

Bedford Elementary Schools Together

Parent Teacher Organization

WELCOME BROCHURE

Information on your school's Parent Teacher Organization

Welcome to the 2021-22 School Year

Davis and Lane Elementary Schools

We are excited for the new school year at Davis and Lane and are enthusiastically looking forward to building a strong community at our elementary schools. We look forward to your contributions and participation throughout the year. Your thoughts and ideas are always welcome!

The Bedford Elementary Schools Together Board

What is BEST/PTO?

BEST/PTO (Bedford Elementary Schools Together Parent Teacher Organization) is a volunteer-run organization that represents the parents and guardians of all students in grades K-5 at Davis and Lane elementary schools. BEST isn't a member organization; it's everyone! The BEST/PTO Board coordinates and plans activities throughout the year that support and enhance the educational experience of our children, and that work toward the common goal of creating better schools and accompanying educational experiences for our children.

How do we achieve this? Our efforts are two-fold: *through volunteer opportunities* (both in school and outside of school) and *efundraising*. The events and programs that we sponsor would not be possible without the time and support of our community. There are many ways to get involved with BEST, and we have included a few brief descriptions in this welcome brochure. We would be happy for your participation in the way that works for you and your family. Whether you volunteer every week in the school or attend a single planning meeting—
it all counts and it all helps!

To learn more, visit our website at www.bestpto.org, and please feel free to reach out to us at any time.

2021–2022 BEST/PTO Board

President	Open	Open
Vice President, Davis	Charlene Dunn	charlene.a.dunn@gmail.com
	Erica Colbath	erica.colbath@gmail.com
Vice President, Lane	Elizabeth Berner	ejflagg@gmail.com
Secretary	Gretchen Heid	gretchenela@yahoo.com
Treasurer	JeaNa Agen	bestptotreasurer2@gmail.com
Assistant Treasurer	Carey Sclafani	carey.sclafani@gmail.com
Communications	Alison Schroeder	thekooks000@gmail.com
Preschool Liaison	Leslie Savoy	lesliegog@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Melissa Brandt	adams_brandt@yahoo.com
Member-at-Large	Kelley Dadah	kelleydadah@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Coreen Garrett	coreenita@yahoo.com
Member-at-Large	Rachel Mark	rachelmark276@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Christie Martin	christiemartin2009@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Shannon Gilbertson	sgilbertson78@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Julie Samble	julies31@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Allison Melahouris	amelahouris515@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Emily Prince	ers.stein@gmail.com
Member-at-Large	Bhumi Aryal	hibhumi@gmail.com

Staying Connected

Email: best.pto.bedford@gmail.com
Website: www.bestpto.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bestpto
Twitter: @BESTPTOMA

Weekly Newsletter

Do you want to keep up on the latest happenings at Davis and Lane Schools? Then sign up to receive our weekly email newsletter! In it, we will not only keep you up-to-date on activities and programs in the school, but we will also share information about scouting, town programs, recreation department offerings, and community sports programs that are of interest to our families, but that are not communicated via the schools because of the Bedford School District communications policy. Per Bedford School District policy, our mailing lists are opt-in only, so you will need to add yourself to our email list by subscribing.

To subscribe to BEST emails and communications:

1. Go to: www.bestpto.org
2. Scroll down to the end of the home page to: “*Subscribe to the BEST/PTO E-newsletter*”
3. Type your email
4. Click: “*Subscribe*”

In addition to BEST’s weekly newsletter, BITS from BEST, Davis and Lane schools send out weekly communications (Davis Scribbles, and Lane Notes), which contain school news only.

Volunteering

We hope that you will attend our meetings and get involved in our many events and activities during the school year. Normally there are many opportunities to help out in the school and outside of school; for at least the start of this year, volunteer opportunities will be limited to outside of school, due to COVID-19 restrictions. As opportunities evolve, we will continue to update you. **Volunteer Sign Ups will be sent out soon**, so make sure to check out the different ways you can help and sign up for anything that may be of interest. Signing up doesn’t commit you, it just puts you on the list to be contacted about the opportunity. If you would like to volunteer for an event, become more involved, learn more, or have a new idea, please email us at: best.pto.bedford@gmail.com or reach out to a Board Member. We welcome your thoughts and input!

