



Update from Mrs. Hine:

Dear Brownstone Families,

I hope that my email finds you and your family healthy. I recognize how difficult this time is and how the decision to remain in remote learning may have made it even more difficult for you. Please reach out to me or to Mrs. McDonough if you can think of anything that you need, or even if you just want to share concerns with us. We are working hard to support each family in any ways possible.

Thank you to the PTO for their support of our families during the holidays and also for their work to spread spirit and cheer. Please read their emails to get involved. If you have not been receiving PTO emails, send me an email and I will get you onto the distribution list.

Ms. Kamis is continuing to hand out library books when kids request them. This is a great time of year to catch up on some of the newest books in our collection. Please encourage your child to utilize this service and see the section below to learn how to select and pick up books. Also, we are going to host a virtual book fair this year from January 25th until February 7th! More details will be coming soon.

Picture make ups will take place next Tuesday from 9:00- 10:30. You do not need an appointment, and can enter the school through the gym door. Please see additional details below.

I wish you and your family a wonderful weekend.

Allison Hine

Please reach out to me with any questions. I can be reached at ahine@portlandct.us or at (860)342-6765.

Attachments:

[Winter Activities and Programs](#)

[Book Fair- January 25- February 7th](#)

[COVID Screening Document](#)

News from the Library:

Starting next week, students will be able to check out books from the BIS Library! Students will need to return books they currently have in order to check out new ones. Here's how it will work:

1. Students should use the [google form](#) on the [library website](#) to reserve books. The form has a link to our [Destiny Catalog](#), so they can see what is available. They may submit up to 2 forms at a time.
2. Once the form is received in the library, the books will be checked out to the student and placed in a brown bag and brought to the main office at BIS.
3. Brown bags can be picked up in the main office anytime between 8 AM and 3 PM. The student should check for an email indicating that the bag is in the office and is available for pick up!
4. Please bring any books to be returned to the library when you come pick up your bag!

Please let me know if you have any questions! I can be reached at mkamis@portlandct.us.

Picture Re-Takes:

[Picture Re-Take info](#)

If you would like to have your photo retaken, please bring in the old photos. For those who missed out in getting their photos taken back in September, now is the time to do so. You can order online at mylifetouch.com (Picture Day ID: EVTH4KT4R) or get an order form in the BIS main office. Please remember to bring in the order form and payment if having your photo taken for the first time and not ordering online.

Hours will be from 9:00 - 10:30 a.m. in the BIS gym and no appointment is necessary.

News from Mrs. McDonough:

This week we continued weekly social-emotional lessons (SEL) in both grades. Our lesson this week was on “courage.” Every day students display small and large acts of kindness and courage. During a pandemic, these acts take on even more meaning. It takes courage to ask for help. At BIS we are a family. If you or your child is having difficulty coping with the challenges of living in these changing times, and need some extra support, please feel free to reach out to me at smcdonough@portlandct.us or 860-342-6765, ext. 1615.

Dates to Remember:

Monday, December 14th - BIS PTO (virtual) - 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, December 15th - Picture Retake Day (9:00 -10:30 a.m.)

Wednesday, December 16th - Late Opening - 2 Hr Delay

Wednesday, December 23rd - Friday, January 1st - Holidays/Winter Break



News From Nurse Palma:

All 6th Graders: Need to have a mandatory physical completed this year per the State of CT. Letters went home to families who need to provide a physical for their child. Around 60% of 6th graders need a physical turned in to the school. Thank you for those who turned in or called regarding their child’s physical. The last mandated physical was Kindergarten, so don’t be surprised by the year of your child’s last physical on file. Accepted physicals must be completed after January 1 of your child’s Fifth grade year. Please call me if your child has an upcoming appointment. Physical forms can be found online at the link listed below. I also included one in the mailing. Physicals can be handed in at school, mailed, faxed to 860-342-6766, or emailed to jpalma@portlandct.us https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/School-Nursing/Forms/HAR3_2018.pdf?la=en

Health and wellness: Coping with Holiday stress on top of a pandemic! Let's face it, times are tough. Stress and depression can ruin your holidays and hurt your health. Being realistic, planning ahead and seeking support can help ward off stress and depression. With some practical tips, you can minimize the stress that accompanies the holidays. You may even end up enjoying the holidays more than you thought you would.

1. **Acknowledge your feelings. It's OK to take time to cry or express your feelings. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holiday season.**
2. **Reach out. Call a friend or family member. Volunteering may help lift your spirits. If you are feeling sad or anxious seek out help from a medical professional. If talking to family makes you anxious write them a letter.**
3. **Be realistic. The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. If you can't be with loved ones, create a zoom call or facetime. Make it fun and have a themed meeting. For example, wear an ugly sweater, have everyone tell a joke, wear Santa beards, etc...**
4. **Set aside differences. This can be challenging. Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Chances are they are feeling the affects of the pandemic, Holiday stress, and Winter blues**
5. **Stick to a budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts. Making gifts or creating gift exchanges may help your budget.**
6. **Plan ahead. Plan out your menu, so you are not shopping last minute. Make a list and check it twice. Look ahead and set days to shop or shop online.**
7. **Learn to say no. Plan and simple. Do what is best for you and your family. Saying yes to everything will just get one feeling overwhelmed and possibly resentful.**
8. **Don't abandon healthy habits. Or adapt new healthy habits.**
9. **Take a breather. It is hard at times to do so, but you will be thankful when you do.**
10. **Seek professional help if you need it. Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious, plagued by physical complaints, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless, and unable to face routine chores. If these feelings last for a while, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.**

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544>

<http://www.preventsuicidect.org/> 1-800-273-8255

Substance abuse and mental health: SAMHSA's National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357) [Contact Us - SAMHSA Behavioral Health Treatment Services ...](#)

Friday Joke: What happened to the thief who stole a Christmas calendar? Answer: He got 12 months!!!

Our Week in Pictures:

Today was a BIG Birthday day at BIS where we celebrated birthdays for Shane Guilmette, Liam Currie, Aidan Currie, Nolan O'Connor!

A fun version of Happy Birthday:

