

Please help RBS with our campaign to raise funds for the new Rock Brook School Bus. The bus has been ordered and we expect to receive it by July 2019! The anticipated cost of the bus is \$69,000. Any donation amount is welcome.

Parent/Team Conferences
Student Early Dismissal 2/13 & 2/14 ~ 1:00 pm

Conferences are scheduled for 30 minute time slots. This is your mid-year opportunity to meet and discuss progress with the teaching teams. You will be receiving your child's progress report prior to your scheduled conference. As with the previous November conference, this conference will be an overview of your child's total performance and progress. The teams will not go through each one of the rated objectives on the report. If there is a specific area you would like to talk about please let the team know prior to the conference to make sure concerns and questions are addressed within your allotted conference time.

CLOSED for ALL on 2/15 & 2/18 ~ Presidents' Day Break

parentReach Just as a reminder, we have the parentReach Emergency Notification Alert System that will notify you with a phone call when we have a delayed opening or are closed due to inclement weather. On the caller ID it will say Rock Brook. **You need to answer and say hello to hear the message.** We will also update the voice message on the school's main office line, update the Rock Brook website, and contact radio station 101.5.

Call the Hotline if You Missed a Call or Want to Replay the Latest Message:
parentReach Hotline - 1-770-406-5581
RBS Site Identifier: 6896



Friday is Pizza Lunch at RBS. We ask families to preorder for their child and to send in money two times a year. The **February- June Pizza Order Form** was due Wednesday January 23rd. Please remember to send in CASH with the order form as that is how we pay for the Pizza. Form is for **February 1 - June 14, 2019.**

Beautiful Winter Art done with Art Teacher Mr. Chris



Important Upcoming Dates

February 2019

- 8 Valentine's Day Celebration
- 8 Safety Patrol Food Drive Ends
- 8 Parent Support Mtg. 2:00 pm
- 9 PNO - 5:30 - 9:30 pm
- 11 100th Day Celebration (Tentative)
- 13-14 Parent Conferences Early Dismissal 1pm - Students
- 13 Evening Parent Conferences (Revised Date)
- 15-18 RBS CLOSED for ALL Presidents' Day Break
- 22 Parent Support Mtg. 2:00 pm

From the Director
Mary Caterson

W. Glenn Famous has been chosen as the next Executive Director of Rock Brook School. Glenn has a long career in public education serving as Principal in several elementary and middle schools in South Brunswick. His commitment to children and their families, as well as to the staff who support them, is well recognized. The formal transition process starts April 1 with Glenn and I working together through the end of the school year. Welcome Glenn!

Mary

By Katie Hardgrove, RBS Principal

Why It's Important to Partner With Your Child's Teacher



I recently read this article from Understood.org by Amanda Morin and it reminded me about the reasons why communication with the teaching team here is so important.

The author states, "With open lines of communication, you and the teacher (team) can help connect what's happening at school with what's happening at home."

The phase, it takes a village, is so true. The students that succeed the most are those in which there is a true partnership between the family and school. What that looks like is open, honest conversations about struggles the child is having at home and in school and then coming together as a team to problem solve. Another key for students success is consistency- strategies used at home can be transferred to school and vice versa.


A partnership with the school team can help your child to feel more empowered, less confused, more confident, and overall more willing to self-advocate since everyone is on the same page.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming parent/team conferences in February!

By Mary Caterson, RBS Director

David Brooks is an Op-Ed Columnist for The New York Times and is Executive Director of the Aspen Institute. The Aspen Institute is a nonpartisan forum for values-based leadership and the exchange of ideas. A recent column in the Times was entitled, "Students Learn from People They Love". He discusses how emotion is essential to reason and that emotions assign value to things. We pay attention and remember who and what we care about. The job of school is to give students new things to love – new friends, new learning experiences. Brooks says that children learn from people they love, and that love means willing the good of another, and offering active care for the whole person. Social-emotional learning is not an add-on to school curriculum: it is the way to have school.

This struck a cord for me in terms of what we strive for at RBS. We try to connect with our students; whatever their skills and capacities might be. We want school to be a positive place where children trust their teachers and achieve things that are challenging for them. We work through frustrations, behaviors, celebrate achievements and share the joy of accomplishments. As we connect with students throughout a day, we increase their ability to connect as well. I observe this every day at Rock Brook. The goal for all – students and staff - is to connect, communicate and contribute to our school community and the community at large.

