

Birchwood parents step up! Plus budget updates; magician to perform at Fun Fair; new lunch payment website, & more.

BIRCHWOOD

ELEMENTARY

Weekly bulletin -- February 7th, 2013

THANK YOU, Birchwood parents! Since we began taking volunteers for next year's positions, **we have had 44 parents sign up for 87 volunteer slots!!** That is an impressive showing, considering we also have jobs, kids, other volunteer work, and a host of other commitments. Thank you for caring about Birchwood!

Volunteers are still needed for several open posts and committee positions. Please don't assume one of the "regular" parent volunteers will do it--we're extremely grateful to those perennial volunteers, but having **NEW NAMES** on the roster enriches our programs and spreads the work around. We ask that you **CONSIDER** putting your name down for one of these positions or planning committees. No experience necessary. Take a moment; think about it. Why not you?

Sign up instantly online: [View open positions and sign up online](#)

Or print the [sign up form](#) (updated) and discuss with your spouse or a friend.

Open positions:

- * PTO Co-President (email birchwood@niskypto.org if you're considering this post)
- * Arts in Education (assemblies), 2 organizers
- * Back to School BBQ, 1 co-organizer and helpers
- * December Open House, 2 organizers (revised event--have input on developing it)
- * Fun Fair, 2 organizers and helpers
- * Entertainment Book Fundraiser, 1 or 2 organizers
- * Fall Fundraiser, 1 or 2 organizers (have input on this program)

Feature position: 1,000 Book Kid Program Coordinator

Work with the Birchwood librarian to coordinate this preschool reading program, which includes a free book check-out system (green book bags in the cafeteria). If you're a believer in reading, this is a rewarding and valuable program to coordinate....proven by its 14-year history! You organize a March kick-off event, and the rest of the work (monitoring the condition of books and check-out system) is almost entirely on your own schedule.



Feature position: Vice President, Fundraising

The VP of Fundraising is a member of the PTO Executive Committee. In cooperation with the Co-Presidents, you plan and implement [PTO Fundraisers](#) to meet fundraising goals

and manage a team of program coordinators. Moderate to high time commitment, but on a flexible schedule. Funds raised by the PTO support educational and social programs at Birchwood. In this position, you have a direct, significant impact on the entire Birchwood community. (Email birchwood@niskypto.org if you're considering this post.)

Questions about a position? Explore the [PTO website](#) or email us at: birchwood@niskypto.org. Please select your position by Thurs., Feb. 28th.

Update on how Niskayuna schools will close the multi-million dollar budget deficit (from Tuesday night's Board of Ed meeting): Birchwood parents, teachers, staff, and PTO leaders were among the audience and speakers in the crowded auditorium Tuesday night. While all options are still on the table, the board categorized potential cuts into 3 levels, level 1 being most likely and 3 being least likely. Closing Van Antwerp Middle School OR an unspecified elementary school next year were presented as "level 2 options," indicating that closure of one school is under consideration. However, no decisions have been made and no particular elementary school has been named. Meeting recap and materials [HERE](#). Got questions, concerns, or ideas on cutting costs or increasing revenue for schools? Now is the time to speak, and the [board](#) is listening. Email them at SchoolBoard@niskyschools.org.

Mon. Feb. 11th, 7pm -- "A Call to Action" regional advocacy event, Niskayuna High School -- Learn how to lobby for better school funding ([INFO](#) | [RSVP](#))

Wed., Feb. 13th, 7pm -- Community Budget Forum #2, Van Antwerp Middle School -- Get informed first-hand and voice your opinion about how Niskayuna schools should close the budget gap ([INFO](#))

Breaking Fun Fair news! The March 8th event will feature a magic show by Jim Snack! Hear how he entertains and motivates our kids, echoing the themes of perseverance and self-discipline they've been talking about at school. Here's the schedule:

6:00 – 7:00 p.m. – Games and activities in gym (thank you, 5th graders!)