In-School Volunteering

BEST manages the classroom volunteering for both Davis and Lane Schools. Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, the volunteer opportunities are more limited than in the past. That being said, we ARE currently recruiting volunteers to assist in Davis School Visit bestpto.org to sign up for volunteer opportunities!

We will continue to have room parents for all classrooms.

Out-of-School Volunteering

We have so many opportunities to help outside of school. Many are on your own time and are easy to do, including:

Coordinating...

School Volunteers
Room Parents
Fundraisers
School Enrichment Programs

Committees for...

Bedford Day
Enrichment
Restaurant Nights
School Director
Spring Fundraiser
Sustainability
Teacher Appreciation Week

Raising (& Spending) Money

BEST PTO raises and spends for the schools over \$100,000 per year. The money we raise goes towards everything from enrichment programs and field trips to professional development, supplemental supplies and equipment, and food for the school chickens! BEST also provides money every year for the principals to spend on innovative ideas and projects.

We do not collect dues from our parents, but your support is vital to the diversity and continuation of the programs offered and supported by BEST/PTO, and we respectfully ask for your generous support both through fundraising and direct donations to either our Appreciation Fund or the General BEST Fund (see pages 7 & 8).

Major Fundraisers

Catalog Sales (Fall)

The fall catalog fundraiser brings in approximately over \$10,000 for our schools. This year's sale will be online & "in person" with orders being delivered to students, rather than the schools as in past years. Parents will receive information in late September about the sale, which is scheduled to run October 6-27. Items in the sale include Meadow Farms and will receive 40% of all sales.

Color Run (Spring)

For several years, we have held a family-friendly 3k fun run/walk at JGMS. This event is our largest fundraiser of the year. After the run/walk, there is a carnival-like after party, with a DJ, face painting, bouncy houses, food, and other things to do. The Color Run raises about \$20,000 annually for the PTO. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the 2019 Color Run was canceled and the 2020 run was held virtually. We hope to hold an in-person run again in 2021!

Other Fundraisers

School Directory (Fall)

Each year, BEST volunteers put together an amazing directory for Davis and Lane schools. This is the only way to get contact information for students in your child's class. BEST makes a small profit from the sale of directories and advertising.

Information on how to order will be sent home in the fall. If you are interested in placing an ad in the directory, please contact Vivian Chang (vivian.h.chang@gmail.com).

Photo Days (Fall & Spring)

Money earned from our photo days go directly to the Principals' Discretionary Funds, which are used to support teacher continuing education, enrichment, and/or to purchase discretionary items for the school (teacher spirit wear, staff lunches, additional equipment and supplies, etc.). The Bedford School District doesn't allocate discretionary funds to the Principals, so these funds are critical to financially supporting our schools' administration. There are two photo days:

School Photos (Fall)

School photos at Davis are scheduled for Monday, October 18

School photos at Lane are scheduled for Thursday, October 21

Sibling Photos (Fall)

We offer a sibling photo day on a weekend day in the fall. It is a great opportunity to get your children photographed together and receive the pictures before the winter holidays.

Sibling Photo Day is scheduled for Sunday, October 17th

Spirit Wear

We hold online Spirit Wear sales in the fall and spring. This fundraiser is a popular option for gifts for both children and parents. Get your Bedford, Davis, and Lane spirit wear at these sales.

Amazon Smile (On-going)

If you shop at Amazon, please select the BEST/PTO as your designated non-profit and place your orders online at: www.smile.amazon.com. Amazon provides us with rebates based on sales through the program.

Box Tops For Education (On-going)

Box Tops for Education is a digital coupon program that raises money for our schools. The program has moved to a digital collection, and you can download the Box Tops for Education App and then digitally upload your coupons. Each Box Top is worth \$.10. To find out which products have the Box Tops coupons and more about the App, visit: <https://www.boxtops4education.com>.

Mabel's Labels (On-going)

If you need labels for school supplies, clothing, water bottles, etc. please order through our portal at Mabel's Labels, we receive a portion of sales through the BEST PTO portal: www.mabelslabels.com/en_US/fundraising/support

Restaurant Nights (Periodically)

Throughout the year we offer fundraiser nights at local restaurants. In past years we have done this at: B. Good, Flatbread, and Chipotle. This is an easy way to give to the schools AND feed your family.

