

The Comet Connection

A newsletter for the families of W. C. Britt Elementary

Volume I, Issue I

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Technology Tip:

Have you visited Britt's website at www.wcbritt.org? Click on the student tab and select "Learning Links" from the drop down menu. There you'll find websites to support your child's learning.

Principal's Corner

Greetings to the Britt Community,

I am pleased to inform you that Britt Elementary School is off to a wonderful start, and I want to thank you for choosing Britt Elementary for your child. Students are engaged in learning throughout the school. Both staff and students have been encouraged as they have reviewed data from the 2008-2009 school year which reveals increased learning over the previous year. We are now setting our academic goals to achieve even greater success. We want every child to achieve to their greatest potential which will prepare them for future learning successes. Therefore, it is important for students not only to meet expectations but to exceed expectations in their learning.

Our Highly-Qualified Teachers participated in many hours of staff development during the summer, and they continue to sharpen their instructional skills during weekly staff development sessions. Teachers collaborate on a weekly basis to plan rigorous instruction for students according to Gwinnett County Public School's Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) Instructional Calendar. Every effort is being made by all faculty and staff members to use researched based Quality-Plus Teaching Strategies that challenge and support each student in their learning.

Let me encourage you to utilize learning links found on our school web site to reinforce academic skills. Please assist your child in navigating to appropriate grade and subject level web sites. You will find a variety of different learning links and computer programs that make learning fun. In addition, the Parent Center has many resources to assist you in helping your child be academically successful. Mrs. Kathy Jackson welcomes the opportunity to assist parents with instructional resources.

Communication between school and home is very important. We are committed to communicating with you through student agenda books, Friday Folders, School Messenger phone messages, The Comet Connection, student progress reports, phone calls, email, parent conferences, and flyers. I hope that you will continue your support of our school program and stay involved in your child's education. Communicate with your child's teacher through email, notes, student agenda books, phone calls, and conferences. In addition, I can assure you that every word and note of encouragement to teachers and to staff members are highly valued and greatly appreciated.

All resources at Britt Elementary are utilized to support our efforts in pursuing excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior. This school year, Britt is very fortunate to have Title I funds to support and enhance our school program for every student. We are sure to see even greater learning gains due to this funding. The faculty and staff at Britt Elementary are dedicated to making this an award winning year as we celebrate Britt Elementary School's 40th year of teaching and learning. Thank you for joining us in this effort.

With kindest regards,
Doris Jones
Principal

Special thanks to **PTA Dad's Club** for doing such a wonderful job getting the outdoor classroom ready for our students to use and enjoy. Many members volunteered their personal time on Saturday, August 29th, to make the difference. We appreciate you!

Looking Ahead in September:

- **Sept. 11th**
Midterm Progress Reports Go Home
- **Sept. 15th**
Local School Council Meeting 10:30 am
- **Sept. 17th**
Parent Workshop: CRCT, Promotional Requirements, & Homework Tips 7 pm
- **Sept. 21-25th**
CogAT Testing Gr. 1,3,5
- **Sept. 24th**
Steak 'n Shake Night 6-8 pm
- **Sept. 26th**
Super Saturday at The Centerville Community Center 10 am—1 pm
- **Sept. 28th**
Family Night at O'Charley's 5:30—8:00 pm
- **Sept. 28-Oct. 2**
Book Fair
- **Sept. 29th**
PTA Meeting 6:30 pm
- **Oct. 2nd**
Fundraiser Kickoff

Parent Center News

Have you visited the Parent Center yet?

Did you know that Title I funds pay for the materials in the Parent Center? The first trailer, directly across from the gym, is the place to be if you want to check-out materials that will support and challenge your child's learning. Like a library, parents can check-out materials on a two-week basis. Reading and math games (board & folder), videos, LeapFrog Pads, TAG Readers, CD's, pamphlets, Versa Tiles, flash-cards, electronic devices, and more will keep your child engaged and excited about learning. Mrs. Jackson, a highly-qualified and certified teacher, is available to help you select materials that will address the academic needs of your child. She is available to review tests with you (such as Benchmark "Interim" tests), guide you through the Britt Webpage, and share helpful websites, such as the CRCT website. Please stop by and make use of this valuable resource. **Parent Center hours are:**

Mon & Tues 8 am—4 pm

Wed & Fri 10am—4 pm

Thurs 12 noon—7 pm

Visit www.wcbritt.org and click on the Title I Tab for upcoming Parent Workshops.

