is unsafe for students to exit the vehicle in the roadway or have them walk between parked or stopped cars in congested areas.

**Pedestrians/Bicyclists:**

1. Parents: Take your child on a run-through of the route they will take to school several times before the first day of class. Insure your child knows proper crossing techniques.

2. ALWAYS look left, right, left (and over your shoulder for turning vehicles) before entering the roadway, even if you have a signal to proceed.

3. When possible, cross only at designated school crossings or marked crosswalks.

4. Wear bright clothing and reflective material to be seen. If traveling in low light or dark conditions, carry a flashlight. If riding a bicycle law requires it to be equipped with a working headlight and rear light.

And remember,

Children’s height makes it difficult for them to see motorists and for motorists to see them. This is especially true when there are others obstructions in the way, such as parked or moving cars, buses, and bushes. Children often think that if they can see a car then the driver can see them and they often do not recognize or react to unsafe situations. Remember that children assess traffic situations much differently than adults. All motorists should slow down and watch for children.

**Bus etiquette:**

When a school bus is stopped, lights are flashing, and stop sign arm is extended, motorists…

1. On a two lane road must stop in both directions.

2. On a multi-lane road with no barrier in between must stop in both directions.

3. On a road with any kind of barrier in between must stop behind the bus. Traffic in the oncoming lanes may proceed with caution.
Art & Algorithms: Titusville Festival Ties Art, Science Together

Art and Algorithms is a different sort of festival. In its fourth year, the Art & Algorithms Digital Art Festival in Titusville brings together digital technology, science, and art for the ultimate learning and enjoyment experience. The festival which runs October 11-16 this year, has a large educational component and many art teachers and their students travel to the festival to partake in the activities.

The festival is open during the daytime Tuesday through Friday exclusively for student field trips. During that time students are rotated through the exhibits in groups. “We try and have as many of the artists available as possible to talk with the students and answer their questions,” said Marcia Gaedcke, president of the Titusville Chamber of Commerce, one of the sponsors of the event.

Attendees may experience The Pool, by artist Jen Lewin, with giant concentric circles that are actually interactive pads. “Through the art of movement and technology, you can step, hop, or dance to create unique swirling patterns and music . . . synchronize with friends to create a symphony of sound,” according to festival organizers.

Arboria is a gigantic luminaria created by Architects of Air. The monumental walk-in sculptures of Arboria featuring Berlin, Brooklyn, Taipei, and Tel Aviv have enchanted audiences around the world. This tree inspired exhibit designed by Alan Parkinson features luminous abstract tree trunks and branches that reach 33 feet tall, creating an unforgettable experience in color and light.

Award-winning international short films will be shown for both the family or for those 16 and over at 2nd Stage Theater downtown. Family friendly films will also be featured on a huge LED screen on the green at the park. Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets, chairs, picnics, or popcorn.

Festival exhibits include a virtual reality lab with Google Tilt Brush and virtual reality viewing options. The iPad Lab features pre-loaded iPad fun and special digital painting workshops by Vermont artist, Corliss Blakely. Augmented Reality Sandbox, a favorite last year, is coming back bigger and better. For more information, www.ArtandAlgorithms.com.
What’s Cool in Schools

Students at Cocoa Beach Jr/Sr High travel to Washington, D.C. this summer to attend the coveted Jefferson Award event.

COCOA BEACH JR/SR HIGH

In the first year of its existence the Students In Action (SIA) team at Cocoa Beach Jr/Sr High, under the leadership of guidance counselor, Dr. Steven Primus, was recognized for its accomplishments at the national Jefferson Awards Foundation (JAF) ceremony in Washington, D.C. this summer. The team has 14 members. JAF empowers others to have maximum impact on the things they care about most and nationally recognizes outstanding citizenship and volunteerism.

Over 400 schools competed nationally and 13 were chosen to attend the D.C. awards ceremony. Six students traveled with Primus and three other chaperones to the nation’s capital to represent Central Florida. Newly graduated Rory Sullivan led the select group which included seniors, Mekenzie Bradley, Heather Ditz, Aly Redden, Taisse Yang, and junior, Taylor Bloom. The Cocoa Beach Rotary Club provided funds to help pay for the students’ accommodations at the event.

