



## **Welcome Guidebook for New Families**

*A Supplement to the Baker School Handbook*

Welcome to the Edith C. Baker School!

The Baker School Handbook provides a detailed listing of the expectations and rules of behavior at Baker. This Guidebook supplements the information in the Handbook by providing an outline of a typical year and answering many Frequently Asked Questions that new families often have.

Please carefully read both the Handbook and the Guidebook – together, they provide a comprehensive overview of what you can expect from your Baker experience. We hope you will take advantage of the many opportunities and ways families can enrich the high quality public education of their children in Brookline.

*Best wishes for a great school year!*  
*The Baker School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)*



# Important Telephone Numbers and Websites

## **BAKER SCHOOL**

Baker School Main Office	617-879-4500
Baker School Website	<a href="http://www.bakerschool.org">www.bakerschool.org</a>
Absentee Line	617-879-4508
Nurse's Clinic	617-879-4514
Extended Day	617-323-6661 <a href="http://www.bsed.org">www.bsed.org</a>
Baker School on Twitter	@baker_school

## **BAKER Parent Teacher Organization**

Contact PTO at	<a href="mailto:bakerpto@gmail.com">bakerpto@gmail.com</a>
Facebook Page	Join Edith C. Baker PTO
Website	<a href="http://www.bakerschoolpto.org">www.bakerschoolpto.org</a>
Newsletter Submissions	<a href="mailto:bakerpto@gmail.com">bakerpto@gmail.com</a>
This Guidebook online	<a href="http://www.bakerschoolpto.org/new-family-info.html">www.bakerschoolpto.org/new-family-info.html</a>
Korean Parents Network	<a href="http://cafe.naver.com/bakerkpo">cafe.naver.com/bakerkpo</a>

## **BROOKLINE RESOURCES**

Town of Brookline	<a href="http://www.brooklinema.gov">www.brooklinema.gov</a>
Public Schools of Brookline (PSB**)	<a href="http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us">www.brookline.k12.ma.us</a>
Brookline Recreation	<a href="http://www.brooklinerec.com">www.brooklinerec.com</a>
Brookline Libraries	<a href="http://www.brooklinelibrary.org">www.brooklinelibrary.org</a>
South Brookline Neighborhood Assoc.	<a href="http://www.sbna.org">www.sbna.org</a>
Brookline Education Foundation	<a href="http://www.brooklineeducation.org">www.brooklineeducation.org</a>
SEPAC (Special Ed. Parent Advisory Council)	<a href="http://www.brooklinesepac.org">www.brooklinesepac.org</a>
B-PEN (Brookline Parent Ed. Network)	<a href="http://www.b-pen.org">www.b-pen.org</a>
Brookline Community Foundation	<a href="http://www.brooklinecommunity.org">www.brooklinecommunity.org</a>
Brookline QUEST	<a href="http://www.brooklinequest.org">www.brooklinequest.org</a>
Brookline Mental Health Center	<a href="http://www.brooklinecenter.org">www.brooklinecenter.org</a>
Climate Change Action Brookline	<a href="http://www.climatechangeactionbrookline.org">www.climatechangeactionbrookline.org</a>
Steps to Success	<a href="http://www.brooklinestepstosuccess.org">www.brooklinestepstosuccess.org</a>
Bountiful Brookline	<a href="http://www.bountifulbrookline.org">www.bountifulbrookline.org</a>

\*\*Additional information may be found online at the PSB site regarding: commuter families, international families, METCO program, and student support services.



## A YEAR AT BAKER SCHOOL

### Outlined for your Planning

For up-to-date scheduling details throughout the school year, please refer to the Baker School website [www.bakerschool.org](http://www.bakerschool.org), and the PTO website [www.bakerschoolpto.org](http://www.bakerschoolpto.org)

#### FALL through WINTER

A ***Packet of forms*** will come home in backpacks from the school. Sign and return them to the school office (Health/Immunization Forms & Emergency/Directory Contact Forms)

Get connected by **Email:**

- Opt-in to PTO email newsletter list at [www.bakerschoolpto.org](http://www.bakerschoolpto.org)
- Join your class email lists that the teacher and Room Parents organize

***Kindergarten Families:*** in first week of school after drop-off, meet with school administrators and PTO for a welcome coffee called the “Boohoo Yahoo”. The children and their families are invited to an afterschool Popsicle Party on the Kindergarten playground in the first few days of school

Sign up on the PTO’s website to be a ***Room Parent*** to assist your classroom teacher, organize class activities and support the PTO’s activities.