Counselor's Corner-Brenda Straus & Marlene Taylor-Crawford

Tips for Helping Your Child With Homework

Homework can help children master new skills. It can also given them a chance to go beyond what they learned in class. Here are some ideas for helping with homework:

- Set aside a regular time and place for homework. This builds the study habit. Turn off the TV.
- Create a place to keep homework supplies, such as pencils, scissors, ruler, etc.
- Let your child know that homework is their job. You can give some assistance, but you aren't going to do the work for them. Say, "I already went to fifth grade. Now it's your turn."
- Show interest in your child's homework by asking questions.
- Don't let long-range assignments become last-minute assignments. Encourage your child to plan ahead and use a calendar to make sure projects get finished by the deadline.
- Praise your child for their hard work. Ask to see grades on homework assignment
- Talk to your child's teacher if your child is constantly struggling with homework assignments.

What's Super Saturday? (Sept. 26th 10 am—1 pm)

Come join us at the **Centerville Community Center/Library** (3025 Bethany Church Road) for fun and learning. Parents will have an opportunity to meet with local educational vendors and learn more about the Title I Program while children enjoy a fun-filled afternoon with free entertainment including: moon walks, carnival games, face painting, pizza, and more. Families receive a Free Food Ticket once a parent attends one 30-minute informational session. This event includes all Title I Schools in the South/Shiloh Clusters. Be sure to put this date on your calendar!

Kindergarten AKS

LA-Identify and match upper/lower -case letters and identify letter sounds. Describe a personal experience using drawings, letters and words spelled the way they sound (phonetically).

MATH-Within a pattern, identify the missing shape. Sort and compare geometric figures. Name a sphere and cube.

SCIENCE-Identify and demonstrate the use of the 5 senses (taste, touch, smell, see, & hear) and sort objects by their physical attributes (color, size texture, odor, weight, etc). Explore forces that cause a change in motion (push, pull, speed, and direction)

SOCIAL STUDIES- Identify purpose of Labor Day and ways people celebrate it. Explain that

First Grade AKS

LA-Identify beginning/ending sounds, blends, & short/long vowels. Write about a personal experience- use complete sentences, capitalize "I" & use periods correctly.

MATH-Add/Subtract to ten.

SCIENCE-observe, measure and analyze weather data; determine patterns. Use weather instruments (rain gauge, thermometer, & wind vane) to identify weather patterns.

SOCIAL STUDIES-Describe how John Henry & Johnny Appleseed displayed positive character traits: commitment, respect for others & environment, courage, etc. Identify & locate one's city, state, nation & continent on map/globe. Locate major topographical features (rivers, mountains, etc) on a map. Explain patriotic words in songs.

Second Grade AKS

LA-Write words with root (base) words & suffixes (-ing, -ed, -s, & -es). Distinguish between declarative (telling) & interrogative (asking) sentences. Identify poetry & author's purpose. Read words containing *au*, *aw*, *oi*, *ou*, *oy*, *al*, & *all*.

MATH-Add four one-digit #s; use boxes for missing numbers-for example $9 + \square = 12$; extend repeating patterns; use representations for numbers, such as 14 is one rod & 4 units.

SCIENCE-Life cycle of plants and animals (cat, bird, frog, butterfly) Investigate how temperature, light, water, & nutrients affect life cycles.

SOCIAL STUDIES-Before there was GA-locate major topographical features (mountains, rivers) of GA on a map. Analyze how features define GA's surface.

Third Grade AKS

LA-Capture a reader's interest by writing both personal & fantasy/imaginary stories, setting a purpose, and developing a point of view; write using simple & compound sentences; identify author's the purpose when reading.

MATH-explain the relationship between multiplication & addition; extend the pattern in the table (ex. Adds 4 each time). Identify multiplication properties of zero & one.