“It was an outstanding event,” Primus said. “The kids attended leadership courses and had a chance to sightsee around D.C. A few had never been there before. My favorite part was seeing these kids dressed up for the gala awards event. These are some outstanding young people who excel not only in the classroom, but in the community as well.”

This team of students made a huge impact, over 21,000 public service hours were recorded, and an estimated $484,000 was given back to the local community. With the joint effort of school and community organizations, the team donated food, clothes, and toys; raised thousands of dollars to purchase 13 prosthetic limbs for those in third world countries; and funded a Secret Santa program to provide Christmas gifts for students in difficult financial situations.

COQUINA ELEMENTARY

Titusville’s Coquina Elementary recently received a $2,000 STEM grant from AT&T to focus on providing its students with a unique forensic science experience. Students honed their detective skills and learned about the art of deconstructing a crime scene from experts from the Titusville Police Department and Brevard County Sheriff’s Office.

The students were then tasked with solving the case of the missing school mascot in hopes of bringing home Coquina’s beloved Cody the cougar. After processing a mock crime scene, students tested the evidence collected and named their suspects in a formal written report. The students cracked the case and Cody was safely returned home.

A second grant from the Brevard Schools Foundation, allowed students to put their problem solving skills to the test by working collaboratively to solve game-themed real world problems at the Escape Zone located in Melbourne, a BPS partner in education.

“I have hosted many students from a variety of schools and the Coquina students stood out to all of us here at The Escape Zone,” said marketing director, Andrea Cannizzaro. “The kindness and compassion they showed for one another was simply amazing.”

GEMINI ELEMENTARY

Gemini Elementary in Melbourne Beach has a team of budding chefs. Fifth graders John Demari and Cooper LaMontagne and sixth graders Caroline Meyers and Tavie Schoolfield recently won first place in the third annual Florida Dairy Council’s “Gridiron Cook-Off Challenge.” The team, under the direction of Billy Bechtol, the school’s physical education teacher, traveled to Jacksonville’s Jaguar Stadium to compete.

The team took first place for its winning recipe, a panko breaded chicken strip covered in Alfredo sauce on a Cuban roll topped with a Greek yogurt slaw. A dozen recipes were chosen to compete from the more than 60 that were submitted. Gemini Elementary was one of four teams competing for the Jacksonville region, the other three schools were James Weldon Johnson Middle in Jacksonville, Blue Lake Elementary in Deland, and Bunnell Elementary in Bunnell.

Each Gemini student won a gift basket with an iPad 2 Mini and several other gifts; the school will also receive $2,500 in equipment from the Florida Dairy Council. Gemini’s winning students were also invited by Judge Hari Pulapaka, head chef and owner of Cress in Deland, to be guest chefs for a night at his restaurant.

HARBOR CITY ELEMENTARY

Harbor City Elementary in Melbourne recently hosted a bicycle safety rodeo for students in its summer camp. Over 50 students brought their bicycles to school and practiced bicycle and pedestrian safety. Kim Smith from the Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) has visited the school for more than 10 years to teach students these skills.

The TPO sponsors “walk to school day,” “bike to school day,” and “walking school bus” programs throughout the year in partnership with BPS. “Kids should be active outside throughout the year,” said Lydia Reynolds, Harbor City after care coordinator. “Outdoor activities are just as important as any other type of work that a child does.”

HOOVER MIDDLE

Sophie Clark and Sidney Fire, eighth graders at Hoover Middle in Indialantic earned a top award at the 2016 Florida History Fair in Tallahassee last May. The girls earned the Outstanding County Award for Brevard for their museum-like exhibit titled “Sally Ride: Exploring Space and Equality.”

This year’s projects focused on the themes exploration, encounter, and exchange in history following the guidelines of the National History Day program. Students from Brevard entered 16 of the 651 projects judged at this year’s competition. Clark and Fire’s award winning project originally began as an assignment in their history class, given by teacher Stephanie Moody.
“Sidney and Sophie created an amazing project, comprised of hard work and strong research,” said media specialist, Ana Woodbrey. “I am so happy that their passion for their selected topic has resulted in this fantastic achievement.”

JEFFERSON MIDDLE
Thomas Jefferson Middle eighth grader, Crystal Murr led a team to first place at this summer’s Future Problem Solving Program International (FPS) conference at Michigan State University. The team also included a student from Wisconsin and one from New Zealand. They wrote a collaborative scenario about the year’s topic, “Energy of the Future.”