***International Parents Orientation:*** in September or October. Includes presentations by ELL staff, school administrators and PTO (including Korean Parent Network)

Back to School ***Classroom Curriculum Events:*** each grade hosts a morning or evening presentation for parents detailing the year’s curriculum. Your classroom teacher will notify you.

***Program Curriculum Presentations:*** throughout the year, starting in September, Baker Specialists host a presentation describing their work in/out of classrooms with students. Specialties include: Math and Literacy Specialists, ECS (Enrichment and Challenge), Special Education.

***Box Tops:*** Baker School collects Box Tops! Please clip, save and send into your child’s classroom teachers. These are redeemed to support the PTO annual fund.

***Family Directory:*** If you would like to add your contact information to the PTO compiled Baker School Directory of addresses and phone numbers that is distributed to parents electronically, please complete the beginning of the year school paperwork or visit the Baker PTO website to submit your information electronically.

***Annual Fund:*** PTO’s yearly donation drive to fund programs and classroom support for teachers begins in September/October. Donate anytime online at [www.bakerschoolpto.org](http://www.bakerschoolpto.org) or look for your letter in the mail with complete details.

***Student Council:*** Student Council is a popular activity for grades 4-8. Under Dr. Brown’s supervision, they plan school wide activities and fundraisers. More info on the Baker School site.



**School Picture Day:** early October with retakes approximately two months later. Parent volunteers can sign up for short shifts to assist photographers.

**Halloween:** Teachers may plan classroom and grade-level celebrations, with parents invited to bring food or party supplies, or attend the celebration (depends on the grade). Your classroom teacher will provide you with details, as well as information about the school-wide parade of costumes on the upper playground. The Friday before Halloween, the PTO organizes volunteers to throw a family Halloween Party for the whole school community.

**Thanksgiving Assembly:** Organized by the administration, various grades perform at the all-school assembly, for students only.

**Scholastic Book Fair:** The PTO and many parent volunteers set up, organize and run a three day book sale in early December. Books for children and adults, as well as items from teacher wish lists are available.

**Winter Holiday Assembly:** Music teachers prepare an all-school assembly featuring some grades singing songs, reciting poems, or playing music. Grades featured vary by year.

**Game Night:** a night for K-3 and/or 4-6 grade families to get together and play games.

**Valentine's Day:** lower grades celebrate with individual classroom parties and in past years Student Council holds an afterschool party for Kindergarten students.

**Lunar New Year:** lower grades celebrate with individual classroom parties often featuring parents coming in to bring traditional foods and activities. Your classroom teacher has more details.

**WINTER  
through  
SPRING**

**100<sup>th</sup> Day of School:** Kindergarten traditionally celebrates the 100<sup>th</sup> day with a big party. Teachers will provide details about donations of supplies and parent volunteer opportunities. Lower grades usually celebrate in their classrooms, and third grade celebrates "halfway day" on the 90th day of school instead.

**MLK Day Assembly:** lower and middle grades celebrate in assemblies featuring readings and musical performances by students, organized by the school.

**American Heart Association Wear Red Day Fundraiser:** Informational packet mailed in January from PE Faculty, event in early February.

**Sock Hop:** an annual event to raise money for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip; a family night of dancing, snacks and fun!

**MCAS/PARCC Testing:** State standardized testing for Math and English, includes ELL testing. More information will be available from the school.

**Musicals and Performances:** 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade musical, Kindergarten's Carnival of the Animals, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade's BUGZ show, and instrument and choral concerts throughout the spring.

**Culture-Fest for Families:** An evening to celebrate the diversity of our community. Variety changes each year, many volunteers are needed to help bring it together.