Parent Communication / Support & HS Student Features	
School Counselor Ms. G. - Jessica Gosses, M.Ed., LPC	
<p>Over the last week, I have heard adults in random places tell kids they were doing a “great” or “good job”. While I love the positivity of this, it made me think a lot. Does the child know WHAT was good or great? Honestly, we do not know, since we cannot read their minds! This led me to think more about the topic of praise and some helpful reminders for praising children. Many of us intellectually know this, but in the moment, we may forget or speak out of habit. Admittedly, some of the following ways of speaking may feel foreign at first, but with time and practice, they will feel more comfortable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be specific - You are using eyes to show me you are listening- great job!• Praise behaviors that are related to emotional/social understanding and not only academic/achievement related - You noticed that Joe was feeling sad and gave him a tissue - what a way to be a friend to him!• Sometimes saying nothing or asking a question is appropriate - praise does not have to be constant. A smile or nod of the head also can express approval.• Your tone and emotion can say a lot even without direct praise - Your teeth are SO clean!• Use praise for things a child can control. Some studies have shown that when praising ability, some children then avoid challenges perhaps for fear of not living up to your expectation of them. For example, saying” You are so smart”, or “ you are the smartest kid ever!” may make your child feel good in the moment, but later they may avoid challenging tasks since they may fail and not get the same praise. Instead, be specific and acknowledge the effort or the process.• Avoid praising things that are too easy or come naturally for children. Some children will interpret this to mean the task is too easy or they are not smart since you think they are doing such a wonderful job at something so simple. Of course, this depends on the child and their ability to attach meaning to the scenario. For more information on this, look up research by Carol Zweck.• Avoid comparing children. Keep your praise specific to the child so that they internalize the message that everyone is different and the goal is not to outdo friends or peers.• Lastly, give yourself a break! Everyone falls into the trap of saying a quick “good job” here and there. It does take some time and effort to think about the words we choose to communicate with our children, but it will benefit everyone in the end!	
Staff Interview of the Month ~ By HS Student Evan	HS Student Larry's News
<p>January Interview with Miss Judi</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What’s your name? “My name is Miss Judi.”2. What class do you work in? “I work in preschool.”3. What is your job at Rock Brook School? “I am a teaching assistant.”4. What do you like about Rock Brook? “I love working with the children.”5. How long have you worked at Rock Brook? “4 years.”6. What do you do at home? “I knit, read and hang out with my grandchildren.”7. What is your favorite subject? “My favorite subject is music class.”	<div><p>In the High School everyone gets a chance to choose a special trip for their birthday. On January 10th the High School went to Applebee’s to celebrate Michael’s birthday. We got burgers, pizza, fish tacos, soup, pasta and more. It was a great day. Evan’s birthday is next. We can’t wait to celebrate!</p></div> <div><p><u>Please help the Safety Patrol help the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen by donating your non-perishable food items by 2/8/19.</u> Safety Patrol will be organizing the goods and also helping some Rock Brook students create take home lunch bags to also donate. We need the following items: Any canned goods esp. Tuna fish, vegetables, beans For the lunch bags we will be making we need the following: Peanut butter, jelly, white bread, individually pop open canned fruit, juice boxes, & napkins.</p></div>
Parent’s Night Out / PNO / 5:30 - 9:30 pm	
The next PNO is scheduled for : February 9	

By , Lisa Gagliastro, Speech Language Specialist, High School	
<p>I am so happy to honor my student, Annika, as January’s student of the month! I have worked with Annika since she joined the high school class this past July. Annika is filled with joy, care and laughter and she is truly a pleasure to have in the high school.</p> <p>Annika is an active participant in the high school’s community-based instruction (CBI) and structured learning experiences (SLE). Every Tuesday, she goes with her class to Shop Rite and the laundromat to buy her groceries for the week and do laundry. She works at Mary Jacobs Library once a week with three other students where they help out with a range of tasks, such as setting up bulletin boards, cleaning and organizing library books, and preparing craft materials. She also works at the weekly high school coffee cart where she goes around to various classrooms to take and prepare coffee orders for school staff. She takes pride in these jobs and always works hard.</p> <p>In speech, we work on maximizing communication both inside and outside of the classroom. Annika continues to amaze me every day with how fluent she is on her AAC device. She is an AAC role model in our school!</p> <p>Annika’s friendly personality shines throughout Rock Brook School. She says hello to everyone, asks about their day and comforts others when they are feeling down. She has a true desire to connect with others and does so with ease. Congratulations, Annika!</p>	
By Lisa Mantz, RN CSN, Rock Brook School Nurse	
Children and Nutrition	
	<p>Proper nutrition is vital for good health and development, especially for children growing up. Consuming “the right amounts of macronutrients like protein, fat, and carbohydrates and micronutrients like vitamin A, iodine, iron and zinc” are important in the development of our mental and motor skills, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Choosing to eat a balanced diet can aid in proper physical and mental development, an increase in productivity, ability to fight off some diseases, and improved immunity (WHO). A balanced diet contains food from the five food groups; dairy, fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins.</p> <p>Children tend to try a variety of foods and begin to formulate their “likes” and “dislikes”. The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) states that much of what youngsters choose to consume is influenced by their “family, friends, and the media (especially TV) influence their food choices and eating habits”. Ways to get your child interested in making healthy food choices would be to include them in preparing and cooking foods, helping to make meal decisions, formulating a grocery list, preparing their school lunch and snacks with you, attending cooking classes for children at your local grocery store, if they offer one. Make good nutrition habits fun and tasty! For more helpful information on nutrition go to choosemyplate.gov .</p> 
	