



Tucson Unified School District
Augustus Brichta Elementary School

2110 W. Brichta
Tucson, AZ 85745
(520) 225-1100/Fax: (520) 225-1101
<http://www.brichtabears.com>

January 2010

Principal's Letter

Dear Families of Brichta Students,

I hope that you were able to spend some relaxing time baking cookies, playing games or otherwise enjoying the company of your children during the winter holiday. My three children, ages 25, 24 and 21, were all home this year, so our time passed joyfully, albeit too quickly!

Here at Brichta, we returned to find construction (but not the unpacking!) of almost all projects completed. I hope that you are finding the new entrance to our south parking lot a little easier to navigate. Inside, some classrooms received new tiling and the library received new carpeting. Our fences were extended in the kindergarten playground area and near the south entrance to provide greater security. Later this month, environment-friendly hand dryers will be installed in our bathrooms and our electrical system will be upgraded.

A special thanks to all of the wonderful volunteers:

**Veronica Canchola, Diana Kingfisher,
Andrew Mandros, Marisa Gonzalez,
Jim Carrasco, Wanda & Greg Wynne,
Dolores Furtado, Clarissa Carley,
Theresa Cariño, Maria Sorio, Erika Dorado,
Cindy Becerra, Sarah Budak, Kelsey Elsmann,
and April Morales,**

who helped to pack and then unpack the books in the library. Special thanks to **Irene Peterson** whose Herculean-like efforts really put us on target for the project. A warm round of applause to our teachers, as well, who came in during their time off or worked extra hard on Monday morning to ensure that all would be ready for the students' return.

Switching gears - We have been approached by Clearwire Communications with an offer to put a cell tower on the southeast corner of the parking lot. Over the next few weeks, we will be getting more information about this proposal and sharing the information through PTO meetings, Site Council meetings and our newsletters. Please be assured that any decision that is made will consider neighborhood and parent input.

For several years now, Brichta parents have requested that the Brichta program be extended to include a 6th grade. Earlier this year, members of our Site Council and PTO again brought up this subject. Concurrently, TUSD announced its optional merger plan wherein schools that were underenrolled might merge with other schools (very simplified version for the sake of space). As part of this plan, TUSD announced that schools could not add on a sixth grade without the provision of rolling out a seventh and eighth grade.

There is research to show that K-8 schools have a positive impact on attendance, achievement, drop-out rates and students' relationships with their teachers.

However, once again, we do not want to make a decision that does not consider the wishes of our families and the community. In light of this, at our PTO meeting on Tuesday, January 12th at 6:30, our Site Council meeting next Tuesday, January 19th at 4:00 and at a special parent meeting on Tuesday, January 19th at 6:30, we will be discussing possibilities for expanding Brichta's program to include grades six through eight. Please plan on joining us for any of these meetings or providing feedback to us on your opinion through email or a letter.

Finally, a quick budget update. Last year, our Site Council, PTO and faculty met several times to determine how our resources would be used this year. Together, we decided to fund classroom and resource positions as a first priority. Given the budget constraints of these economic times, less money was then available in our supply, substitute and monitor lines. However, we have been able to use our supplies wisely, we have shared monitoring duties and, on a couple of occasions, have opted to split classes rather than hire a substitute. I am happy to report that I believe if we continue this prudent use of our funds we will be able to finish the year without *too* many difficulties.

Support staff and I will continue to help monitor on the playgrounds and in the cafeteria with teachers providing support when our schedules prevent us from this monitoring. If you are available and can also help to supervise students before school, during lunches or after school, even if only for 30 minutes, we would appreciate your assistance. Students love it when parents drop by to turn a jump rope or throw a football!

Likewise, if you would like to donate school items at any time, in any economic situation, they will always be appreciated! Pencils go fast around here as well as glue sticks and Kleenex. ☺

At this time, however, there are no plans to divide classes when teachers are out ill *unless the grade level decides that this is the best educational plan for students*. There are occasions when we are not able to get one of our regular substitutes in. On these occasions, we have found that sometimes students complete more work and are more focused when they are divided among the grade level teachers with whom they are already familiar. This will continue to be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Smiles,
Sabrina Cruz



TUSD
Celebrate the US!

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Mark your Calendar!
Brichta Calendar of Events



Tuesday, January 12	6:30 p.m. ~ PTO Meeting in the Library
Monday, January 18	No School ~ Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Tuesday, January 19	4- 6 p.m. ~ Site Council Meeting in the Library 6:30 p.m. ~ Special Parent Meeting to discuss possible 6 th grade at Brichta
Thursdays starting on January 14	4- 6:00 p.m. ~ Extended Library Hours for Brichta Families and Family Fitness in the MPR Come join the fun!!!
Wednesday, January 27	9:00 – 10:00 a.m. ~ Parent Cafecito in the Parent Room
Mondays & Wednesdays	9- 11 a.m. ~ English Class in the Parent Room
Thursdays	6- 7 p.m. ~ Cub Scout Meeting in the Cafeteria

Thank You

We would like to acknowledge and appreciate all who contributed to our school through the Arizona Tax Credit Program:
Nasario Verdugo, Rosemary and Richard Yancey, Kevin Blake, M. Evangelina Loya, Marianne N. Parham, Patsy Van Buren, Selso Villegas, Lee Gardner, Thomas Henderson, Sylvia Carrasco, Jim Carrasco, Diana Kingfisher, Kerry Hodgkinson, Molly Harris, Cheyenne Sotelo, Susan Sotelo, Rosemary Tweet and the on-line donors.
Your support helps the special programming at Brichta!

About Our School Community Garden

Remember to bring your compost! **Any fruit or vegetable, shredded newspaper, leaves, straw, coffee grounds and tea bags will nourish our compost.** Every **Tuesday** will be a compost drop off day. Please bring your donations in a sealed and labeled (name and phone number) container to the garden. We will empty your containers and have them ready for pick up Tuesday at 4 p.m.

Parents, Grandparents, and Family Members: Great News! We hope that you will participate in the Parent Education classes that have been scheduled for the following days and times:

Community Class	Day & Time	Start Date
Parenting Strategy Toolkit	Thursdays 9:30–10:30 am	January 14 (for 6 weeks)
Family Fitness and Games	Thursdays 4- 6:00 pm	January 14
Extended Library Hours	Thursdays 4- 6:00 pm	January 14
Healthy Cooking on Shoestring/Nutrition	Tuesdays 6 – 7:30 pm	January 26 (for 7 weeks)
Family Math (MAPPS)	Thursdays 5 – 6:00 pm (Once a month)	February 4; March 4; April 8; May 6
Student-Led Technology	Thursdays 5 – 6:00 pm	March 11 (for 7 weeks)
Financial Literacy	Tuesdays 6 – 7:00 pm	March 30 (for 7 weeks)

Please contact Dora Martínez at 225-1118 for questions and enrollment information.

Thank You

Tucson Firefighters # 479
Community of Hope Church

For providing several of our families in need with wonderful Christmas Food Boxes and Gifts!

Your thoughtfulness and generosity are greatly appreciated!

Attention Parents and Families

We need your help to solve a problem here at Brichta that we wish we didn't have. Unfortunately, too many students are losing out on instructional time because they are getting to school very late. Some students are getting to school so late that their tardiness can be justified as a half-day absence. Even missing only 10 minutes at the start of the day can negatively impact your child's learning for the day.

Please make every effort to ensure that your child gets to school on time. Please remember that if you do have to be late, that you come in with your child to sign him/her in. We appreciate your support with this.