***Teacher and Staff Appreciation Luncheon:*** Annual PTO-sponsored event for all Baker teachers and staff to enjoy each others' company and delicious homemade foods prepared by parents. Volunteers help make food, provide coverage for staff, and assist with setup and cleanup

***Art Show:*** organized by Arts Faculty and Arts Council, an evening show of all students' work hanging at school

***Baker's Got Talent:*** started in 2014 by the Student Council; this is the annual Baker talent show for students

***Baker Film Festival:*** started in 2014 by the Student Council and modeled after the Academy Awards, students in grades K-8 can submit films in a variety of categories for review by peers and staff; awards are given out on the culminating Awards Night in early June

***Graduation:*** Celebration of 8<sup>th</sup> Graders as they move onto High School, hosted by 7<sup>th</sup> Grade parents in the Circle at the end of June

*This is an informal listing of the major events that happen yearly – new events can be added at any time, and individual classes or grades may have other special days not listed here. Please ask your classroom teacher if you need advance notice of events for your planning.*

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

*For additional information, please refer to THE BAKER SCHOOL HANDBOOK*

### **PICKUP & DROPOFF**

*What time does school start and end?*

The school day starts at 8:00 a.m. for all students; doors open at 7:50 a.m. Students who are not in their classroom by 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy (late). Pickup is at 2:30 p.m. except on Fridays when students are to be picked up at 1:40. Doors to the school lock at 8:10 a.m. If you arrive after that time, please enter through the front main door and sign in at the office. Parents are encouraged to establish a meeting location with their children outside of school.

*Can my child come to school early?*

Students may be dropped off at 7:30 a.m. to the Cafeteria and they are released to their classrooms at 7:50. Students are not to wander the halls before 7:50, as teachers do not open their classrooms to students before 7:55.

*Where can I park my car for pickup and drop-off?*

You may park on either side of Beverly Road, except when there is heavy snowfall and No Parking signs are posted. You may park on the designated side of Zanthus Road (please watch signs). NOTE: in the winter, from approximately December through March, Beverly Road becomes a one-way street during pickup and drop-off, starting at Zanthus and ending at Grove (Independence) St. This is coordinated through the Brookline Police Department for public safety and parents and Beverly Rd Residents are notified before it is instituted yearly.



*Can I use the school parking lot during school hours? Can I park in the Circle?*

Parents may not park in the school parking lot, and may not make U-turns in the lot during pickup and drop-off. This is to ensure the safety of children walking. Parents may not park in the Circle during drop-off, as it must be kept clear for busses and vehicles stopping to let kids out. The circle is closed to all traffic at dismissal. Brookline Police will ticket cars who park illegally or who leave their cars in the spaces marked "live parking only" – you must remain in the car if you stop there for a few minutes at drop-off or pickup.

*Is there a school bus for Baker?*

Local residents who live outside the walkable area may inquire to the Town about the local bus. METCO families should receive bus information through their METCO coordinator.

*How do Early Dismissal Days work?*

Please check the master Brookline Public Schools calendar for all early dismissal days, as they vary by grade (some are K-6, some are K-8). Baker's PTO, Grade 5 or the Student Council traditionally hosts a series of movies in the Auditorium on early dismissal days as a fundraiser. For a small fee, students watch an age-appropriate movie under the supervision of the Baker staff, parents and older students. Early dismissal days are typically scheduled to accommodate Parent-Teacher Conferences.

### **BEING LATE, ABSENT OR SICK**

*What if my child will not be in school or will be late?*

It is very important that you let the school know if your child will not be in school for any reason, sickness, travel, etc. Please notify the school by calling 617-879-4508 any time - you can leave a message. If your child is late due to a medical appointment, please have the doctor's office write a note for the school. Your child must sign in upon arriving to school in the main office.

*What happens if my child becomes ill during the school day?*

Baker School has a full time nurse. If your child becomes ill at school, he or she will be taken to the nurse's office and you will be notified.

### **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS OR EMERGENCIES**

*How can I find out if school is cancelled or having a late opening due to a weather situation?*

"No school" and delayed opening announcements due to weather are given to several radio and TV stations, including WBUR 90.0 fm and TV channels 4, 5 & 7. Cancellations and delays will also be posted at [www.brookline.k12.ma.us](http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us). Parents are called if school is cancelled for other reasons. Return your contact information so the office knows how to reach you.

