

Birchtree Friday Update



Birchtree Charter School 7107 E. Palmer Wasilla Hwy. Palmer, Ak 99645

May 16, 2014

t. 907-745-1831

f. 907-745-1843

8th grade graduation, May 16th-

Our 8th grade class of 2014 will bid adieu to Birchtree, Friday, May 16th 6:00 PM at the Palmer Depot. It is an honor to share this important moment in your life. Your graduation from Birchtree Charter school is certainly an achievement, but there's a lot more to come: goals, challenges, and opportunities! Anything is possible when you just believe in yourself.

Birchtree Potluck Picnic, May 20th 11:30- 1:30-

Each year, Birchtree teachers, students and parents gather for a picnic on the last day of school. It is a time to visit with friends and share the joy of giving.

We respectfully request parents provide the following to share:

Families with multiple students may choose one dish to share.

1st Grade- Fruit and Vegetables

2nd Grade- Green Salad

3rd Grade- Pasta and Potato Salad

4th Grade- Rolls/ bread

5th Grade- Dessert

6th Grade- Chips/ Snacks

7th Grade- Water

8th Grade- Enjoy the day, you've earned it!

Clean-up : 1:30- 2:30

We are looking for volunteers to help set up tables and arrange food for the picnic from 10:30– 11:30. Please call Gena at 745-1831 if you would like to help.



Virtue of the Week-

Trustworthiness:

Trustworthiness: Trustworthiness is being worthy of the trust others place in us. When we give our word, we stand by it. Others can rely on us with confidence. We demonstrate by our actions that we keep our promises and commitments. There is constancy in the way we love and loyalty in the bonds of our friendships. Trustworthiness is the foundation of our business agreements and our personal covenants. When we are worthy of trust, we attract abundance. We create lasting success. "To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved."

Expressions of Gratitude-

- ◆ Thank you to the entire Birchtree staff who went out of their way this year to welcome me into your midst, to include me in your lives, and to nurture me with your smiles, your thoughtfulness, your genuineness. All of you have made this a precious year for me, indeed!

-Mrs. Fry

- ◆ Mrs. Tran's parents, thank you for all the support you've given our class inside and outside the classroom. Thank you for the great attendance of our 4th grade play, helping your child practice their lines at home, and contributing props and materials! Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Busk, Mr. Hetrick, & Mr. Merritt, thank you for chaperoning our end of the year field trips. Mr. Hetrick and Mrs. Twitchell, thank you for being my lead parents and helping organize the year's events. I could not do it so well without the support of my families! Thank you!

-Mrs. Tran

- ◆ Ms. Phillips would like to thank Danielle Terry for her invaluable assistance and time with shopping for and buying material and sewing costumes for our class play; Tina Leingang for helping with the costume rental process (making phone calls, driving students to and from costume rental, taking photos, and everything else this process entailed); the Budde family for making the windmill and basin bowl; The Mueller family for making and supplying costumes. Faye Trammell and Gena Chastain for all of their behind the scenes work with finding a theater location, bus request, and their patience and support with other requests from our seventh grade class.

End of the year reminders

Return Library books-

As we approach the end of the year, it is very important that all library books are returned to school. The library team has sent home overdue notices. Please, check your child's backpack for these notices. This week will be the last week for library time for classes.

Registration-

To the parents of all new and returning students:

Here is a head's up regarding registration for school year 2014-2015:

You will need to register your student through iParent on the district website (www.matsuk12.us). If you have problems, I will be back at work on July 25th, so please call and I will be happy to help you with this step.

We will have on-site registration July 29, 30 and 31, at the following times:

July 29th ~ 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

July 30th ~ 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

July 31st ~ 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM

This registration is NOT instead of, but in addition to, the iParent registration.

For students new to the District, or coming from Home School, you will need your child's immunization record, or a current Religious Exemption, notarized and signed **after July 1, 2014**. You will also need to have a copy of your student's birth certificate.

For returning students who have a Religious Exemption, this will also have to be renewed, notarized and signed **after July 1, 2014**.

Our School Nurse will be checking all immunizations and Religious Exemptions and students will not be allowed to attend school until these requirements are met.

Kindergartener's need to have a TB test no sooner than 6 months prior to starting school. If your kindergartner has not had a TB test, the school nurse will be giving them within the first couple of months of school starting.