During the five day event, students from all over the world participated in multiple types of competitive activities designed to challenge students to solve potential problems of the world through critical thinking and collaboration. Many BPS schools have FPS teams who competed locally and on the state and national level. “The program offers students a unique opportunity to develop global critical thinking skills,” said Jefferson faculty advisor, Melinda McMaster.

“FPS isn’t just a competition, it is a process that students learn in order to truly see how capable they are at solving future challenges,” McMaster said. “Crystal is the type of student who will use her knowledge and experience to make change in this world.”

JUPITER ELEMENTARY
Fifth and sixth grade students at Jupiter Elementary in Palm Bay recently coordinated and assembled 80 fully packed “blessing bags” that were donated to a local homeless shelter. “Teaching students the importance of giving back is such an amazing thing. Each child can change the world just by being kind to one another. It is a great concept, one that is just as important as teaching the standards,” said kindergarten teacher, Amanda Redmond.

Each grade level at the school was responsible for collecting a specific item for the cause. Essential items included deodorant, soap, hand sanitizer, crackers, socks, wet wipes, toothbrushes and toothpaste. When items came in, the collected students inventoried and categorized the items on tables in a packing area for easy assembling.

With the help of over 25 volunteers, in addition to staff and students, the school community collected over 700 items and assembled 80 fully packed bags which were donated to a local homeless shelter. “I really enjoyed putting together and donating the blessing bags to the homeless shelter because I like to do things that help others in the community and give to those in need. It gave me great joy to be involved and help out,” said fifth grader, Alyssa Montanez.

MELBOURNE HIGH
Melbourne High played host this summer to “Show Stoppers 2016,” a summer theatre workshop for students in grades six – 12 from Central and Hoover Middle and Melbourne and Palm Bay High. Over the course of the eight days, students learned songs and choreography from classic and current Broadway smash hits. To culminate the workshop, students presented the showcase twice for the local community.

Musical selections were chosen from classic shows including Annie, Annie Get Your Gun, Oliver, Pippin, and You’re A Good Man, Charlie Brown. Songs were also chosen from shows currently on Broadway or on tour including Finding Neverland, Frozen, Hamilton, Matilda, Tuck Everlasting, and Wicked.

Director Rodney Savickis said, “This was a 75 minute non-stop musical to keep your toes tapping and a smile on your face.”
Principal's Perspective: Brown’s Roots Run Deep at McNair Middle

Like the featured character in the 1970’s sitcom “Welcome Back, Kotter,” Rosette Brown returned to her elementary school roots first as a teacher and later as its principal. McNair Magnet Middle began its life as Poinsett Elementary in 1959 and Brown attended the school from first through sixth grades in the 1960s. At the time, the school was segregated, but much of the physical footprint was the same as it is today. “We did not have the resources that our students have today,” Brown said. “But, there was a cohesiveness between the faculty and students. It was very family oriented. We still have a family atmosphere here at McNair.”

In 1982, Brown began teaching English in the same building, which by then was known as Poinsett Middle. She left for a brief period in 1991 to be an assistant principal at Rockledge High and was back to the building now known as McNair Middle by 1994 as its assistant principal for curriculum. Brown was named principal in 2001. She has been in the building that straddles the Rockledge and Cocoa city limits for 36 years.

Changes were rampant at the school over the decades. Brown recalls how court orders forced integration at the school in the sixties, how new buildings were added on in the seventies, and later how performing arts facilities were improved to qualify the school for performing arts school status. Most recently, McNair was awarded the National Magnet School of Excellence by Magnet Schools of America.

Brown is extremely proud of all of the students at McNair Magnet Middle and their accomplishments. She reflected back on the fact that McNair was the first middle school in Florida to win the National Science Bowl and had one student who placed at the National Spelling Bee. She had students come through McNair whose parents she taught or who attended the school themselves.

Personally, Brown reflects back on challenges in her life. “My mom is my hero. She didn’t graduate high school, but she instilled in our family the importance of education. She had 10 children and seven of the eight who lived to adulthood either attended or graduated college. Four of her grandchildren have Ph.D. degrees.

