

# **Fireside Elementary - Ambassador Program Guide Information Source and Support Network**

Welcome to Fireside Elementary!

**The goals of the Ambassador Program are to:**

- Ensure that every child and family in the classroom is supported to negotiate the resources of the school and the community.
- Support access to extra-curricular and activities both within the school and externally including information and funding.
- Provide a source of ongoing support, information and connections for new families to Fireside, International and Bilingual Families.
- Build a more inclusive community.
- Celebrate diversity at Fireside Elementary.

The Ambassadors (volunteer parents) are here to help answer any questions you may have in navigating the school system and to support your family throughout the year. Please feel free to contact an Ambassador with any question. We want to help you feel connected to the Fireside and greater Louisville community.

## **Fireside Ambassadors**

Brenda Jones (Ambassador Program Coordinator) [brendajones2313@gmail.com](mailto:brendajones2313@gmail.com) 303-748-3117

Gillian Millar [Gillianmillar@me.com](mailto:Gillianmillar@me.com) 720-470-8810

Natalie Swetye [natalie.swetye@gmail.com](mailto:natalie.swetye@gmail.com) 703-725-8589

Ulana Bihun [ulibvv@gmail.com](mailto:ulibvv@gmail.com) 303-547-5690

Kristi Kremer [kristi.kremer@yahoo.com](mailto:kristi.kremer@yahoo.com) 303-332-8468

## **SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

**Friday Folders:** Every Friday, your child's teacher will send home important information through your child's Friday folder. Be sure to look for it in your child's backpack! The Friday folder will contain important information from the teacher, the district, and the community. In the first weeks of school, there is a lot of information that comes home, but this does slow down as the year progresses. If you have any questions about the items found in the folders, please contact us. Please ask if you have any questions from the Friday folders.

**Fireside Directory:** The Fireside Directory is a place where families share their contact information (phone number/email address). We highly recommend that you add your contact details to the Fireside Directory. It's useful if parents from your student's class can contact you to arrange carpools, playdates, and parties so your child and/or family can be included in social activities outside of school.

**Fireside Chat/ Friday Communication:** The school will email you each Friday. This communication often includes a blog post from the principal as well as other pertinent school communication. Once a month the school will include as part of that communication the Fireside Chat, an electronic newsletter with more information about happenings at school

**Fireside Parent Teacher Organization (PTO):** The Fireside PTO will also email you additional information, including information about fundraising, school supplies. This information is also available on the PTO website (found below).

The Fireside Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is made up of parents, teachers, and our principal. We work together to provide a quality scholastic experience for all Fireside students and to make Fireside an excellent school for our community.

The PTO uses family events and community activities to raise funds for Fireside. We do not ask our children to sell door-to-door, so please help us by supporting our events and activities. Your donations are always welcome, even if you cannot join us.

The PTO funds many projects including: additional teaching tools in the classrooms, buses for field trips, the annual science fair, new computers, playground equipment, classroom books and supplies, additional paraeducator hours, and more.

All members of the Fireside community are welcome and encouraged to attend monthly PTO meetings, which are usually on the third Tuesday of each month from 6:00-7:30 PM in the school library. School needs and budget issues are discussed and voted on by attendees. This is your chance to influence just how PTO funds are put to work in your child's school! Childcare is provided.

## IMPORTANT WEBSITES AND USEFUL SOURCES

**Camps:** The Ambassador program has created a list of summer camps. Summer camp registration does start early in this area (sometimes as early as February). Ask an Ambassador for guidance on this or any other school vacation ideas. (Check PTO website for information on camps)

**Fireside PTO:** <https://sites.google.com/site/firesideptoco/> Please visit this site to learn more about fundraising, Volunteer opportunities, school calendar, PTO minutes and much more.

**Fireside Elementary Homepage:** <http://fie.bvsd.org> Please visit this site to learn important school announcements, report an absence, notice of school closures, information on Fireside activities and clubs and information about teachers and contacts.

**Lifelong Learning:** <http://www.bvsd.org/lll/Pages/default.aspx> Lifelong Learning has many courses for adults and children. Some of these classes are held at Fireside after school. If your child participates they will make their own way to this afterschool activity and you will collect them when it is finished. There are fantastic after school programs from learning Spanish to participating in the school musical. We recommend you review the website to see what's on. The list of classes becomes available in September.

**Louisville Recreation Center:** Lots of activities for the entire family. Many children participate in the sports activities organized by the recreation center.

<http://www.louisvilleco.gov/residents/recreation-senior-services/>

**YMCA:** Lots of activities for the entire family. <https://www.ymcabv.org/>

**School Age Care (SAC):** SAC offers an inclusive, fee-based, licensed program that provides a safe, fun and enriching environment for children before and after school at Fireside.