The District recommends a physical for new students. This form is available on the district website (www.matsuk12.us), or you can ask your health care provider for one.

All parents will need to either pay their student's Supply Fee, or submit a Request for Scholarship during on-site registration.

Thank you,

Faye Trammell, Registrar

PEDAGOGICAL NOTES-

In its last meeting, the Pedagogical Council made great strides toward the revision of Birchtree's discipline policy. The Council has developed and piloted a new tracking system for incidents, has outlined a tier system for progressive discipline, and is currently refining the overarching program for proactive approaches, combining the Virtue's Project with Compassionate Campus. Come Fall, expect to learn about the new policy at a parent night. Our goal is to educate all adults in our community so that we can consistently meet our children's needs, using a common language to uphold common expectations.

-Donna Levesque
Pedagogical Council Chair



End of the year reminders cont.

Volunteer Hours-

Did you know we have 10,666.7 volunteers hours for the 2013-2014 school year?!!

Thank You for spending your time with us!

The school year is quickly coming to a close and with that it is time to record volunteer hours that may have previously slipped your mind. Please take a moment to reflect on the precious time you have so graciously shared with our school to provide the best education possible for your children. This "time" can come in many forms: cooking, cleaning, laundry, gathering box tops, shopping(\$20 equals one hour), sending in food or crafts with a student, field trips, meetings etc. (the list could go on and on...) The point is that your time and energy is a valuable resource for your child's education and our community.

If you have any questions regarding your volunteer hours please do not hesitate to call me at 745-1831.

Your last opportunity to record volunteer hours for 2013-2014 school year will be Sunday, July 6th.

Lost and Found-

The lost and found is bursting at the seams! Take a moment to sift through the mountains of mittens, snow pants, hats, shoes, and socks to find your missing treasures. **We will donate all leftover lost and found items after Tuesday, May 20th. I urge you to look for any long lost treasures before it's too late.**



Expressions of Gratitude-

- ◆ I want to thank my incredible lead parents for all they have done this year! Whew! It was a busy year!!! I also want to thank those parents who came to help with our dye yarn day, it was incredibly successful because of you!!! I could not do what I do without my parents! Thank you!!!

-Kara Johndro

- ◆ Gratitude: Thank you to all volunteers who helped to make the Valley's first Pentathlon a huge success. Parents, teachers, students, friends, and strangers came together to orchestrate a glorious event. Furthermore, I thank the 5th grade Pentathletes for being examples of grace, honor, and sportsmanship. I, myself, am honored to have been a part of the day.

- Mrs. Jones



Track Meet, May 17th-

The 2014 Mat Su Elementary Track meet will be held Saturday, May 17th at Colony High School. Athletes are required to arrive between 8- 8:45 AM. The races will begin at 9:00 AM. Please ensure your athlete arrives prepared with food, water and appropriate clothing (all events will be held outside). Concessions will be available through Colony High School.

Volunteer opportunity:

This year, Birchtree will oversee the shuttle relay. We are requesting three volunteers to assist with his event. If you are interested in helping please call coach Andrist at 707-3014 or the front office at 745-1831. As always we truly appreciate your volunteerism; we simply could not do this without you!

Sportsmanship expectations:

Each athlete is an ambassador of Birchtree Charter School and expected to be an exemplary role model.

Battle of the Books-

Do you have a child interested in participating in Battle of the Books next year? Get a head start on your Battle Books reading this Summer. The third- fourth, fifth-sixth and middle school reading list is available in the front office.

Summer Art Camp- June 9th – 13th

Birchtree Parent Guild is proud to offer students the opportunity to have fun with friends in a creative educational environment this summer. The duration of each class is one week and costs \$125.00 per class. A few of the classes available include: cake making, woodworking, felting ,and adventure camp .Visit birchtreecharterschool.org and click on the Summer Camp link to find out more about the classes available and register your student for this great summer camp. <http://budgetauthenticity.org/summercamp/>



