

## Sleep and Light Bulbs.....

### This is not an endorsement but it sounds promising.....

Scientists have understood for years that different levels and colors of light can have powerful biological effects on humans. But that concept has been applied only with expensive bulbs for specialty application like imitating the 24 hour cycle for astronauts or treating jaundice in newborns. But companies are now developing "biological lighting" for regular consumers.

A company called The Lighting Science Group makes something called Sleepy Baby and other bulbs to enhance rest or alertness, and other bulbs called Good Night and Awake and Alert. These new bulbs are designed to regulate the body's basic need to rest and wake up by stimulating receptors in the eyes that signal to the brain when it is time for bed and when it is time to go about the activities of the day.

When exposed to short-wave length light, the blue end of the spectrum, those receptors suppress the release of the sleep inducing hormone melatonin. White artificial light, especially the LEDs used in bulbs and illuminated screens is typical high in blue, so exposure after dusk tends to reduce sleepiness and increase alertness, leading to an epidemic in sleep deficiency.

Something to think about folks....

Read about this in more detail in the New York Times, Saturday, September 12, 21015 edition.

## BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

### Rock Brook's Back to School Night is scheduled for Tuesday, September 29, 2015.

The program will run from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. This program is designed for parents to hear from the school director and principal, meet their child's teaching team, learn about what is planned for the fall and visit with other Rock Brook Parents.

Please bring in your child's Pizza Order Form and **Cash** if you have not done so already. Pizza Friday begins October 2nd.

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## Rock Brook Family News - September 2015

### Important Upcoming Dates

#### September

Sept 29 Back to School Night 7-9 pm

#### October

Oct 2 Pizza Lunch Begins

Oct 3 Parent's Night Out 5:30-9:30pm

Oct 12 RBS Closed for STUDENTS - Staff Development

Oct 30 Halloween - In-School Activities / Details to Follow

#### November

Nov 1 Daylight Savings Ends

Nov 3 RBS Board Meeting 6:00 pm

Nov 5 Sibling Visit Day 10-11 am

Nov 6 Holiday Sale - In-School Event

Nov 7 Parent's Night Out 5:30-9:30pm

Nov 17-19 Parent Conferences

Nov 17-19 Early Dismissal for Students 1:30 pm

Nov 25 Early Dismissal for All 1:30 pm

Nov 26-27 RBS Closed - Thanksgiving Holiday

### Interesting Research

An article by NJSpotlight (an online news site [www.njspotlight.com](http://www.njspotlight.com)) highlighted the recent conference hosted by the New Jersey Autism Center of Excellence Coordinating Center. They work to make sure that individual researchers are aware of other developments of autism studies in the state. While trying to understand autism's root causes, research in NJ has also focused on current treatments that can help children and families.

There is a growing sense that progress is being made but the challenge is in treating what is seen as a range of disorders with different causes and symptoms rather than a single "autism spectrum disorder."

The state is providing \$3.8 million for autism research this year. The projects include finding ways to diagnose autism sooner, finding the genetic markers for autism, and using videos for developing imitation skills. Rutgers' Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation has been exploring ways to improve transit options for adults with autism. State officials are also looking at ways to increase funding for programs for older children and young adults as they leave school programs.

**Check out NJ Spotlight for more information on the Conference!**

### Tax free savings accounts for the Disabled

Tax free savings accounts for the Disabled are expected in 2016 and are modeled on the 529 college savings accounts. The accounts, known as 529A or Able accounts, should be available in most states next year.

The 529A accounts allow contributed funds to grow tax-free and to be withdrawn tax-free for eligible expenses. Anyone – including family and friends - as well as the disabled person themselves can contribute to the accounts, but there is no federal tax deduction for the contribution. Most importantly is that people with special needs can save for their care and education without being disqualified from government benefits.

To qualify you must have been disabled before ages 26 and there is an annual contribution limit equal to the annual gift tax exclusion – presently \$14,000. Some families may want to use a combination of a special needs trust and the 529A but they should consult with their financial advisor. 529A funds can be used for education, healthcare, housing and transportation. You can check with [www.ablenrc.org](http://www.ablenrc.org) to see updates regarding the plan and its implementation.

