

Brookstone Schools

revised 2.10.15

Lunch Buddy Mentoring Program

One of the best ways to overcome socioeconomic challenges affecting academic achievement is for children to have supportive relationships with concerned adults. That is the rationale behind the Brookstone Lunch Buddy Mentoring program. Even though the commitment is only 30 minutes each time, we expect positive changes to take place in children with Lunch Buddies.

How Lunch Buddy Mentoring Works

A Lunch Buddy Mentor commits to eating lunch with an assigned Brookstone student in the cafeteria *at least once a month*, but preferably two or more times each month during the school year. You do not have to visit on the same day each week, and we encourage you to bring your own “bagged” lunch and arrive at or a few minutes before the student’s scheduled lunch time. A Lunch Buddy sits and eats at the lunch table or another designated place with his/her student.

We will do our best to remind Lunch Buddies by email of school holidays, half days, special events, and field trips, but the school calendar can also be found on our website. If your student is not available when you arrive, you are encouraged to have lunch with his/her other classmates, or you may simply excuse yourself and come back at another time.

To apply to become a Lunch Buddy, simply fill out our Volunteer Profile form, the Volunteer Background Check form, and sign the bottom of this form. Return them by email (development@brookstoneschools.org), in person to the Brookstone office (301 S Davidson St, Charlotte, NC 28202), by mail (PO Box 667890, Charlotte, NC 28266), or by fax (704-334-5417). You will then be contacted by the Volunteer Coordinator and given the opportunity to attend an orientation session at Brookstone.

General Guidelines

- Call the school office (704-392-6330) the morning you plan to come to make sure your student is in attendance and that the lunch schedule has not changed. Students are not available for lunch on Wednesdays.
- At the Educational Building entrance, ring the bell, enter through the door when buzzed in and proceed to the Brookstone hallway to the left.
- Sign in on the computer in the School Office (we will need to scan your driver’s license on your first visit) and put on a name tag.
- Proceed to the Fellowship Hall at the end of the main hallway to the right and wait for your student’s class to arrive for lunch.
- Call your buddy by name and express often how much you enjoy being his or her Lunch Buddy.
- Encourage your student by finding things to affirm and compliment.
- Ask about school work to develop an understanding of how the student is doing in school.
- Talk about after-school activities, sports, music, etc. These topics are usually less threatening than direct questions dealing with a student’s thoughts and feelings, or the student’s family situation.
- Tell about your life – your family, your interests, and your faith.
- Pray for your student and ask your student how you can pray for him/her.

Things to Keep in Mind

Don’t expect to have meaningful conversations every time. What makes the most impact is a consistent, supportive, affirming presence. It is sometimes overwhelming for a student to be the center of attention, so others at the table may be more talkative; this is normal. You are welcome to include another student in your visit if it is helpful in communicating with your student.

It is okay to give cards or lunch treats **on special occasions or occasionally**, but we really want to emphasize the relationship over the objects. Please note that many of our students participate in our hot lunch program, and will have a paid lunch provided for them.

Additionally, if during the course of your conversations with your buddy, you have any questions or concerns, please speak to the child’s teacher or to the Volunteer Coordinator. We also ask that you let us know if you are no longer able to fulfill the commitment above. We hope this experience will be a blessing to you, as well as to the student.

Signature _____ Date _____

Student assigned _____ Date _____ (office use only)