<http://bvsd.org/sac/Pages/default.aspx>

## KEY FIRESIDE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES *(Parent volunteers are always welcome and needed at these events)*

**Parent Teacher Conferences:** Fall: October 16, 18, 24th; Spring: February 19, 21, 27th. Twice a year parents have the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher to talk about their child's learning and progress. This informative meeting lasts about 20 minutes. A sign-up sheet will be sent out via email several weeks before conferences. The PTO also organizes volunteers to provide meals for the teachers on these evenings.

**Jog-a-thon:** September 14, 2018. Fireside's biggest fundraiser. Students run/walk laps by grade level during the school day to show enthusiasm and support. Parents can come cheer on their child(ren). Families are asked to help raise money for Fireside by asking family members, neighbors, and/or making personal donations to the school. Some children donate the money

they make from lemonade or bake stands. Our community understands that not all families will be able to contribute, and that is ok. All children can participate in the jog-a-thon run and receive a free t-shirt. There will also be a community celebration on September 21, 2018 in the evening.

**Spirit Nights:** Several times a year, local restaurants will host a night where a portion of their earnings from that evening will be donated to Fireside PTO. This is a fun night to eat out and see friends while supporting the school.

**Community Literacy Week:** Each year the school celebrates literacy week. There are opportunities for parents to read to the children and many interactive programs during the week.

**Science Fair:** Spring 2019. The Science Fair is a great time for students of any grade to explore and discover new ideas and then share their knowledge and enthusiasm of inquiry with others in a supportive environment. Students display their projects and meet with judges to explain their discoveries. The fair is non-competitive for grades K-2 and competitive optional for grades 3-5. Students can work alone or with a partner. An informational packet will be sent home in the Friday Folders approximately a month prior to the fair explaining what is necessary to participate. Janine Fitzgerald, Tag Coordinator, is the organizer of this event  
janine.fitzgerald@bvdsd.org.

**Field Day: Spring 2019:** This is a day of fun non-competitive games that takes place for several hours during the school day. Parents are welcome to come watch the fun. A schedule for each grade level will be sent in Friday Folders.

**Class/grade level Parties:** There are three grade level or class parties that take place schoolwide: Halloween, before Winter Break, and Valentine's Day. Parent Volunteers work with the teachers to provide food and activities for each class. Parents may attend these parties and are encouraged to contribute to supplies or food needed.

**International Potluck:** Spring 2019 A family night of celebrating our diversity. Families bring a dish that represents their heritage.

**Teacher Appreciation Week:** Spring 2019. We have amazing teachers at Fireside and this is a week where parents and students come together to show our appreciation! The PTO organizes different activities from encouraging students to write thank you cards to bringing in a flower. Some families do things on their own like bringing their teacher coffee or a gift card. Here is a

link to the Staff Favorite Things page:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1u8PTCqHnmaGJBIQuslob4vNd4NrUVpKCq9Ii\\_FuRdlc/edit#gid=195245236](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1u8PTCqHnmaGJBIQuslob4vNd4NrUVpKCq9Ii_FuRdlc/edit#gid=195245236)

**Bike to School Week:** Students can register to bike or walk to school. Schools with the most participation can win a party.

## **CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES AT FIRESIDE:**

**Fire Choir:** An extra-curricular choir for 4th and 5th grade students run by our music teacher, Doug Haley. Rehearsal is every Tuesday and Thursday at 7:10 a.m. in the amphitheatre when school is in session. Please contact Mr. Haley with any questions: [doug.haley@bvsd.org](mailto:doug.haley@bvsd.org)

**Fireside Gazette Newspaper:** School newspaper open to all 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. Student reporters write articles for the newspaper which is published twice a year. Contact Mrs. Burgert with any questions: [shannon.burgert@bvsd.org](mailto:shannon.burgert@bvsd.org)

**Chess Club:** An after school club open to all students interested in playing chess. This club meets for about a month in early spring. Please contact Mrs. Fitzgerald with any questions: [janine.fitzgerald@bvsd.org](mailto:janine.fitzgerald@bvsd.org)

**Student Council (4th and 5th grades):** The student council helps share students' ideas, interests, and concerns with teachers and school principals. They often also help organize school community projects, like canned food drives for people in need. Student representatives are elected by their peers in the fall.

**Destination Imagination (3rd - 5th grades):** The Destination Imagination Challenge Program is a fun, hands-on system of learning that fosters students' creativity, curiosity and courage through academic Challenges. Challenges blend STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education with the arts and social entrepreneurship. Students who participate learn invaluable 21st century skills as well as patience, flexibility, persistence, ethics, respect for others and their ideas, and the collaborative problem solving process.