SCIENCE -learn the differences between the habitats of Georgia (mountains, coast, piedmont, marsh/swamp, Atlantic Ocean).

SOCIAL STUDIES-Use map & globe skills to locate places. Explain political roots of our modern democracy in the USA. Explain importance of basic principals that provide the foundation of a republican form of government.

Fourth Grade AKS

LA-Identify synonyms, antonyms & homophones. Write narrative by establishing a plot, setting, conflict, & including significant events while carefully sequencing events, main ideas, & details. Respond to literature.

MATH-interpret & compare data; determine range, mode, & median. Compare features of graphs; locate, name & graph ordered pairs.

SCIENCE-Weather forecasting-analyze charts/maps to predict events & infer patterns & seasonal changes. Use weather instruments to measure atmospheric conditions.

SOCIAL STUDIES-Describe how early Native American cultures developed in N. America; Describe European exploration in N. America; Compare & Contrast examples of cooperation & conflict between Europeans & Native Americans. Describe colonial life in America as experienced by various people. Use various sources of information.

Fifth Grade AKS

LA-Identify simple/compound subjects, pronouns & predicates, & singular/plural/possessive nouns. Write a narrative by sequencing events, paying attention to character development, point of view, conflict & closing sentence.

MATH-Order and compare decimals. Analyze the effect on the product (answer) with a multiple of 10. For example, $5 \times 10 = 50$, $50 \times 10 = 500$, and $500 \times 10 = 5,000$.

SCIENCE-Compare & contrast the structure & function of single-celled (such as amoeba & bacteria) & multi-celled organisms (such as sponges, & worms). Compare & contrast the characteristics of learned behaviors & inherited traits. Discuss the role genes play in the transfer of traits. Explain the role of chromosomes in development.

SOCIAL STUDIES-Explain causes, major events & consequences of Civil War. Locate important places during Civil War.



**Are you doing
your part by
cutting box
tops?**

**Shining
Comet:
Employee of
the Month!**



**Sheryl
Ferguson**

**Giving
Sharing
Dedicated**

Sheryl gave her personal time to visit children's rooms on the first day of school.

Sheryl is so dedicated to her job that she stayed every day after school to get things completed — especially during her ESOL testing time before school started.

Title I Goes School Wide!

Title I is a federal funded program designed to help all students get a good education. All students are held to the same high standards. The schoolwide Title I program offers services and programs that help improve the education of all students. Britt's Title I money goes towards paying teacher salaries (which lowers the student/teacher ratio), staff development, before and after-school programs, purchasing technology for classrooms, parent workshops, and Parent Center materials and resources.

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Don't miss the first Parent Workshop: Testing/Promotional Requirements/ Homework Help on Thursday, Sept. 17 at 7 pm. For more information and to RSVP, call 678-639-3884 or visit www.wcbritt.org and click on the Title I tab.

Cafeteria News/Gwinnett School Nutrition Program

Start the Day Right

by Karen Crawford, MS, RD, CSP

Teach your child to eat a healthy breakfast every day, and you'll help your child build an important habit for life. Here are some ideas.

- **Why should I eat breakfast?** Start by explaining to your youngster that food gives the energy your child needs to do schoolwork and to play. Ask your child, "Can we drive our car without gas in the tank?" When your child says, "Of course not!" you can tell your child that food is like fuel in their tank.
- **What should I have?** Help your child learn how to put together a healthy breakfast. Using old magazines, have your child cut out pictures of foods. Then, have your child glue several "meals" on separate paper plates. Discuss their choices. Are proteins like eggs, milk, or yogurt included? Are whole grains such as oatmeal, whole-wheat toast, or whole-grain waffles there? What about fruit?
- **What can I do?** Let your child plan breakfast menus for the week. Suggest that your child write each one on an index card and keep them in a small box. Go food shopping together, and help your child select healthy versions of their choices (fat-free milk, non-sugary cereals).

Britt is Bananas for BoxTops!

We've recently launched our 2009-2010 BoxTops for Education fundraising campaign – "Britt is Bananas for BoxTops." This year we've set a goal of earning \$1,300.00 through BoxTops to purchase the school's BrainPOP computer subscription. Please visit www.brainpop.com for more details.



