

Birchtree Friday Update

Birchtree Charter School 7107 E. Palmer Wasilla Hwy. Palmer, AK



April 17, 2015

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VIRTUES in RETROSPECT, Part 1

As the sun arches higher in the spring sky, and the school year begins its final push, I wanted to take some time to reflect on the virtues we have worked with at Birchtree over the course of the year. The virtues we have brought to the children have been considered central to our mission and symbolized by the image of a birch tree. Birch trees, by nature, form community. Rather than growing as isolated entities, they tend to share common roots, from which two or three trees emerge. A few years ago, the staff distilled the most essential components of our Birchtree community, identifying the acronym TREE to encompass Thankfulness, Responsibility, Empathy, and Excellence, all rooted in the ground of Respect.

We built our Virtues Project this year from the ground up, beginning with respect. Chief Dan George speaks of respect in the following words: "There is a longing among all people and creatures to have a sense of purpose and worth. To satisfy that common longing in all of us we must respect each other." As staff members, we have encouraged all students to show respect for themselves as well as others. This involves holding reverence for nature, the work of others, and our school building; speaking with courtesy and showing manners; and being considerate of the needs of other students. Respect means accepting others' differences, and listening to others' points of view.

As adults, we have taken it upon ourselves to serve as models for our students, immersing them in a culture of respect. This has become increasingly important in our fast-paced, disposable world. Next month, when our eighth graders travel to Washington D.C., their chaperones will likely hear what previous Birchtree chaperones have been told: that our students show far more respect than their peers from other schools. Our students know, for example, that to run through Arlington Cemetery is not so much fun as it is a sign of disrespect.

It takes a great, conscious effort to instill these values in children during a time when disrespect becomes more and more prevalent. Expecting children to say "thank you", "please", and "excuse me" has become part of the ground from which we teach. Speaking with civility and respect is something that our students learn at Birchtree, as is waiting patiently to be acknowledged. Birchtree students are learning to be stewards of the land, nurturing the natural world, rather than destroying or polluting it. It is our fervent hope that parents continue this education at home over the summer months, with the heightened awareness that we reap what is sown.

-Donna Levesque

Pedagogical Dean

Save This Date

April 18th: Elementary Chess Tournament. See Mr. Klauder for more information

April 22nd: The lottery will be held at 7 PM

April 27th: 6th grade Knighthood Ceremony @ 11:30 AM.

April 29th: Jo-Ann Climenhage, How to bolster their child(ren) learning at home lecture will take place from 6:30-8 PM

April 30th: 2nd grade plays and potluck dinner 5:00 PM

May 1-8: 8th Grade trip to Washington DC.

May 2nd May Faire 11 AM - 3 PM

May 7th: 5th Grade Pentathlon @ Goose Lake in Anchorage. Bus provided only to Goose Lake departs at 9 AM

May 8th and 9th: BPG rummage sale.

May 9th: Elementary Track Meet Palmer High School

May 15th: 8th Grade promotion at Mat-Su Senior Center 6 PM

May 18th: Medieval Games (6th grade)

May 18th: Last day of school for students. Enjoy your summer break!!

Reminders

*****Yearbooks are on sale now at TreeRing.com*******

Just a reminder to 5th GRADE PARENTS: We will be taking the MAP Test Tuesday through Thursday, with Friday as a makeup day. Please make sure your children get to bed on time for plenty of rest, have a good breakfast, and have a healthy and hearty lunch for energy! We will be providing some extra snack foods, donated from our AMP Testing days. Thank you! Mrs. Tran and Mrs. Folsom

BPG and the 7th grade class are looking for good quality donated items for this years rummage sale! The sale will be held May 8th and 9th at the school. Donations will be accepted each Thursday from 1-2 pm. If you have any questions please contact Mr. David Auld at 315-3079.

Jo-Ann Climenhage, an expert in assessments and learning support for Waldorf schools, will be coming to Anchorage Waldorf School and Birchtree Charter School during the last week in April and the first in May. More information to come in next weeks update.

Please pay Second Semester Supply fees. You may check at the Front Office if you are unsure if you owe. The supply fees are due prior to returning for the 2015/2016 school year. If you are incurring a financial hardship, please ask at the Front Office for a Supply Fee Scholarship.

Next Week is the last Pizza Friday of this School year.

6th Grade News

Birchtree Sixth Graders have been busy fulfilling their quest of community service in training for knighthood. In order to be knighted into the Order of the Birch, each sixth grader must complete 12 hours of service to others in the community. Our squires have been busy cleaning, babysitting, helping with fundraising and charitable events, and even dog walking! Each squire must turn in his or her time sheet on **April 24**. There is only one week left to complete the quest! Students who meet the requirements will be knighted in Birchtree's first ever Knighthood Ceremony on April 30.