“We faced challenges, but persevered and were able to come back to our community and give back. I have seen decades of change from when I have attended school here,” Brown said. “Technology, of course and a more diverse student population. I strive to maintain a diverse student and staff community.”

Some things haven’t changed. She remembers that the front office in the building is still the same. In fact, her elementary school principal sat in the same office she sits in now. “The office could use a make-over,” she said.

“The caring also remains the same,” Brown said. “I received the nurturing of a neighborhood school when I was in elementary school and we still provide nurturing for students here at McNair. We try to focus on preparing our kids to be well-rounded and succeed emotionally and academically. We want to prepare them for the high school level.”

After 36 years in the same building, folks can expect Brown's passion for the place to show . . . and it does.

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What’s Cool in Schools

TITUSVILLE HIGH
Fifteen Titusville High students in the school’s automotive maintenance and light repair program recently passed the automotive industry certification qualifications.

The automotive industrial certification stresses the understanding and demonstration of planning, management, finance, technical and product skills, underlying principles of technology, labor issues, community issues, as well as health, safety, and environmental issues.

This year the Titusville program received a 2015 GMC Sierra 4-wheel drive vehicle, valued at $48,000, from General Motors through Seminole State College to use for student training. In addition to their career ready experiences at the school level, last year the program had six students complete on the job training at automotive and parts stores throughout the local community.

The program also recently completed the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) inspection during which an outside inspector from the state comes to inspect documentation of student learning, county spending on equipment, and support from the community. To continue receiving funding from the state, this inspection is completed every five years.

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Getting the Most Out of Your College Admissions Essay

College-bound advice from the experts at Florida Institute of Technology

The admissions essay is an important element of most college applications—and a daunting one. A personal statement is an opportunity to demonstrate one’s character, perspectives and values to an admissions committee. When writing the essay, a common question students ask themselves is, “How can I make my essay stand out?”

Each college has its own prompts for you to answer and choosing the right topic for your essay is important. When deciding upon a topic, choose something that is personal and meaningful. Avoid trying write about something lofty or weighty because you think it’s what a college wants to hear. Instead, write what you know. Choose something important to you and your passion will shine.

An essay that begins with “I am interested in becoming a student at your college because…” or “I would bring value to your program because…” are not as interesting as writing that starts with a story or memory. Opening your essay with a creative beginning can excite an essay evaluator and keep her hooked until the end.

The essay tells the admissions office what your application does not, so listing your activities and accomplishments in your essay is redundant. Your essay is an in-depth glimpse into your mind and what moves you—it’s your chance to show off your best self and what you are passionate about. If you decide to discuss a controversial topic, back-up your opinion with well-researched statements and arguments to show you understand the issue thoroughly.

While you are trying to make an impression, take note of your writing style. Replacing simple words with “smarter” sounding words you find in a thesaurus can interrupt the flow of the essay and may change the meaning. If you write clearly and concisely, admission counselors will have an easier time reading your essay and relating to it.

Admissions officers read several essays daily, leaving only minutes for each prompt. They do not want to spend a lot of time understanding each essay, so it is vital to state your point right away and stay within the word count. Aim to tell your story in 250 words or less.

The final step in writing your essay is to have someone like a teacher or a parent look over your essay to proofread and make corrections. Your first draft will be the first version of many. You want your essay to be the best it can be because a spelling error in the first sentence—or in the last—won’t make a good impression.

One final recommendation: Be yourself. While the admissions essay may seem intimidating, it is important to remember to write about what is important to you. So, pull up a chair, turn on your computer and start writing. Your future awaits.

To see an example of a college admission essay prompt, check out Florida Tech’s prompts: http://admission.fit.edu/documents/Essay%20Instructions%2020092012.pdf

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Projects Completed This Summer
Mechanical, electrical and plumbing system work was completed at DeLaura Middle, Audubon, Oak Park, Andersen, and Palm Bay Elementary Schools. Facility renewal projects were completed at Jefferson Middle, Tropical, Discovery, Roosevelt, Cape View, and Sea Park Elementary Schools.