For 12 years, BoxTops for Education has helped America's schools raise over \$250 million to buy the things they need. School budgets are tighter than ever, and W.C. Britt Elementary is asking for the support of families and community members such as yourself.

Sign up to support our school at the BoxTops website (www.btfe.com). You'll get money-saving coupons, family-pleasing recipes, and chances to win Bonus Box Tops for our school! Look for "Britt is Bananas for BoxTops" collection sheets in Friday folders. Download extra collection sheets from the school website.

Why should I join PTA? (It costs \$5.00 to join PTA)

The number one reason to join the Parent Teacher Association is to benefit your child. In doing so, you also help your school. But there are many more advantages. Here are just a few:

- **Get Connected.** There's no better way to know what's happening in your school. Discover Great Resources. The PTA offers a variety of programs designed for parents as well as students.
- **Tap into a Network .** Parenting is not easy—it helps to share ideas, concerns, and experiences with other parents and educators in the community. PTA functions are opportunities to meet other parents and teachers, building rapport and discussing issues that are on your mind.
- **Watch Yourself Grow.** By volunteering with your PTA, you gain valuable experiences. It's an opportunity to put your skills and hobbies to good use for a good cause—your child and all children in the community. Speak Up. Because the PTA is a forum for exchanging ideas, you are encouraged to make suggestions. PTA can be a way for you to more effectively suggest change at your child's school.
- **Witness Improvement .** By getting involved at your child's school, you'll be part of the solution, helping make positive changes. Local PTA's play an important role in fundraising to provide building improvements, curriculum-based programs, and social events—all vital to a school's success.
- **Be a Role Model .** By becoming a PTA member, you'll be demonstrating to your child the importance you place on education.

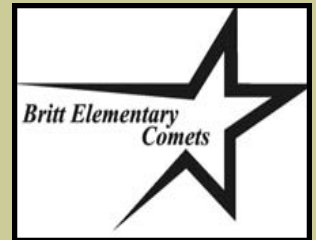
Coaches Corner: By Lisa Brown, Math Coach and Math Specials Teacher K-5

Know Your Math Facts

In order for your child to be successful in math, it is essential for them to know the math facts with fluency and speed. It should be automatic for them. Steady practice is the key to success. There are many fun things you can do at home to help your child learn his or her math facts.

- Check often to see if your child is fluent with math facts. First and second graders are learning the addition and subtraction facts to 18. If your child is hesitant, or has to use his/her fingers to find the answer, they are not fluent with that particular math fact.
- Help them understand the fact families and see how they relate to each other.
Example: $5+2=7$, $2+5=7$, $7-5=2$, $7-2=5$
- Third and Fourth graders need to know their addition and subtraction facts, as well as, their multiplication and division facts. Multiplication and division facts have fact families too.
Example: $8 \times 6=48$, $8 \times 6=48$, $48/8=6$, $48/6=8$.
- Check to see if your child is fluent by asking him or her different facts. Most students have the hardest problem learning the 6, 7, 8, and 9 multiplication facts. It is helpful to skip count to practice multiplication facts. They could bounce a ball as they skip count by different numbers (6, 12, 18, 24, 30, etc...).
- Make learning their facts fun by playing games. You can practice math facts with a deck of cards by having each person turn over two cards and either adding, subtracting or multiplying the numbers. The winner is the person who has the highest number after doing one of those operations; keeping all the cards. The winner of the game is the person who has the most cards when the draw pile cards run out. The Parent Center has games you can check out to help your child learn his or her math facts.

Helping your child learn the basic math facts is the best way for you to ensure success in mathematics. Steady practice is the key to success, but also try to make the practice as fun as possible so it will be a positive experience for your child.



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The Comet Connection Newsletter

The Comet Connection is a publication of W. C. Britt Elementary School for Britt families.

Please e-mail questions or comments to the Editor, Kathy Jackson at Kathy_jackson@gwnett.k12.ga.us

Would your business like to advertise in our newsletter?

**Call Janice Joseph,
Britt's PTA Co Vice-President,
at 770-572-4818
to purchase advertisement space
in *The Comet Connection*.**

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- Briefly highlight your point of interest here.
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