

BIRCHWOOD ELEMENTARY

Weekly Bulletin

September 11th, 2014

*The weekly bulletin will be sent by email starting with the September 25th issue.
Please be sure that your family contact info is registered with the PTO and current.
An e-copy of this week's Bulletin can be found at birchwood.niskypto.org.*

From Principal Berndt's Desk.... It has been such a pleasure having the students back in school. We look forward to working with each of your children, as well, as you throughout this school year. Our opening days have gone very smoothly and the children seem to be adjusting to the new school year well. Welcome Back!

Also, a big welcome to our new staff: Mrs. Wendy Weir: Cook Manager, Mrs. Renae Semione: Secretary, Mrs. Jodi Hogsberg: Special Education Teacher, Mrs. Kate Kirkpatrick: Librarian, Mrs. Caroline Colwell: Special Education Teacher, Mrs. Sandy Hovey: TA, Mrs. Rosa Cannavo: TA, Mrs. Carla Pakosz: ESL Teacher Mrs. Nancy Collins: Boces Teacher

Happy beginning of the school year! We're so happy to see students returning to Birchwood and to welcome so many new families across all grades to our community. PTO leadership and committees have been working hard to make this a fabulous year of learning and fun at Birchwood. With your help and support 2014-15 will surely be a success. We look forward to seeing you at our programs, events, and meetings throughout the year!

Deb Foley & JoMarie Ethier, Birchwood PTO Co-Presidents

Stay informed. Be connected. Get involved.

Birchwood Families – Be Sure to OPT IN!!!

Due to new legislation, the schools are not allowed to distribute class information. **We encourage everyone to register ONLINE to be included in Birchwood's PTO Directory.** You only have to register once; the system will update the grade for your child as they move through the Niskayuna School System. This is an important service for students and families that enables the PTO to connect with other classmates, families, and friends. Also, the directory contains contact information for your school's teachers, administrators, and office staff. It facilitates communications between families and Homeroom Parents for classroom events planning, and is essential when class projects are assigned. The directory is the PTO's way to connect and organize volunteers, to distribute meeting schedules, calendars, and other important PTO information. We encourage you to please register your family, even if you only provide the name(s) of your students, so that all students will be included.

Please register at www.NiskyPTO.org (secure website) so your child and you can be included. Everyone needs to be signed up online by 9/20. You will have an opportunity to review your current information in the directory on Curriculum Night.

Any questions please contact the directory chairs, Millie Gnatek at bradleycleo@gmail.com and Shilpa Garde at shilpa.garde@gmail.com.

Volunteer positions available!

Many of Birchwood's great programs, events and services are run by PTO volunteers. If you're interested in volunteering, you can sign up online [here](#), [email us](#), or speak directly to one of the PTO Co-Presidents (Deb Foley, JoMarie Ethier). We particularly need volunteers for the following positions: Communications Committee Information Sign (sign on Birchwood Lane); Nature Park Committee (all positions) and the Fundraising Committee (grantwriting).

Go Team! Once again we have a dedicated group of PTO officers including Deb Foley and JoMarie Ethier as Co-Presidents, Lynn Boler as VP Fundraising, Sonya Ward as VP Programs & Services, Treasurer Brenda Leto, and Recording Secretary Kim McClive-Reed. Three cheers!!!

Homeroom Parents Wanted: Looking for parents to get involved and help plan classroom activities and celebrations! Please sign online through [SignupGenius](#) or contact Suzanne Brooksby at suzierunsl8@gmail.com. A Homeroom Parents' organizational meeting will be held on Thursday, Sept. 11th at 7:00 pm.

Did you miss last night's PTO meeting? No worries, the minutes are posted on our wonderful website. Please plan to join us at our next meeting, October 15, 6:30pm, in the conference room

If you missed the monthly lunch menu handout, you can print it from the [district website](#).

Earn Money for Birchwood....



Submit Your Box Tops Labels, and Your Child Could Win!

You can raise money for Birchwood easily when you cut out this label on many products you buy at the grocery store. Submit the Box Tops labels by [gluing them on this sheet](#), or toss them in a Ziploc bag in bundles of 25 (sheets also available in the main office). Don't forget to include your child's name. **Each month, students who submit completed sheets are entered into a drawing for a great prize with a local merchant.** The first drawing will be held at the end of October---so start clipping and send your box tops to school. **Last year, Birchwood earned \$982!** Thanks so much to everyone who cuts out Box Tops! Questions? Contact Amy Jasiewicz at amyjasiewicz@gmail.com

Cut Out Labels for Education, and your Child Could Win Our Contest!