School Supplies (Spring)

Towards the end of each school year, we have an option for parents to order their children's school supplies for the following year online. Not only is this a very convenient option, but the proceeds from this fundraiser are used to purchase supplies for students who may not be able to afford their own supplies, and to purchase snacks for students who may have forgotten or can't afford a snack.

Additional Fundraisers

Occasionally throughout the year we will have additional fundraisers for BEST. In past years this has included: Breathe New Hampshire coupon books, Eversource light bulbs, Learning Express, etc. Be on the lookout for these additional opportunities to support Davis and Lane schools.

Direct Donations

The Appreciation Fund

In 2019, we launched the [Appreciation Fund](#), recognizing that we were making many requests for specific appreciation efforts such as gift cards for support staff at the holidays or luncheons during teacher appreciation week. It was confusing to get so many different requests for money, so we created the Appreciation Fund. Donations to the Appreciation Fund are appropriated throughout the year to all members of the Davis and Lane faculty and staff. You pay once, we fund activities all year!

You can give to the Appreciation Fund at any time, but we hope you will consider doing it early so that we can confidently plan activities for the year. We will also ask for contributions at certain times during the year for those who would prefer to make smaller donations towards each initiative. When and how much you give is up to you. Information on how to give can be found on the back page.

The *Appreciation Fund* will go towards:

Teacher Supply Reimbursements

Formerly called “*Sponsor-A-Class*”, this program provides teachers and specialists with up to \$100 during Teacher Appreciation Week in May to purchase teaching tools for their classrooms that are not included in the school budget. Many of our teachers spend their own money to purchase items to improve their classrooms and support curriculum. This money shows our appreciation to our teachers’ extra efforts and helps them plan for the next school year by enabling them to purchase books, math and science kits, educational games, audio/visual aids and computer software.

Holiday and End of Year Gifts for School Support Staff

Formerly called “*Good Cheer*”, this program shows appreciation to the “behind the scenes” support staff at our schools (office staff, nurses, custodians, cafeteria staff, crossing guard, educational assistants, etc.) by giving each a small gift during the winter holidays and again at the conclusion of the school year. These gifts are for staff that are not part of a specific classroom. Classroom staff and teachers are recognized through gifts organized by room parents. Money collected through the Appreciation Fund will help us make these meaningful gestures of appreciation. We budget \$5 per student at each school.

Hospitality and Appreciation

Our hospitality committees plan several meals for the staff at our schools throughout the year. Our Teacher Appreciation Week (TAW) committee helps BEST show gratitude to the teachers at Davis and Lane schools by treating them during TAW in early-May. They decorate the teachers lounges, provide meals and snacks throughout the week, and provide gifts for the teachers. The Appreciation Fund will offset these costs and help our hospitality committees to continue to put on these fabulous events for our schools’ staff!

Any funds raised above what is needed for these Appreciation fund programs will be used by the PTO General fund.

The BEST PTO General Fund

In addition to collecting for the Appreciation Fund, BEST/PTO also welcomes donations for its [General Fund](#). This is the pool of money that funds enrichment programs, school improvements, field trips, and events for Davis and Lane School. The majority of our fundraisers are raising funds for these activities. If you would rather support these activities with a direct contribution, it is always welcome.

Classroom-Specific Gifts/Activities

There are times when you will be asked directly by the Room Parents of your child's class to donate to your class specifically for holiday and end of year gifts for the teachers and staff that serve your class, or to help fund a class activity. Please note that those donations are not to BEST/PTO and are not tax-deductible. These gifts and activities are not supported by the Appreciation Fund or the BEST General Fund.

Enrichment, School Improvements & Events

The central reason why BEST/PTO puts so much effort into fundraising is because we want to fund enrichment opportunities, school improvements and events at Davis and Lane Schools. Enrichment activities are any special activities that enrich our children's education, such as field trips, performances, workshops and visiting programs. We also help to fund the food and maintenance for animals out of the enrichment fund, such as the fish at Davis and the chickens at Lane. School improvements are purchases of equipment for the school that will be used to enhance our children's experience for years to come.