6:00 – 7:15 p.m. – Raffle sales (thank you, teachers and staff for donating prizes!)-tickets will also be sold Wed. & Fri. during lunch

6:00 – 7:30 p.m. – Food served in cafeteria (hot dogs & chips, pizza, brownies, popcorn, beverages)

7:10 – 7:30 p.m. – Magic show in cafeteria

7:30 p.m. – Announcement of raffle winners (do not need to be present to win)

FREE admission & magic show. Tickets sold for food, games, and raffle (10 tickets for \$5). Can you already hear squeals of excitement? [FUN FAIR FLYER](#)

Notice--there is a new school lunch payment website. Switch your

bookmarks...MyNutriKids.com (where you prepay your child's school lunches) has become MySchoolBucks.com (you'll be redirected if you go to the NutriKids website). You can use the same login and password, and you can still view your child's payment activity, add money with debit, credit, or bank account, and set up automatic payments. You may need to re-set your notifications on the new site, like low-balance alerts.



Your child's teacher and the school staff...do you ever marvel at how they spend their days helping our children learn to read, solve math problems, make friends, select library books, get exercise, find the right bus in the afternoon--and they love what they do?? Twice a year we show our appreciation for their hard work by providing a festive meal. [Print the flyer.](#)

Staff Appreciation Luncheon
Wed., March 13th (after early dismissal)

Please email Lori Lembo (lorilembo@verizon.net) by March 4th to let her know what you can bring, or if you can help serve (shifts are 9:00-11:00m, 11:30-12:30, and 12:30-1:30). Suggested dishes:

- * Tossed Salad w/ Italian dressing
- * Assorted Dinner rolls w/ Butter
- * Antipasta Tray
- * Favorite Rice Dish
- * 1/2 Tray of Vegetable Lasagna
- * Chicken Piccata
- * Bowls of Whole Fresh Strawberries
- * Chocolate Dipping Sauce
- * Pound Cake
- * Fresh Fruit Tray
- * Box of Joe w/ cream & sugar
- * Tropical Punch
- * Sparkling Grape Juice
- * Small Bottles Water
- * 2 Bags Ice
- * 1 Roll Saran Wrap, Foil & Gallon Storage Bags
- * Bags of Chocolate Kisses
- * Cash Contribution (suggest \$3-\$10)

February at a glance

Mon. Feb. 11th, 7pm -- Regional School Funding Advocacy Event @ Niskayuna High School ([INFO](#))

Wed., Feb. 13th -- Last day to enter Box Tops & Labels for Feb. prizes

Wed., Feb. 13th, 7pm -- Community Budget Forum #2, Van Antwerp ([MAP](#))

Get informed and voice your opinion on a possible school closure

Feb. 18th-22nd -- NO SCHOOL, Winter Recess

See all events on the [school calendar](#).



[February Lunch Menu](#)

New Lunch Payment Website: MySchoolBucks.com



**Spring fundraiser:
Chocolate & Flower Sale
Feb. 4th - Feb. 15th
Birchwood earns 50%**

Did you get a whiff of spring when you found brochures for Gertrude Hawk Chocolates and Dutch Mill Bulbs in your child's backpack on Monday? Place an order and ask friends, family, and co-workers. Chocolate sales can also be done online--click [HERE](#), then **click "Group Member Sign Up" and enter 702491**. Create an account and you can do your fundraising by email!

Note: Chocolate orders will arrive before Easter and Passover (and will be "concealed" in packages so your child won't see them). Flower bulbs arrive after the frost, around April 15th.

Questions? [Amy Jasiewicz](#)
(For more information see our [PTO Fundraisers](#) page.)



YEARBOOK FAMILY ADS UPDATE

Family ads pages in the yearbook are already 70% full. If you have been meaning to place an ad (especially 5th grade parents!), please do it soon and don't wait until the March 7th deadline. We can't take any more orders once we're full! Cost is \$15 per ad (max 2 per child).

Family ad order form
([PRINT](#))

Email photos & message to:
Amy Jasiewicz
(amytjaz@nycap.rr.com)

Order your yearbook by April 1st (\$18):

[ORDER ONLINE](#)
(enter ID code:
10694313)

[MORE INFO](#)



Box Tops & Labels for Education

Fill a [Feb Box Tops sheet](#) (or just turn in Box Tops!) by Wed., Feb. 13th for a chance to win a free milkshake from Stewarts!

Click [HERE](#) to print a 1-pt Labels for Education sheet to fill with UPC's from [participating products](#).

Don't forget to register your PriceChopper or ShopRite cards [HERE](#) to get e-Labels for Education--an *additional* point on every participating product!

Feedback? [Click here](#)

Add/update an email address? [Click here](#)

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

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.

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