

2019-2020 School Year

Welcome! To those of you brand new to Gilson Brown, welcome to a wonderful school and a fabulous school year. To those of you returning! Welcome back! So glad we are together again! We are looking forward to working with you and your children this year. Please know that you are always welcome at Gilson Brown. We are here to help make your child's first years in school both enjoyable and successful. It is an honor to begin your child's educational journey for and with them. This is something we do not take lightly. Research shows that when your child has a successful kindergarten and first grade year, the likelihood of academic success in future years increases. Therefore, we are committed to making that happen.

Our school vision is: **All staff and students at Gilson Brown will reach their highest potential, provide/obtain a high quality education, and build significant positive relationships.** We take this vision seriously and are determined to fulfill our vision's promise.

Attendance

Please be sure to read your handbook in your calendar. School Starts at 8:15. Dismissal is at 2:40. We will be charting attendance every day. Our goal this year is to improve our school's attendance. Each month, in the Newsletter, I will let you know if our attendance improves or worsens. As we improve our daily attendance, we expect to see our students become better readers, better learners, and better students. Every moment of every day counts toward your child's academic success. Please help us create eager learners and happy students by having your child(ren) at school every day, on time and all day. Each week/month I will look at class attendance. The class (one from kindergarten and one from first grade) with the highest attendance average will get to display the Attendance Banner above their door.

Did you know:

- Your child is considered unexcused if you do not call the office to report them off for illness.
- A vacation/trip is not considered an excused absence.
- After 8 excused or unexcused absences, you will receive a letter from our Truancy department.

In order for us to have a smooth start to the school year, **we will not allow any changes in bus stops for the first 7 days of the school year.** If you would like to drop off your student, you are more than welcome to do so. Please follow the drive around the rear of the building to access the parent drop off line. If you wish to pick your child up at the end of the day, please call the office no later than 1:00 pm to make arrangements. Our phone number is 618-463-2175. Keep in mind, the pick up line also goes around the rear of the building so there is no need to come in to the building.

Coming to School Late

Perhaps, on a rare occasion, you may be bringing in your child after the school day has started. Or, possibly, you need to bring something to your child. Upon arrival, you will buzz to be let in. Once in, please report to the office. We keep all visitors in the office rather than having parents in the hallways, walking to class. We do this to maintain safety to all. If you need to see your

child, we will certainly have him/her come to the office to meet you. We do appreciate your compliance with this as we continue to strive for a safe, positive learning environment.

If you arrive after 8:15, your child will be marked tardy. You will need to come into the office and sign your child in. We will walk your child to class. After 8:15, students who arrive late will still be offered something to eat, but it will not be a full breakfast as we will have finished serving at that time. Your child may be offered a pop tart or granola bar.

Parent Pick Up

Parents/guardians coming to pick up students at the end of the day should drive around to the back of the school and get in the line of cars waiting to pick up kids. In order to serve you better and to make pick up quick and easy, there is no need to come into the building. We will walk your student out to you at your car as you move up in line. School dismisses at 2:40. We will begin sending students out at that time.

Our teachers teach “bell to bell”. Because of this, any time your child is late for school or picked up early, they miss out on essential learning that cannot be made up. Please allow us the whole day to work with your child to ensure more learning and greater success for him/her.

Ice Cream Social

Mark your calendars! There will be a Fall Fest/Ice Cream Social on Thursday, September 19th to start our year off together. Watch your student’s backpack for more information. This will be held at our sister school, West Elementary.

Badge Pass

The safety of our students is of utmost importance to us. Because of this, the district has implemented a system in each of the school’s offices to ensure all visitors on campus are appropriate for the school setting.

The system that is in place is called Badge Pass. Everyone who comes to the building to be a visitor, volunteer, attend meetings etc...will be checked against the Sex Offender List. Everyone must present their ID, this can be a military ID, Valid Driver’s License, or State ID, to be run through the system. Once cleared through the database, you will be issued a Visitor’s Badge with your name, the date and your location on it. If you are coming on campus to pick your child up for a Dr. appointment or take home for illness etc...we will not run you through Badge Pass. We will, however, continue to ensure you are the appropriate person to pick up the child as has been done in the past.

As I said, this will be done through your ID. Failure to have an ID with you will result in a delay in your request or the possibility of having to go home to get your ID.

