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# Birch Grove School For the Arts

## PTO News

### Upcoming Important Dates:

- \* PTO Meeting  
Dec. 18th and Jan. 15th,  
7:00pm—8:15 in the  
Media Center.  
Supervision for children  
provided in the gym.
- \* Scholastic Bookfair  
Jan. 22, 24 and 28 in the  
Media Center during  
Conferences.
- \* Burger King Night  
Jan. 31, 4:30 pm -7:30
- \* Read-a-thon Fundraiser  
Month of February
- \* School Carnival  
March 6

### Agenda for Tuesday, Dec. 18th

- Special Guests: 3rd Grade Teachers
- Approval of Oct/Nov. Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Entertainment Fundraiser for spring
- Movie Nights
- Other business

NOTE TO PARENTS: All parents are invited and encouraged to attend the PTO meetings. If you are unable to attend, your thoughts, concerns and any additional agenda items may be submitted in writing to the office (in care of PTO), or by email to BirchGrovePTO@yahoo.com. We will address it during "Other Business". Thank you for your cooperation.

## Parent Support and Participation is Needed at Birch Grove

I know what you are thinking when another fundraiser comes home from school with your student. I've had those same thoughts. Would you rather just send in a donation to the school and forget about asking Uncle Dan or Aunt Betty to buy some more gift wrap or chocolate candies? How would you feel about a fundraiser that has a direct effect on helping that child improve academically?

If you agreed with either of the aforementioned questions, then the Read-a-thon fundraiser in February is for you. Students will be asked to gather pledges to read for a predetermined amount of minutes. Not coincidentally, February is also "I love to read" month. The more time a child spends reading, the better he or she becomes at

reading and comprehension.

This fundraiser has the potential to be a huge success for our school. Directly, students will benefit by improved skills and knowledge. Indirectly, the PTO will generate much needed funds to support the school in a number of ways, including buying books for the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program. The RIF program allows for every student, three times per year, to choose a free book to take home and own.

Every student in the school benefits from a program such as RIF. I would like to see every Birch Grove family participate in the upcoming Read-a-thon with at least a \$10—\$20 pledge. This is also one of those fundraisers that family members

that live far away can participate without you having to worry about shipping products.

As I have taken the time this year to learn more about my child's school and become more involved, my eyes have been opened to just how important the PTO fundraising is to maintaining the programs offered at Birch Grove. Wouldn't you want every opportunity for your child? The PTO has had to scale back its budget this year and we continue to struggle with meeting our fundraising goals. A meager 20 percent of Birch Grove students have participated in the Gold C and Geckler fundraisers this year. Please help us save our current programs from being cut by contributing to your child's school.

## Thanks Turkey Bingo contributors!

The Birch Grove PTO would like to thank the following businesses for their generous donations for our Turkey Bingo fundraiser:

- \* Fleet Farm
- \* Target
- \* Grand Rios Water Park
- \* Stages Theater
- \* Lyric Arts Theater
- \* Youth Performance Company
- \* Play it Again Sports – Brooklyn Park
- \* ShowPlace Cinema
- \* Buffalo Wild Wings
- \* Sammy Perealla's
- \* Jack's Bakery
- \* Jimmy John's
- \* Mad Jack's
- \* El Toro
- \* Papa John's
- \* Zantigo
- \* