

Parent Council Meeting Notes

October 23, 2018

- I. Parent council reps are listed on Bright Start's website. Some council reps expressed privacy concerns with this approach, so Kerri will take the full last names of council reps off the website, replacing them with the last initial. Parents can always reach out to council reps using the classroom's pta email address.
- II. To keep Parent Council email lists up-to-date, Kerri will email council reps a transition list. It will include the names of the new kids in the class and the email addresses of their parents.
- III. There have been some office shifts.
 - a. Vanita and Kerri will have offices in the space where the cab company used to be (directly to the left of the Zebras Class). Despite having offices there, they will still be walking around to all the buildings to be present and available for the teachers and kids. This new space will also be used as a training room (and for parent council meetings).
 - b. Ms Gilda, the Assistant Director of Admin, will be in the office in the main infant and toddler building. Ms Mia, the master teacher over the infants and toddlers classes, will also have a desk there.
 - c. Ms Cherie, the master teacher over the preschool classes will have an office in the preschool building next to the Indian restaurant.
 - d. Ms Cynthia's office will now be in the new junior kindergarten/Pandas building (where the Market uses to be). Bright Start also added a staff lounge in this building.
- IV. Master teachers are currently splitting their time between being amazing lead teachers, admin work, and mentoring other teachers. This is a heavy load for them, and they're spread too thin. Bright Start is looking at possibly moving master teachers out of the lead teacher role so they can help with teacher development and growth.
- V. Accreditation update. Bright Start has been working on getting [National Early Childhood Program Accreditation \(NECPA\)](#) for the past year. One of the main reasons that Bright Start decided to finally pursue accreditation is that the military won't allow families to go to a non-accredited center (and Bright Start felt strongly about keeping military families). The accreditation inspection was last Tues. It was very thorough and lasted from 8:30am-7pm. Kerri and Ms V felt that it went well. Bright Start will know the results within the next 60 days. Bright Start will go through the process every 3 years.
- VI. Bright Start will be continuing its sports program again this year, and they will be including all age groups, including the Teddy Bears (who will do their sports indoors). The idea is to get the kids started exercising and moving, teaching them lots of different things. Mr. T, a teacher from the Zebras class, has experience doing this type of program;

he will be running Bright Start's program. It will include a variety of things: ballet, yoga, soccer, tumbling, etc. Each class has sports once a week.

- VII. Pumpkin patch. Thanks to parents for volunteering to help and bring snacks. Rain is in the forecast, so we may need to postpone this event. Ms. V will announce the rain plan soon. If the event is rescheduled, parents are still encouraged to come, but Bright Start understands that parents may not be able to change their work schedules last-minute.
- VIII. Bright Start will be closed on Veterans Day. This will be a professional development day for teachers.
- IX. Bright Start will be providing access to pre-recorded videos about Conscious Discipline. This training will be available to both teacher and parents. Parents will have the option to participate in these trainings, which will likely be Saturday mornings (5 Saturdays in a row), starting in Jan/Feb. There will probably be a limit of 25 parents/class. Nominal cost.
- X. Parent Council reps provided feedback on the school pictures. Feedback was mixed. Some parents didn't receive any photos. Kerri is planning to send out a survey to parents for their feedback. The company will be returning on Thursday, November 8 for retakes.
- XI. Parent Council reps provided Kerri with positive feedback about the Parent Night Out in August. Kerri will check into the possibility of doing another one in the future.
- XII. The Panda and Junior Kindergarten building just had a new door system installed. So far, Kerri is very impressed with the new system. She's considering installing it in the other buildings in the future.
- XIII. In November, Bright Start will receive a phone system upgrade. Each class will have a 10-digit phone number, so parents will be able to dial directly into the classroom. This upgrade will also allow phone calls to be transferred between the offices and classrooms. Kerri will send out the phone numbers once they are available.
- XIV. Bright Start does Employee of the Month every month. If any parents want to recognize an employee, please send an email to management@brightstartva.com. All positive messages about employees are also posted to Bright Start's intranet page for all of the teachers to see.
- XV. A Bright Start parent recently took photos of teachers. Those will be posted in the classrooms soon. Kerri will also look into the possibility of creating a document that has the names and photos of all the teachers – and then making that document available to parents.

- XVI. A security reminder: Parents shouldn't hold any of the Bright Start doors open for people they don't recognize. This is just to protect the children. We haven't had any issues or incidents related to this – this is just a way to avoid problems.
- XVII. Reminder: Please, please, please keep kids home when sick. We know that it's very difficult to miss work when kids are sick, but sick kids infect other kids and the teachers. Please don't dose them up on meds (to bring down the fever, for example) and send them to school. Please help protect the other kids.
- XVIII. Bright Start will be hosting a food drive again this Thanksgiving. The goal of this is to have the kids participate (e.g., have kids pick out food at the store, put the food in box at school). The food drive will take place the week before Thanksgiving. Bags of food are offered to Bright Start teachers who need a little extra help. Distribution is done confidentially. Bright Start buys turkeys for all of the teachers.
- XIX. Bright Start will be collecting money for the teachers (the Red Box) again this holiday season (December). Parents can make voluntary cash donations, which will be split among teachers. The teachers know that this is a cash bonus that comes directly from the parents. Families typically donate \$50-\$100. Cash/check donations can be delivered to the office; online donations (via PayPal) will also be available. Bright Starts asks that parents not give any individual gifts to teachers (e.g., gift cards). Only nominal gifts (e.g., cookies, cards, etc.) are permitted.
- XX. Bright Start will be operating on a modified schedule between December 26 and December 31. Hours will be 8:30am to 5pm. This allows Bright Start to have one shift of teachers, which allows more teachers to have time off with their families.
- XXI. As a reminder, Bright Start's [2018/2019 calendar](#) is on the website.
- XXII. The dates for the next two Parent Council meetings will change.
 - November meeting is moved to Nov 13.
 - December meeting is moved to Dec 11.