Student Birthdays

There’s no better day on the calendar than your child’s birthday! I have always enjoyed celebrating my own children’s birthday and loved sending treats with them to school for them to share with their class. Here are the district guidelines regarding birthdays and birthday snacks that you should know before that important day.

You MAY send in store bought treats. You will either send with your child or drop off in the office. We do not do juice, treat bags, balloons, flowers, stuffed animals etc. Your child’s

teacher will get the snack from the office and have the birthday student pass them out in class at a time that is convenient for the teacher and her daily plan.

Student Backpacks

It's important that your child bring a backpack, the same backpack, to school each day. You will notice that your child has a hanging tag from their backpack. This tag does a couple of things for us. One thing it does is provides us his/her name if for some reason they are too shy to share it with us. This helps in the beginning of the year for sure. Another aspect of the tag is your child's transportation home. It will indicate whether or not your child is riding a bus or is a parent transport student. Finally, the tag has a barcode on it that we scan at breakfast so that we know who received breakfast at school. This is important for state reporting. Utilizing this system, the students don't have to remember a PIN to enter into the computer, they just turn and we scan their code. Thank you for your help with this.

Growth Mindset

If you are returning to Gilson Brown, you should be familiar with our work toward teaching students about Growth Mindset. If you are new to us, let me fill you in. Studies show there are two types of mindsets. One is a fixed mindset, believing we are born with the only potential and intelligence we will ever have. The other is a growth mindset, understanding that with hard work, determination and grit, we can achieve more, learn more, do more.

At Gilson Brown, everyone believes that mistakes are opportunities for learning and growth. We believe in accepting challenges and really look forward to being challenged every day. We also believe in the power of feedback.

We promise to provide your child with challenges every day. We will allow them to make mistakes and learn from them and we will give feedback to help foster growth.

Each month, I will put a Growth Mindset Blurb in your monthly newsletter. I will share with you what I will be teaching the students in our morning meetings so that you will know and be able to engage with them in the ongoing conversation as a family.

Here is a little bit to get you going toward a growth mindset. We will talk a lot about the Power of Yet. This simple word, YET is so powerful. We teach the students this little trick. Instead of saying, "I can't do this." Change your sentence to say, "I can't do this, YET." Instead of, "I don't understand this." Make it, "I don't understand this, YET." You wouldn't believe the number of students, parents, community members who comment on how they use this in their every day life. I even have to remind myself of the Power of Yet!

My Belief

If you were to ask me, "What can I do to make sure my child has the best opportunity for learning and success in school I would tell you these....

Reading

You must read to your child every day. You should listen to your child read every day. Think of it like this. Michael Jordan didn't just "get good" at basketball because he wanted to be good. He practiced every single day. He was intentional about his work. He had determination and grit. When it was hard, he tried harder. When he made mistakes, he learned from them. It's

the same with reading, writing, math.....Your child must practice, even at home, every day to soar in his/her learning. (Cost - Free)

Sleep

A consistent bedtime is a must. Research indicates that 5 year olds should sleep 10-13 hours at night.

6 year old children should sleep 9-12.

(Cost - Free - Payoff - Huge!)

Sleep helps the body restore/reboot and be ready for the next day. We ask a lot of our children today. In order to be focused and mentally ready for a full day of learning, they must get sleep.

Nutrition

Eating a healthy diet is another major component in helping your child learn. Fruit, vegetables, protein are all important to have each day.

Student Academic Success - (Priceless)

Just this week, I read an article that stated that the most important time in the school year is the first two weeks. This is important for both teachers and parents. You can show your child that their education is important to you to by establishing school routines. Wake up and get ready routines are just as important as after school homework and bedtime routines. Have daily conversations with your child. Provide a quiet place for children to work on school assignments. This one may be a hard one, but, limiting the amount of screen time also increases the chances for success. Please take advantage of this critical first two weeks of school to set the tone for the rest of the year.

Final Thought

Thank you for giving us your trust and your children. Together, we will make this an amazing year for your child(ren). Remember to be in constant contact with your child's teacher. **You** play such an important role in your child's academic success.

I look forward to the rest of this year working with you and your child. Welcome to the best year ever!

JoAnne Curvey

Principal, Gilson Brown Elementary