Labels for Education is similar to Box Tops, as you cut out labels to earn merchandise for the school. In the past Birchwood has earned free books, sporting equipment, and games for the Fun Fair, and many teaching tools--all for free! You can either [submit labels on this sheet](#), or in a Ziploc bag in bundles of 19 (sheets also available in the main office). Don't forget to include your child's name. Questions? Contact Amy Jasiewicz at amyjasiewicz@gmail.com



Bike Riders for Missing Children of the Greater Capital District to visit Birchwood!

On **Friday, Sept 19th**, one of our 4th grade teachers, **Lisa Luyckx**, is participating in the **7th Annual Ride for Missing Children of the Greater Capital District**.

This 100-mile ride honors the memory of missing children and raises funds to support poster distribution and other necessary services.

This year, the riders will include Birchwood School as one of their rest stops. The riders will arrive with a police escort, dismount their bikes, interact with the students, and enjoy breakfast prepared by PTO volunteers. During the week prior to the event, our children will attend an assembly and pep rally where they will be educated on keeping safe in an age-appropriate fashion.

You can find out more about this event at Birchwood's PTO Website. For more information about this amazing ride, or to make a donation, please visit <http://rideformissingchildrengcd.com>.

Curriculum (Back-to-School) Nights

Thursday, September 18th:

6 – 7pm K – 2nd grade

7 – 7:30pm K – 5th grade

7:30 – 8:30pm 3rd – 5th grade

This is a great opportunity to meet your child's teacher, visit their classroom, and learn about the curriculum. You will also have a chance to sign up to help with special activities and parties. These evenings are geared toward parents (not students). Bring your questions for the teacher!

Due to limited space in classrooms, this event is best suited for parents unaccompanied by their children.

Birchwood Back to School Barbecue

Friday, Sept. 19th, 5-7pm

(Rain or Shine)

Join us for this annual welcome event as this year we're serving a home style cookout ourselves. Parent and teacher grill masters and volunteers will surely make this a fun evening for all. We're still looking for more help. Sign up at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a084dafad2ca46-calling>

Get your orders in by tomorrow (9/12)!

BBQ order form at end of Bulletin.

Questions? Please contact Lori Lembo at

lorilembo@verizon.net



Looking for... absolutely anything and everything?!?

Check out Birchwood's amazing website at

<http://birchwood.niskypto.org/>

Our Masters of the Web Kim McClive-Reed and Pennie Cuevas work 24/7 (well, almost)..... to insure that you have the most up-to-date and complete information. You will find PTO information, PTO forms, district and school-specific calendars, details about upcoming events and activities, district information, community information, and more!

Back by Popular Demand...

Birchwood's After School Enrichment Program

Every fall and winter Birchwood offers fun and fantastic after school classes for all interested Birchwood students. Each class runs one day a week from 2:15 – 3:15pm for six consecutive weeks (skipping half days and holidays).

Offerings include: Spanish, painting, gym classes, chemistry, cooking classes, and more! Classes cost between \$16 - \$40.

The fall program was sent home with students this week. There will be a 2 week registration period. First come, first served.

Our fall program will begin the week of September 29th.



Summer Reading Program

We hope you enjoyed your summer and had a great time taking part in the Summer Reading Program. The Summer Reading tally sheet(s) are due September 15th and can be returned to your child's classroom teacher.

Keep Reading!

Birchwood Back –to- School BBQ Order Form

Friday, September 19th 5:00-7:00pm

Make checks payable to **Birchwood PTO**.

Please return to the main office by Friday Sept 12th.

Family Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Meal Choices	Cost	# of meals	Total \$\$
Adult Buffet Hamburgers/ Hot dogs includes plenty of side dishes, dessert and beverage (vegetable burgers also available)	\$7.50 X		
Kids Buffet Hamburgers/Hot dogs includes plenty of side dishes, dessert and beverage	\$5.00 X		

We are still in need of volunteers! Please visit the Birchwood PTO website page and sign up on line with SignUp Genius / Back to School BBQ

OR e-mail Lori Lembo @ lorilembo@verizon.net to help out for an hour or two!

THANK YOU!!

To submit information for the weekly bulletin, please email Birchwood@niskyPTO.org by Sunday night of the week you want it to appear (write “bulletin item” in the subject line). Please have submissions print ready.

The Birchwood Bulletin is produced by the PTO Communications Committee in cooperation with the Birchwood principal and staff.



Bulletin information is online at: <http://birchwood.niskypto.org>