The Music Corner

Families of all Orchestra Students,

Please remember that THIS TUESDAY, April 21, is our school's spring concert. Students will attend an afternoon rehearsal at the venue - First Baptist Church in Palmer - and will leave their instruments at the church to be tuned. Students are expected to arrive by 6 pm and the concert will begin at 6:30 pm. Please remind students to dress nicely for the concert and to use their best audience behavior both for rehearsal and concert. Also, if permission slips for the rehearsal have not yet been turned in, please do so ASAP! Everyone has been making great progress and I look forward to hosting this year's spring concert!

~Jessie Eddings

Dear Birchtree Families,

Every year the District hosts music festivals for a variety of grade levels. This year we were invited to send students to the Elementary Honor Music Festival from grades 4-6. I am excited to announce that we have 32 students who auditioned and were accepted to participate in this event! Those students will get to experience an all day field trip to Palmer High School where they will learn to work with other students from all around the district and strive to perfect their music together. They will have the opportunity to work with several different local directors and broaden their musical skills. On the evening of April 28, all students involved in the Festival will perform in the honor concert that is open to the public. It will also be held at Palmer High and begins at 7 pm. Please consider coming out to support your Birchtree friends that will be participating in this exciting event!

~Jessie Eddings

BPG NEWS

AmazonSmile~ Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the charitable organizations selected by customers. Birchtree Parents Guild Inc. has been added to the list. This is another great way to help give money back to our school. Next time you place an order through Amazon choose Birchtree Parents Guild Inc. as your charitable organization.

Thank you for all that you do,

Tiffany Kent

BPG Treasurer

Middle School Track

If your student athlete is interested in participating in the middle school track and field program at Birchtree, you **MUST** have the following submitted to the office prior to participation:

- * Signed participation form
- * Current school physical on file
- * \$60 participation fee

Your student will **NOT** be allowed to participate until all three of these items are completed.

Please be aware that the track season is very brief — starts April 13 and ends May 13 — so attendance at every practice is important. It is my priority to assure that our athletes are trained safely and consistently. Consistent attendance will assist in injury prevention and maximum benefit to your athlete.

For those students that have already been participating in the preconditioning, please be sure your fees are paid, and that we have a copy of your physical on record.

Please contact me directly if you have any questions or concerns
hacski@mtaonline.net <<mailto:hacski@mtaonline.net>>
 ; 907-232-0660)

Thank you and I look forward to a fun season with your student athletes!

Heather Lee
 Coach
 907-232-0660

Middle School Track Schedule

April 28th JV meet @ Palmer
 May 6th JV meet @ Teeland (@ Wasilla High School Track)
 May 7th Varsity Meet @ Teeland (@ Wasilla High School Track)
 May 12th JV Championship @ Houston
 May 14th Varsity Championships @ Colony



Gratitude's and Expressions.

The second grade teachers want to thank all of the parents who have worked so hard on our costumes and other things for our upcoming play. We greatly appreciate your help! We look forward to seeing you at our class plays on Thursday, April 30, at 5:00PM. Our plays will be followed by a class potlucks.

~Mrs. Basner & Mrs. Horvath

Ms. Albina would like to belatedly thank all those who contributed to the testing-week breakfasts. Our class play/family night will be May 15 5:30-7:30

~ Ms. Albina


Thank you To Birchtree parent Bill Mackreth for volunteering to host a First aid and CPR training for all Birchtree staff.

Thank you to our Acting principal Mr. David Booth for filling in while Mr. Bowen and Mrs. Busbey were gone.

Thank you Mr. Auld for your continues help in securing donations for our the BPG rummage Sale

Twisted color Jump Ropes



Twisted Colors Jump Ropes are back! Sixth Grade will be making jump ropes for sale for the rest of the year. Order forms will be  in the office and, once filled out, can be either brought to Mrs. Feldman or put into her mailbox. Please note that, due to a need for

efficiency, we will not have colors requested on the form. However, if you wish to come up to Mrs. Feldman's room and see what colors are available, you may do so. Child size are \$7.50 adult size \$10.00 and double dutch are \$20.00.

April/May 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
12	13 Day 1	14 Day 2	15 BPG 2nd semester Supply fees due Day 3	16 Early Release Day 1	17 Day 2	18 Elementary School Chess tournament TBA
19	20 Day 3	21 Spring Music Concert 6 PM @ Palmer First Baptist Church Day 1	22 Lottery 7PM Day 2	23 Early Release Day 3	24 Day 1	25
26	27 Day 2	28 Day 3	29 Day 1	30 Early Release 2nd grade plays and pot luck at 5 pm	1 Pastries for Parents 8-10 AM 8th grade leaves for D.C Day 3	2
3	4 Day 1	5 Day 2	6 Day 3	7 5th Grade Pentathlon at Goose Lake Early Release Day 1	8 Professional Development day No school for students. 7th Grade Rummage Sale	9 7th grade rummage sale
10	11 Day 2	12 Day 3	13 Day 1	14 Early Release Day 2	15 8th Grade Promotion at Palmer Senior center at 6PM Day 3	16