### From the Director

#### Mary Catterson

We are several weeks into the school year and busy! The students and staff experience a readjustment as we let go of the summer and reenergize for the fall. The mornings are cool and the afternoons warm. I am reading the forecasts for the winter and the Parent Reach call list is updated and ready to go. And we are off to a great school year!

Mary



Rock Brook is live on facebook!!! Check it out and make sure you like our page.

## Parent Involvement / Support at Rock Brook School.



### Comings and Goings

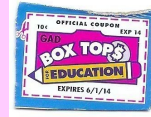
As the new school year starts we welcome some new staff members: Shelly Rzewuski and Antonia Mavrianos, Teachers and Lindsey Watts and Taylor (Levine) Miller, Speech Pathologists. Shelly and Antonia come to us from teaching positions in other schools. Taylor, a recent graduate of University of Virginia, started in the summer and Lindsey completed her Kean University field work with us this summer as well. Erin Stewart, Social Worker also is a new employee who started in the summer. Erin has previous experience in schools and a hospital based setting. We also welcome our new music therapist Jennifer Goldhammer and teacher assistants Matt Nowicki and Denise Ruppe.

Violet Stray, School Nurse has retired after a long career in nursing and 17 years part-time at RBS. We thank Violet very much for her years of commitment and caring for Rock Brook students and staff. Elaine Allen will continue in the nursing office on Tuesday through Thursdays. Lisa Mantz will be in Monday/Fridays and a new School Nurse; Pam Gizzi will switch off with Lisa. Pam has recently retired from the Montgomery Public Schools.

### PNO



Our 1st Parent's Night Out for the 2015-2016 School Year is this Saturday, October 3rd. It's not too late to sign up. Please send in your form tomorrow. It should be a lot of fun.



### Box Tops for Education

We still need a volunteer to count and send in the Box Tops on behalf of RBS. Can you help???

RBS earns cash for our school with these little pink rectangles. If your child wants to tape or glue them on to a collection sheet at home please check out: [www.boxtops4education.com/learn/flyers.aspx](http://www.boxtops4education.com/learn/flyers.aspx)



### Target

If you have a Target charge card you can register it to have a 1 % of your charges made at Target donated to Rock Brook. Go to the Target Red Card site and find the Benefits Tab. Then enroll in the Take Charge of Education program and select Rock Brook as the recipient. There are no fees to set this up.

### Used Printer Ink Cartridges

Donate your used Printer Ink Cartridges. Class 7 recycles them for cash. The money is then used during the Winter Holidays to purchase food and gifts for local food banks and other groups with Holiday Wish Lists.

Please contact Christy Tracey  
at Rock Brook

with any questions.

[christy@rock-brook.org](mailto:christy@rock-brook.org)

## THANK YOU

*Many thanks to all of you who made donations towards our new benches!*

*We like them and we use them!*



## Miss Maggie's Technology Room!

### Technology at RBS: Stop by the Tech Room at Back to School Night!

Technology groups focus on various topics, including but not limited to:

#### Technology for Leisure

Technology for Activities of Daily Living e.g., email, online ordering, etc.  
Word Processing (spreadsheets, graphing, power point presentations, etc.)

Keyboarding

Using the internet as a resource for information

Contributing to digitally-produced individual and group projects.

Internet Safety

Exploring Social Media

Technological vocabulary and concepts

#### Additional Technology Initiatives:

Hour of Code

Kid Blog

Minecraft for Education



**Chat Time** groups will continue as an opportunity for students to review and practice conversational language skills with their devices in the comfort of a small group. Total communication is emphasized as the students work to become effective communicators.

**Parent Connections** time will be scheduled on Tuesdays and Fridays throughout each month. Individual needs and group activities will be the focus.

Any questions email Miss Maggie at [Maggie@rock-brook.org](mailto:Maggie@rock-brook.org)