EARLY RELEASE— A SUMMARY

My earnest hope is that my articles over the last several weeks have created a greater understanding for the reasons behind moving the early release day to Thursday next year. In retrospect, the leadership bodies of the school realize that it would have been preferable to provide our rationale prior to announcing the decision. This school year has meant closely examining the rhythms within our community, seeking to create economy for families and staff members alike. We trust that joining our colleagues in a worldwide rhythm will bolster our educational program. In summary, the objectives for instituting an early release day on Thursday are to:

- ◆ Improve attendance, and in turn, increase student learning
- ◆ Improve our Alaska State Performance Index rating, which includes a school's
- ◆ annual attendance rate (vs. attendance rates solely during testing dates)
- ◆ Align our meeting rhythm with schools in Anchorage, the U.S. and the world,
- ◆ allowing greater opportunities for collaboration
- ◆ Utilize the indications provided by Rudolf Steiner in regard to organizational goal-setting
- ◆ Create regular rhythms in the early life of our school. Take heart in knowing that Winterberry Charter School made its early-release day change in year 8!

Initially, it may take some getting used to the new schedule, but my hunch is that there will come a day in the not-too-distant future when we will have forgotten about any other early release day but Thursday.

To everyone, I wish an enjoyable and safe summer.

-Donna Levesque

Pentathlon-

"As a pentathlete, I represent self, family, school and community, and I promise to carry myself with honor, grace and sportsmanship." This was the vow our 5th graders took before the 2014 Olympic Pentathlon games last Thursday, and it is indeed the manner in which they composed themselves. The event location was inexpressibly beautiful, the golden rays and stillness of the day a Palmer anomaly, and our children an inspiration to all who watched.

The Opening Ceremonies began with a call of the trumpet, and the four city-states of Athens, Sparta, Corinth and Thebes marched forward with their flags held high. The athletes presented artistic gifts of dance, song, and poetic recitation while Zeus and Hera looked on. Oaths to the Greek Gods were orated by the pentathletes before their months-of-effort were revealed, and the games began with Athena lighting the Olympic torch.

Over the next two-and-a-half hours, pentathletes moved round the grassy fields displaying their form, strength and grace within the disciplines of running, javelin, discus, long jump and wrestling. As their teacher and coach, I was beaming with pride, not of selfishness but of selflessness. This day was theirs alone. Every effort given came from deep within, and I was a recipient of this manifestation.

In Greek wrestling, the ultimate goal is to expand one's self and *give* one's strength to the other in such a way that he/she desires to follow and move out of the circle. The other often feels gratitude for the victor and gains a powerful sense of nobility; he/she is literally moved by the experience. In watching my students, I entered the circle and became "the other."

As the Pentathlon came to a close, a parent walked up to me to say thank you and uttered relevant and powerful words: "I wish that I had gone to a school like this when I was a child. It was great to see sport without the competition." How true that is. These games are not about being better than another. They are not about winning or losing. They are about striving for personal excellence. It is my hope that each athlete found his or her own.



Birchtree Summer Arts Camp

June 9th-13th, 2014



Wood working
Cake making
Adventure Camp
Birchtree Sampler

For more information and online registration follow the link on
Birchtree's homepage:

www.birchtreecharterschool.org

Or at Birchtree's front office,
1707 East Palmer Wasilla Highway, Palmer, AK

Questions? e-mail Heather at hacski@mtaonline.net

May/ June

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
11	12	13 TRI for a New Direction, high school meeting @ 8:30 in the library Mrs. Tran's 4th grade class play rehearsal 1:30-3:00 PM	14 BPG Meeting at 3:45 PM Mrs. Tran's 4th grade play 1:30-3:00 6th grade play at Colony High 6-8 PM	15 7th grade class play at Palmer High 6-8 PM 4th grade Mat Su River Historical/ Cultural Tour 8:30-3:00	16 8th grade graduation at the Palmer Depot 6:00 PM	17 District track meet at Colony High 9:00 AM
18 Mrs. Hill's class trip to Homer	19 4th grade field trip to the Anchorage zoo 8:30-3:00 Ms. Levesque's 5th grade class play 6:30 PM	20 Last day of school! School Potluck Picnic 11:30-1:30 Mrs. Hill's class returns	21	22	23	24
25	26 Memorial Day	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 BPG Summer Arts Camp	10 BPG Summer Arts Camp	11 BPG Summer Arts Camp	12 BPG Summer Arts Camp	13 BPG Summer Arts Camp	