Projects Started This Summer
Planning and/or design work has begun for facilities projects scheduled for summer 2017 at the following elementary schools: Coquina, Sabal, Sherwood, West Melbourne School for Science, Turner, Fairglen, Saturn, Apollo, and Pinewood. Middle schools scheduled include: Hoover, Kennedy, and Jackson. Melbourne High is also slated for facilities work in summer 2017. Summer 2017 will be busy as roof projects are planned for Andersen Elementary and Titusville High. Bayside High and Westside Elementary will have new chiller projects.

Summer 2018 projects in the works include design services starting for Cocoa and Rockledge High, MILA, Ralph Williams, Croton and Dr. W. J. Creel Elementary Schools.

Technology Projects Underway
Educational technology projects are also underway. The construction contract has been executed for structured cabling at Atlantis Elementary, and contracts are expected in the next few months for Longleaf Elementary and Meadowlane Primary. Structured cabling at Melbourne High is planned for construction in summer 2017 along with the facility renewal project.

To see more about how important the structured cabling project was at Rockledge High to helping students learn, visit our YouTube channel. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFoKKGqNgxQ

The next meeting of the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC) is Wednesday, August 17, 2016 in the superintendent’s conference room at the School Board building in Viera at 3 p.m. The public is welcome.

Remember much of the sales surtax work is not easily visible, so if you see the Your Money at Work Banner displayed – check out what’s happening inside the school, behind the walls, under the floors and above the ceilings.

Photos by Chris Gerber, BPS project field coordinator
Kick-Starting the New School Year – Top 10 Tips

1. Sweet slumber. To get back in the swing of things, establish a regular bedtime and wake-up routine for your child before he or she starts school. Having a mental and physical check-list to include daily tasks such as: brush teeth, get dressed, pack supplies, eat breakfast, tie shoes, etc. will help your child prepare for school in a practical way and will help limit first day stress.

2. Stay positive. If your child is feeling anxious, make sure to keep a positive attitude. Reminisce about the fun and exciting events, field trips, projects and learning gains from last year and show enthusiasm about the upcoming year’s opportunities.

3. Walk together. Escorting younger children to the classroom and school can help them with the transition. Make sure to familiarize your child with key places like the cafeteria, library, gym and bathrooms. Your student will feel more confident if they practice walking the walk by knowing the school’s layout.

4. Shopping for success. Shopping for school supplies can be a fun way for students to get engaged in their back to school pre-planning. Give them the school supply list and set buying parameters to help them build responsibility and take ownership of their supplies.

5. Talk about it. After school starts, make sure to check in with your child every day when they return home. Avoid general questions, like “How was school?” These questions will likely produce one-word answers. Be more specific. “How did you feel after you took your spelling test today?”

6. Home is where the heart is. Do your part at home by helping your child with his or her homework and projects. Display good grades and creative projects around the house. By taking an interest and showing concern for his or her academic success, your student will acknowledge your expectations.

7. Get involved. Parent involvement is crucial to your child’s learning experience. In addition to your support at home, participate in school and classroom activities to stay connected to the school community and parent peers.

8. Stay alert. Be mindful and aware of your child’s behavior during the first few months of school. If your child’s eating or sleeping patterns change in a large manner, it may be a sign of his or her difficulty adjusting to the new grade level.

9. Read, read, read. Reading with your child is one of the most enriching ways to spend quality time together on a daily basis. Not only will home reading practice help foster a love of reading, but it may also help your elevate your child’s reading level.

10. Stay Connected. Communicating with your child’s teacher regularly is an essential part of their learning experience. Teachers can keep you in the loop regarding any emotional, social, or academic difficulties they perceive in your child at school. School district communication is also key. Make sure to follow BPS on its social media outlets (Facebook and Twitter), download the mobile app for school notifications and log in to your Peachjar account to receive the latest school flyers.
Complete the crossword below

Across
1. You can draw straight lines with this object.
2. Something you sharpen.
4. What you write or draw on.
6. Something you can check out from the library.
7. The head person of your school.
8. Where you go for recess.
10. Please _____ your name on your work.

Down
1. You can draw straight lines with this object.
3. You write on this with chalk.
5. This has a keyboard and a screen.
9. Where you sit and complete work.

Riddle Me This
1. Why did the teacher wear sunglasses?
2. What did the pen say to the pencil?
3. What do librarians take with them when they go fishing?

Answers
1. Because her students were bright!
2. What’s your point?
3. Bookworms