



September 2023

BRIGHTEN ACADEMY

Lady Phoenix Start Strong



Our sports enthusiasts have something to cheer about as the volleyball season is in full swing this month. Led by our dedicated coaches, our student-athletes will have the opportunity to strengthen their teamwork, resilience, and sportsmanship on the court. We encourage all students and parents to come out and support our teams. Let's make this season a memorable one!

The Volleyball team will at home on September 5 and 6. These are the last two home games of the season. Eighth grade night is on 9/6. Come and watch the final home games of the season.

Serving Smiles Each Day

Clay and the SLA team have been serving up delicious meals to 500+ students per day! Menus can be found at <https://sla-bta.nutrislice.com/menu/brighten-academy>. Check out our new, eco-friendly utensil dispensers! We eliminated the plastic-wrapped packs, and we're stocking the dispensers with utensils made from 30% renewable material.



Counseling Department

We are thrilled to introduce you to the dynamic duo of our school counseling team: Ms. Kimberly Sims, our dedicated Counselor, and Ms. Dakota Holloway, our passionate Parent Liaison. Together, they form an essential support system for our students, aimed at nurturing their social, emotional, and behavioral growth.

Kimberly Sims brings a wealth of experience and empathy to her role as our school counselor. Her mission is to ensure that every student feels valued, heard, and understood. Ms. Sims is here to help our children navigate the challenges they may face during their educational journey.

Dakota Holloway serves as our Parent Liaison, forging a crucial link between our school and families. She is committed to fostering strong partnerships between parents and educators, recognizing that a collaborative approach is key to our students' overall well-being.

As the school year progresses, you can look forward to hearing more about the fantastic initiatives and programs Ms. Sims and Ms. Holloway have in store. We encourage you to reach out to them with any questions, concerns, or ideas you may have at dholloway@brightenacademy.com or ksims@brightenacademy.com

Elementary Happenings

Students are engaged in the new math standards and exploring concepts with manipulatives and visual aids. Teachers have been working hard to supplement lessons to meet students where they are. The MAP testing window closes soon, which provides excellent data for differentiated activities and monitoring student growth overall. Grades 3-8 will assess students through the Beacon system in mid-September. Beacon is aligned to GA Milestones and provides data specific to identifying learning progress in each grade level's standards.

All grade levels are beginning their ELA modules soon. Mark your calendars for our first ever Expedition Night on January 18, where all grades will present the culminating products like these poems from fourth grade.



Read All About Our Media Center

Thanks to ESPLOST dollars we were able to reconfigure the media center to make it more inviting and student friendly. We also added many new books to our collection as well as comfortable seating so students have quiet, comfortable spaces to read. We are thankful for all the extra shelving, books, and seating to make our shared space better for everyone.

We are preparing for our first book fair of the year with a new company, Literati. The new company will offer new and different titles with a focus on quality reading and writing supplies. Literati also offers a monthly book subscription club. For every Brighten family book subscription, the school receives a portion. The book fair is September 18th through the 22nd.

Kindergarten, first grade, and second grade attend a weekly story time in the media center. Kindergarten through eighth grade are checking out books regularly. Families can support literacy by encouraging their children to read for at least 20 minutes a night and then summarizing what they read either out loud or in a reading journal.



We Are Crew



We held our first Community Circle with all of our students and staff on Wednesday, August 16. Our students participated in a greeting and a protocol, and we kicked off our PTO fundraiser. Parents are welcome to join us for future Community Circles. Dates and times can be found in the school Calendar of Events.

Specials Update

Our Performing Arts classes certainly help us enhance our craftsmanship and add to our crew spirit. Our elementary band program starts Monday, September 11. Classes are afterschool from 3:45-4:30. Register at www.musikworkx.com.

Our 8th Grade Band students will perform alongside Alexander High School at Alexander's 8th Grade Night September 15th. 8th Grade will also be special guests at the Douglas County Schools Marching Band Exhibition on September 25th at Chapel Hill High School. Go Band Go!!

Our Chorus will perform at September Saturdays at the Douglas County Courthouse on Saturday, September 23, 2023.

Please make plans to join us at our Family STEM Night -- A Journey to Discovery-- on Thursday September 7th, 2023, from 6:00pm-7:30pm. Students, parents, and families can join us for a night of discovery and fun. Donations will be accepted at the door. Kona Ice and Tom's Coffee will also be here for refreshments.

Reminders From the Front Office

We have officially relocated our office to its new location! Thank you for your support and patience as we work through all the details associated with our upcoming renovation. You should begin to see more construction taking place in September and October as we are almost through the permitting process.

There were updates made over the summer to My School Bucks that are causing some issues. We know that this is frustrating for our parents, and we are working with the team at My School Bucks to get issues resolved.

We have noticed an increase in early check-outs in the afternoons. Please know that it will take a few minutes to locate students as we have several classes that are in their connections/specials class and at recess. Remember that we have a cutoff time for early check-outs of 2:45 pm.



Brighten's Board Bash

Our Governing Board hosted it's Inaugural Board Bash. We had many families come out to support our school, meet our Board, and enjoy being crew.

Everyone had a great time playing games, which included a very competitive game of musical chairs as well as our new trivia favorite, Are You Smarter Than A Board Member.



PTO Update

We kicked off the school year with our first and only big fundraiser, POP! We are raising money for items the school may need as well as the teacher grants, events we have at the school, etc.

We also started our membership drive competition this month and its ongoing until September 5th. Whichever class has the most PTO members will get a party of their choice and the teacher will receive items from their wish list. You can check out our website and join by going www.bacspto.com



Clubs At Brighten

We are ready for another exciting year of school clubs!

- Performing Starts -Debate Team
- Brighten Elementary Band -Tome Society
- 4th and 5th Grade Science Club -Yearbook Club
- Entrepreneur Club -JROTC
- Girls on the Run -Roadrunners

See our website for more information about how to join!



Which Middle School Crews Will Rock The House This Year?

This year our middle school crews are structured in a House System where students work together to support each other as they grow academically throughout the middle school years.

Each grade level has six crews and these crews combine to form three houses. The houses work collaboratively to compete against other houses by earning points for demonstrating ethical character, setting and reaching goals, and winning House Tournaments. Through this structure we hope to instill teamwork, strengthen friendships, increase cooperation, and promote leadership.

The House that has the most points at the end of the month will receive a TROPHY that will be held in the House. The House with the greatest number of points at the end of the final tournament will have their name emblazoned on a Brighten Academy Middle School “ROCK THE HOUSES” plaque.



September Events

- 9/4 & 9/5 – Student Holidays
- 9/7 – Family STEM Night – 6:00-7:30 pm
- 9/11-9/15 – Spirit Week – Theme: Brighten is Outta this World!
- 9/12 – PTO meeting on zoom, 6:00 pm
- 9/14 – PTO Potluck (3rd & 6th grade families contribute)
- 9/15 – Movie Night, 6:00-9:00 pm Brighten’s Campus
- 9/16 – Volunteer Workday 9-11am
- 9/18 – Board Meeting 6:00 pm – Media Center
- 9/18-9/22 Book Fair
- 9/19 – PTO Spirit Night Shane’s Rib Shack 5:00-8:00 pm
- 9/26 – Fall picture re-takes – uniform dress code
- 9/29 – On a Roll Breakfast 8:30-9:30 am café – invite required.