*If case of emergency during the school day, will the school contact me?*

Yes, it is critical that the school has your telephone numbers - home, office and cell - so we can get in touch with you in an emergency. The school will send forms home for you to fill out. Please complete the forms and return them as quickly as possible. Baker practices a yearly evacuation drill (students walk to Temple Emeth) and a lockdown drill (students secure themselves inside their classrooms), as well as occasional fire drills.



## **VACATION DAYS**

*When are the vacation days?*

You can view the master calendar for the entire school year at the Public Schools of Brookline website: [www.brookline.k12.ma.us](http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us) (search “Calendar” from the PSB homepage). Please also refer to the Baker School handbook. Parents are asked to plan family vacations that align with given vacation days. Families should know that homework and classwork will not be provided to a student who is leaving on an extended vacation. Classroom instruction from one day informs the instruction for the next day. Classroom learning is made up of much more than paper and pencil tasks, so missed instruction provided by the teacher, class discussions, interactions with peers and hands-on activities cannot be made up. Make-up work will be provided when the student returns.

## **CONTACTING OTHER PARENTS AND FAMILIES**

*Will I receive a Directory of Baker Families so I can make playdates for my child?*

In younger grades, *with parent permission*, teachers will compile a “Playdate List” for their own classrooms and distribute the list on paper. The PTO compiles a Directory based on families submitting their contact information through the office and town at the beginning of the school year. The Directory is available electronically only, and is distributed to current Baker families who have elected to participate, for personal use only.

*What resources are there for International Families?*

Baker is an international school and we try to provide social activities for all our parents. All parents are invited to participate in all our programs. Our large Korean population has enjoyed a strong Korean Parents Network that works with PTO to support the school. Please visit [cafe.naver.com/bakerkpo](http://cafe.naver.com/bakerkpo) for more information.

## **IN THE CLASSROOM**

*How do I communicate with my classroom teacher?*

All Baker teachers are accessible to parents, although teachers may have a different preference - some are comfortable on email, some prefer to arrange a phone call. Your child’s teacher will tell you in September at your Classroom Curriculum event. Please remember that emails are considered public records so do not include anything in an email to a teacher or staff member that you would not be comfortable sharing publicly. You may email a teacher and ask them to return a phone call to you about a personal matter, without going into written detail about the matter. You may also send your child to school with a note for your teacher requesting a meeting or phone call.

*How does the school communicate with me regarding on-going events and activities?*

- Your classroom teacher will ask for your email address and will send emails; or may send a paper newsletter/information home in backpacks. Your Room Parents may email you using the teacher’s list, or, if your teacher does not create a list for classroom use, your Room Parents may circulate an optional sign-up form they will use to communicate with you throughout the year. As well, several teachers keep their own websites and blogs for an inside peek into the classroom.
- The school will email important notices from the Superintendent of Schools, or the School Nurse, as needed. Sometimes you will receive a “robo-call” from the school or the



Town (School Department) about various issues such as a weather closing, a planned evacuation drill, or a negative balance in your child's cafeteria account. To make sure your email address is on file with the school, contact the Baker Main Office at 617-879-4500, or complete the Data Packet that will be sent home to all families each fall.

- The PTO will email Community Updates every Friday to parents, and we will also email grade-level announcements, appeals for volunteers, or important information. To make sure your email address is up-to-date with the PTO, visit our website and click "Join Mailing List" to update your profile. Also updates will be posted on the PTO Facebook page.

#### *My child is having a problem in school - what do I do?*

First, talk to your classroom teacher. He/she will help you determine the next best steps. If the problem is academic, there are support professionals at school who can assist you. If it is behavioral, you may want to arrange a meeting with your classroom teacher and the guidance counselor. If you suspect bullying, please educate yourself on the Massachusetts laws regarding Bullying Intervention, posted on the Public Schools of Brookline website. Please be sure to report suspected bullying behaviors to the Principal or Vice Principal.

