

**Brown Middle School**  
***First Friday Letter***

April 5, 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

April is Autism Awareness Month, and I want to acknowledge our STRIDE program here at Brown servicing students with autism spectrum disorders. Our program here at Brown began fifteen years ago. The Brown STRIDE program has an extraordinarily talented staff that includes: Inclusion Facilitators, Emily Nordone and Monica Massucco; with support from six behavior therapists. The students in the Brown STRIDE program have continued to exhibit some great skills throughout this school year; including participating in an adaptive physical education class, working on literacy skills, completing jobs within the school community, producing some beautiful and creative artwork, and working with peers in the Brown Peer Buddies program on a variety of activities.

**Incoming Sixth Grade:** Fifth grade parents are invited to visit Brown Middle School in session on the morning of **Tuesday, April 9 between 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.** Please report to the main lobby to meet school counselors and Brown parents, have a cup of coffee and be matched up with sixth grade student guides who will take you on a tour of the school.

**Holidays:** There will be no school the week of April 15 – 19, “Spring Vacation.”

**2019 MCAS Testing:** This year, students in all three grades at Brown will be participating in the computer-based version of the Next-Generation MCAS testing. During the Spring of 2017, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) upgraded MCAS to better measure the critical thinking skills students need for success in the 21st century. There will be two testing sessions in English language arts and two testing sessions in mathematics during April 22 – May 24, 2019. Specific MCAS testing dates are listed in the schedule below:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Tests</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Grade 6	ELA (English Language Arts)	Tues., April 23
	<i>(ELA testing sessions on two days)</i>	Wed., April 24
	Mathematics	Wed., May 8
	<i>(Math testing sessions on two days)</i>	Thurs., May 9
Grade 7	ELA (English Language Arts)	Mon., April 29
	<i>(ELA testing sessions on two days)</i>	Tues., April 30
	Mathematics	Tues., May 15
	<i>(Math testing sessions on two days)</i>	Thurs., May 16
Grade 8	ELA (English Language Arts)	Thurs., April 25
	<i>(ELA testing sessions on two days)</i>	Fri., April 26
	Mathematics	Fri., May 10
	<i>(Math testing sessions on two days)</i>	Tues., May 14
	Sci./Tech. Eng. MCAS	Mon., May 20
	<i>(Sci/Tech.Eng. testing on two days)</i>	Tues., May 21

**Spring Sports:** Weather permitting, our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade track & field, softball, baseball, and lacrosse teams will all begin practicing next week and will have their scheduled games and meets beginning after April vacation.

**Spring Play:** There will be one evening performance of our “Spring Play” under the direction of Ms. Miller (drama teacher). Please mark your calendar for Thursday April 25 at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium.

**The Giving Project:** The Giving Project is a special community event that brings families together from Brown and Oak Hill together over a delicious meal while raising awareness and funds for some of the many charities supported by our students and faculty.

Students and faculty are invited to nominate a favorite non-profit organization, along with a brief summary of why they support it. **Nominations are due Monday, April 22.** Click here <http://brownpto.org/giving-project-nominations-2/> for online form to submit your nomination.

All nominations will be shared with both the Brown and Oak Hill communities, and 5 charitable organizations are then selected to be showcased at our fundraising community potluck dinner on **Thursday, May 30, 6-8 p.m. (at Brown Middle School)**. The funds raised at the dinner are then shared among the 5 charities. We can't wait to hear about the charity or cause that inspires you! The potluck dinner volunteer sign-up coming soon!

**AIDS Walk:** It's time to dust off your walking shoes and join the Brown Bears at the 34<sup>th</sup> annual AIDS

5 Mile Walk on Sunday, June 2. Brown Middle School will continue our proud 20 years old tradition of being one of the largest teams to walk in support of the AIDS Action Committee! Information on registration and T-shirt orders will be sent home with your child this month. There will be a kick-off informational meeting on Friday April 26, during 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> extension for everyone interested in participating. Should you have any questions about this years walk, please contact our AIDS Walk Team Captains Elizabeth Messina and Jen Anderson.

**Looking ahead to June:** Our “Moving On” Ceremony for eighth grade students (and their families) will be held on Tuesday, June 18 at 8:15 a.m. in the Newton South High School field house.

Best regards,

John F. Jordan