Enrichment

Davis & Lane Programs

Animals
Gardens

Davis Programs

Author visits
Museum of Science Animal Habitat Program
Mass Audubon Program
Trip Techsplorations Program
Rosie Revere, Engineer Theaterworks Performance

Lane Programs

Summer Reading Program
Author Visit, and Reading to Therapy Dogs
Sturbridge Village Field Trip
Revels Theatre Group Immigration Program
Revolutionary War Program
Freedom Trail Field Trip
Take Flight Field

School Improvements

Davis School

Outdoor Construction Blocks
Playground Portable Gaga Ball Pit
Garden Construction
Bus Loop Playground

Lane School

School

Events

Davis and Lane Schools

Baseball Days
Celebrating Differences Day
ProgramField Days

Lane School

Fifth Grade Talent Show and Senior Luncheon
Veteran's Day

Davis School

Kindergarten Bus Run
Kindergarten Screening

Social Events

In addition to all of the fundraising and supporting the schools, BEST/PTO sponsors social events that are not fundraisers, just bringing the Davis and Lane communities together. We are not sure what events we will be able to offer this year. Some examples of events we have done in the past are:

- Boston Red Sox Game
- Earth Night
- Movie Night

Please note that planned events may vary and will be subject to current COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions.

BEST Calendar 2021–2022

Here is a tentative calendar of events that BEST runs, participates in, or financially supports:

September

BJs Membership Discount
Drive*Room Parent Sign-Ups
Hospitality Lunch**

October

BEST General Meeting & Budget Presentation
Catalogue Fundraiser with Meadow Farms*
Fall Spirit Wear Sale*
Restaurant Night Fundraiser at
ChipotleOnline Volunteer Sign-Ups
School Photo Days*
Sibling Photo Day*

November

Hospitality Lunch**

December

Appreciation Gift Cards to Support Staff**
Fall Fundraiser Orders Delivered

February

Hospitality Lunch**

March

5th Grade Talent Show (Lane)
Baseball Day (Davis)

April

Spring Spirit Wear Sale*
Hospitality Lunch**

May

Teacher Appreciation Week**
Appreciation Supply Money Distributed to teachers**
Baseball Day (Lane)
Field Day (Davis)

June

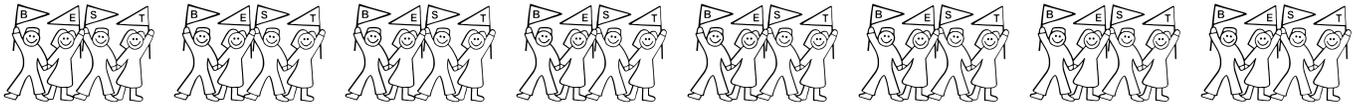
Color Run Fundraiser*
5th Grade Challenge Day
(Lane)Volunteer
Appreciation Night
Appreciation gift cards presented to support staff**
Field Day (Lane)
Order School Supplies for 2022-2023*
Sign-up to Volunteer for 2022-23 Committee
Positions

To Be Scheduled

Author Visits
Barnes and Noble Book Fair
Book Fairs
Earth Night
Family Movie Nights
Kindergarten
screening
Red Sox Game

* *Fundraiser*

** *Activity supported by the Appreciation Fund*



Bedford Elementary Schools Together / Parent Teacher Organization

Donation Form - BEST/PTO Appreciation and General Funds

Name:

Address:

Email:

Would you like a receipt for your donation: No Yes

Please accept my total donation of: \$ _____

Please allocate this amount to the Appreciation
Fund: \$ _____

Please allocate this amount to the General Fund:
\$ _____

When considering how much to donate to the Appreciation Fund for the year, remember that it covers donations to fund the following programs:

- Holiday & End of Year Gifts for non-classroom staff in December and June - \$5 per student
- Teacher Supply Reimbursements, which gives each teacher up to \$100 towards supplies
- Teacher Appreciation Week - which provides special meals and gifts during TAW
- Hospitality Lunches - Four catered special lunches and breakfasts for teachers and staff

Any funds raised above what is needed for these Appreciation fund programs will be used by the PTO General fund.

Make checks payable to: "BEST/PTO", and mail to:
BEST/PTO, % Davis Elementary School, 410 Davis Road, Bedford, MA 01730

Or Donate Online:
General Donations

<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/bedford-elementary-schools-together>

Appreciation Fund

<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/bedford-elementary-schools-together/appreciation-fund-2021-2022>

*BEST/PTO is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and your donation is tax-deductible and eligible for employer matching gift programs.
Contact your employer's Human Resources Department for a matching gift form.*