#### *When are Parent-Teacher Conferences?*

In the Fall and Spring. Your classroom teacher will inform you of the dates. You will sign up on paper outside the classroom, or via email, as the teacher prefers. Afternoon and evening hours are available. Some teachers may have morning hours available as well.

#### *Can my child bring snack to school?*

In the lower grades children do bring snack to school. Baker classrooms are NUT FREE and we ask that no food containing nuts (peanuts or other types of nuts) be brought into the classroom for snack or for parties. Your classroom teacher will provide additional information about allergies that may be in your class each year.

#### *How does Baker celebrate children's birthdays in school?*

Each classroom teacher has their own guidelines, which they will communicate to you directly. In general, classrooms are nut-free and because of allergies food items are discouraged. As a school, we are trying to reduce the amount of unhealthy foods brought into the school. If you choose to bring in a treat for your child's birthday, please consider alternatives to cupcakes and cookies. Some families have celebrated birthdays with items such as stickers, decorated pencils or even a book donation to the classroom or library.

#### *How can I get more involved in the school and in my child's classroom?*

Teachers welcome parent volunteers at various occasions throughout the year. Most lower-grade teachers will post sign-up sheets or send 'sign up genius' emails for specific events, and you can volunteer to be a Room Parent through the PTO as well to assist your teacher with various ongoing needs. Talk to your child's teacher and sign up online to be informed of volunteer opportunities and to receive the PTO Newsletter. Please visit our website, [www.bakerschoolpto.org](http://www.bakerschoolpto.org) and click the "Join Our Mailing List" box to get started.





*Can I chaperone my child's field trips? When are they?*

Please ask your classroom teacher about trips your class may be taking. Parents are required to submit a CORI form to the school (criminal background check). You can download the CORI form on the Baker School website (forms page) or ask your classroom teacher for one. If you want to plan ahead to take a day off from work to join a field trip, please ask your classroom teacher for dates.

### **IN THE CAFETERIA**

*Can my child bring peanut butter or other nuts for lunch?*

Yes, nuts are allowed in the cafeteria and we provide a nut free table for children with allergies.

*How does my child buy food in the Cafeteria?*

Parents will receive printed information each Fall containing their child's PIN ("Personal Identification Number") number for Brookline Food Services and instruction on how to use the online MySchoolBucks system to load money to their account. Using MySchoolBucks.com requires a service charge, however, it allows parents to monitor what their children are buying. Alternately, parents can deposit cash or a check to the mailbox hanging on the wall outside the cafeteria. When your child reaches a negative balance in their account, parents will receive an automatic phone call from Food Services or an email from MySchoolBucks with a reminder to replenish the account. Middle grades are permitted to use the vending machines in the cafeteria. For more information, visit the Food Services link on the Public Schools of Brookline webpage, [www.brookline.k12.ma.us](http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us). You can also download the monthly menu there.

### **AROUND SCHOOL**

*What is the difference between Baker School Extended Day (BSED) and Enrichment?*

Enrichment classes are semester long once-weekly classes taught by Baker teachers after school, run by BSED. Classes vary but typically include: sports, fencing, art, cooking, karate, chess, etc. You will receive a printed booklet from Enrichment at the start of each semester. Enrichment classes are open to all students whether or not they are enrolled in Extended Day, and fill mostly on a first-come, first-served basis. There are a few classes that are drawn by lottery. Kindergarteners must be picked up from the classroom by a parent or older sibling and delivered to the Cafeteria to attend an Enrichment Class.

*Where is the Lost and Found?*

At the base of the first stairwell (enter the school and descend the first set of steps on your right just past the main office), outside the Gym (enter the school and proceed straight to the end of the hall), and outside the multipurpose room at the end of the second/first grade hallway. Please check regularly! PTO donates unclaimed items to charity seasonally.

*Where do I go if I signed up to volunteer in school?*

You must sign in the Guest Log at the main office when you arrive to volunteer and sign out when you leave. This is for everyone's safety so the school knows who is in the building at all times. If you need directions inside the school, please ask the office staff.

*What do I do if my child forgot something at home they need at school for the day?*

Please bring the item to the main office and the office staff will phone the classroom for a student to retrieve the item. Please do not go to your child's classroom to deliver forgotten items.