**Running Club (all grades):** The Fireside Running Club is a group that will meet to run and promote cardiovascular fitness throughout the school year. All are welcome. For more information contact, [Suzanne Johnson, P.E. Teacher](#) and [Jamie Roth, 2nd Grade Teacher](#).

**Fireside Falcon News Network (5th grade):** FNN is a video news program put together each month by Fireside Fifth Graders. FNN conducts interviews and report about interesting events happening at Fireside. FNN has two faculty sponsors- Mr. Millard and Mrs. Winsberg.

## **GETTING INVOLVED**

**Back to School Night** August 29, 2019. Held at the very beginning of the school year, this is an evening where parents come to the school and your child's teacher presents an overview of what to expect in the coming school year. If you are unable to attend this important event, it is recommended that you contact your child's teacher for classroom information.

**PTO:** The Parent Teacher Organization is open to all parents. Even if you cannot come to meetings, there are many ways you can volunteer your time (see Key Fireside Activities and Events section).

**Volunteering in your child's classroom:** Teachers love to have parent support. Volunteer opportunities vary from teacher to teacher. Teachers usually will tell you what opportunities there are for classroom volunteers on Parent Information Night held at the beginning of the school year. All volunteers must complete a mandatory background screening prior to volunteering in the classroom, at events, or on field trips.

**School Accountability Committee (SAC):** The purpose of this committee is to provide opportunities for parents, staff, and community members to be involved in the planning and evaluation of the school improvement goals and the school's instructional programming. There will also be topics of discussion added to the agenda to ensure parents are well informed and abreast to current research and topics of interest.

**Field Trips:** Depending on the grade level, teachers may organize a field trip where students visit a curriculum related site or event outside of the school. Parents are often needed to chaperone. A field trip permission form will be sent home in the Friday Folder. Please sign and return this form. Sometimes a fee is requested to cover the cost of buses and entrance fees. You do need to have passed a volunteer background check.

**Garden:** We have a lovely garden that students help plant and sow. Parent volunteers are needed to help with lessons related to the garden.

**Ambassadors:** Ambassadors are here to support families with any questions they may have in navigating the school. Ambassadors can help provide information on activities in and out of the school and are available to support all families. We recommend new families connect with Brenda Jones, Ambassador Coordinator (see above). Ambassadors are here to support new families, International or English Second Language families to ensure we have an inclusive and well supported community.

**Puentes:** A group of Hispanic parents from diverse nationalities, cultures, and traditions, that, together with teachers and community leaders, seek information to enrich our knowledge on diverse topics of interest that we can incorporate into our daily lives. Within a safe, respectable, and healthy environment, the group will help us to improve communication between parents and the school, as well as improving our relationship with our kids.

**Giving Tree:** This program helps Fireside families in need during the winter holidays. Information will be sent out in your child's Friday Folder in late November. If you have questions please contact Laura at [Laurameese@gmail.com](mailto:Laurameese@gmail.com)

**Box Top Collection-** Many food products have the below picture on the packaging. Fireside collects these Box Tops and earns money for each Box Top collected. Please cut out and collect the Box Tops. Twice a year, students are asked to bring their Box Tops to school. There are parties for the classes that collect the most Box Tops.

**Grocery Cards from King Soopers and Safeway:** Everyone needs groceries, so why not let a

percentage of your grocery and gas purchases benefit Fireside? Every time you reload your card, 5% of the funds will go to the Fireside PTO. It's that easy!

**Amazon Smile:** Amazon Smile is Amazon's way of donating to non-profit organizations. 0.5% of the purchase price of almost everything you purchase at Amazon will be donated to Fireside PTO. All of your Amazon Prime benefits still apply! Simply go to <http://smile.amazon.com/>, log in, and search for Fireside PTO in the charitable organization box. Select the Fireside PTO in Louisville, CO and start shopping.

## **ADDITIONAL DISTRICT PROGRAMS FOR FIRESIDE STUDENTS**

**Talented and Gifted Program (TAG):** Student may be identified as talented and gifted in one or more of the following areas:

- General or specific intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership abilities
- Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities

Contact: Janine Fitzgerald, TAG Educational Advisor [janine.fitzgerald@bvsd.org](mailto:janine.fitzgerald@bvsd.org)

**Special Education:** Students identified with special needs through a legal document called an Individual Education Plan (IEP) can receive support from a team of Special Education teachers. Contact your child's classroom teacher for more information.

**The English Language Development (ELD):** Program supports children who are learning English. The goal of this program is to develop English language proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening for students with limited English proficiency. Contact: Gay Salim, ELD teacher [gay.salim@bvsd.org](mailto:gay.salim@bvsd.org)

**Literacy Intervention:** Our Literacy teacher, Paula Haskins provides support to children who may need support in literacy.