

Resources for parents, grant voting ends, check out books online, notes from the Communications Cmte., & see you in 2013!

# BIRCHWOOD ELEMENTARY

## Weekly bulletin -- December 20th, 2012

During the past week, events at Sandy Hook Elementary have been weighing heavily on our hearts and minds. Many may be wondering what our school community can do to help. The Birchwood PTO leadership and teachers have been getting information from friends and relatives in the Sandy Hook PTA, and have learned about the "Sandy Hook School Fund," set up by the Connecticut PTA. All money will go directly to the school, to be used for whatever purpose they determine will best help their community heal. Donate online at [www.ctpta.org](http://www.ctpta.org) or mail checks to:

Connecticut PTSA  
60 Connolly Parkway, Building 12, Suite 103  
Hamden, CT 06514

At Birchwood, Principal Berndt and the faculty and staff have been reviewing safety procedures and are prepared to respond to students' concerns as they arise. Here are two helpful resources for parents provided by Mrs. Berndt and Superintendent Salvaggio (both include age-specific advice):

[Talking to Children About Violence](#)  
[PBS: Talking to Kids About News](#)

If you have ideas about how we can help Sandy Hook or questions about Birchwood's emergency procedures, please write [Deb Foley](#).

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**Tomorrow (Fri., 12/21) is the last day of school before winter break.** Classes resume Wed., Jan. 2nd.

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**Sincere thanks to everyone who voted once, twice, or more than 80 times (!) for our nature park proposal with Clorox.** Voting closed yesterday. We had a tremendous tally for a small school (top 10% in the "explore" category!), and while it looks unlikely that we will win based on voting, there are also merit grants to be awarded. Results will be reported soon!

**Birchwood in the news...**Meanwhile, our voting drive and Nature Park Rally have garnered some great press, which will help us as we seek other funding opportunities.

Reading these articles reminds us that school is a happy place of learning and exploration.

[Schenectady Spotlight](#)

[Daily Gazette](#)

[Times Union](#)

[WNYT](#)

[Bentley Seeds blog](#)

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**Do your kids miss going to the library during the break?** If you have an e-reader, you can check out books online:

<http://capregboces.lib.overdrive.com>.

Just click "sign in" and select Niskayuna as your school district; then enter your child's library/lunch number. (Note: if their number is only 4 digits, add a zero (0) to the front.) If you have questions, [Mrs. Disque](#) would be glad to help. Once you're signed in, you'll find grade level links at the bottom of "Browse collections" column on the left. *Voila!* A new book to read.



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**Need school information?** Whether you're looking for a link, lunch menu, or Labels for Education sheet, you'll find it on the [PTO website](http://birchwood.niskypto.org) (birchwood.niskypto.org). It's searchable! Just plug in a key word to find what you're looking for. Webmaster Kim McClive-Reed diligently keeps the site up-to-date.

**Saw it in the weekly bulletin?** Save past bulletins in a folder in your inbox for easy reference, or find current and past bulletins on the [PTO website - bulletin](#). Online sign-up sheets and email links minimize what you need to print and send in by "backpack courier." (Printable order sheets are still necessary when payment is required.) **We'd love for every Birchwood family to read the weekly bulletin!** If you or someone you know can't access the bulletin online, by email, or get to school to pick up a hard copy, please let us know (leave a note in the Main Office for Michelle Rosowsky, PTO Bulletin Editor). We'll explore the feasibility of getting a copy to you.

As always, questions about classroom issues can be directed to your child's teacher, or info can be found on the [Birchwood Elementary](http://nisk.k12.ny.us/birchwood) website (nisk.k12.ny.us/birchwood).

**If you still have questions, see an error, or wish to comment on PTO Communications, please email us!** The [PTO inbox](#) is closely monitored by e-Postmaster Shilpa Garde. Suffice to say, we take your feedback to heart... compliments make our week (!), and criticism makes us want to work even harder to improve communications.

We know it can be hard to keep track of all the school information you get. We're doing our best to make it easy to find information and get involved. The Communications

Committee appreciates your feedback!

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**The next PTO meeting is Thurs., Jan 3rd at 6:30pm.** Agenda will be posted in the bulletin that morning.



[January Lunch Menu](#)

*Best wishes to you and  
your precious children.  
See you in 2013!*

Feedback? [Click here.](#)

To submit information for the weekly bulletin, please email [Birchwood@niskyPTO.org](mailto:Birchwood@niskyPTO.org) by Sunday night of the week you want it to appear.

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

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