

Dear BRS Families,

11/23/21

I'm excited to share with you that our faculty and staff applied for a grant that would pay for installing an "observation" beehive in our school. We think we have a couple of suitable places where the hive can be placed, that will give all grade-levels easy viewing access to it. We're grateful that two key requirements to win the grant have already been met. Mrs. Sharon Bolick, an outstanding teaching assistant, has agreed to be our "in-house" Bee Advocate. Mrs. Kathy Garrett, co-owner of Willie Brooks BBQ and Willie Brooks Farm, accepted our invitation to be our Bee Mentor. Many of you know Sharon. Kathy is equally engaging and is excited to help us should we win this grant. Both can teach us so much about bee health.

Another requirement is that we get a Bee Committee up and running (yes, prior to hearing if we won the grant!). We'd like to meet virtually through a Google Meet reading teacher and Bee Committee member Laurie Gill will host on **Wednesday evening, December 1<sup>st</sup> at 7PM**. Three families are already represented on the committee through our outreach on our BRS PTO Facebook page. I extend the invitation to any family member who would like to join the committee. Please email me and copy Laurie Gill if you would like to join.

[sukowp@wataugaschools.org](mailto:sukowp@wataugaschools.org)

[gilll@wataugaschools.org](mailto:gilll@wataugaschools.org)

The Bee Cause organization, which can be found on line or under the Whole Kids Foundation, is the potential source for the hive. They've awarded outdoor and indoor hives over the years and have a fine-tuned model for helping nonprofits like our school make the most of this opportunity. I've linked you to a couple key documents at the end of this letter. They provide an overview and go into detail about who is responsible for what, should we win this grant.

Here's a picture of what the observation hive will look like:



This is an active hive we can use for instructional purposes in grades PreK-8.

Another reason for this letter is to inform all families that we're in the early stages of this project. I want to ensure the safety of all students and staff if and as we move forward. Please share your questions and concerns with me and Laurie by email and we will find the answers to your questions. Again, the two attached documents provide a lot of information. If we move forward,

we will follow the protocol the BeeCause group outlines. They know how to guide us to having a safe and educational experience. As an added piece of information, Cove Creek School in our county has a BeeCause observation hive and will be available to help us as we prepare.

Once the hive is installed (it wouldn't ship till New Year's), there are modest costs associated with ongoing maintenance of the beehive's health. Cove Creek's media center director tells us that their costs mirror those described by BeeCause—ranging between \$250-\$500 at most per year. The Bee Committee will need to determine how we would fundraise. This amount seems a good investment for all our students will learn about bees and the food chain and our environment.

I'd like the bee committee to be inclusive yet still efficient so we don't take up too much of any committee member's time.

Again, please contact me at [sukowp@wataugaschools.org](mailto:sukowp@wataugaschools.org) and copy Laurie Gill at [gilll@wataugaschools.org](mailto:gilll@wataugaschools.org) with interest and questions or concerns. Laurie and I will get back to you together as soon as possible. Importantly, please let us know if you'd like to join the Bee Committee and give us your best email and phone number.

We're hoping for a lot of community buy-in for this exciting initiative. Interestingly, Superintendent Elliott has also kept bees and asks that we keep him updated as to our progress.

Thank you for reading. This letter is long because as your principal, I want to be sure this project is something many of us want and are willing to put in some time to make it the best quality project we can.

**Link to Grant Overview:**

[https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2021\\_grant\\_overview.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2NGHyAySu94NifziZwU5CdUblgL--b9VdfELde2Bhqnl6nmirETWO53sE](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2021_grant_overview.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2NGHyAySu94NifziZwU5CdUblgL--b9VdfELde2Bhqnl6nmirETWO53sE)

**Link to Letter of Understand with a table of who does what:**

[https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/5\\_letter-of-understanding-for-schools.pdf](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/5_letter-of-understanding-for-schools.pdf)

Sincerely,



Patrick Sukow  
Principal, Blowing Rock School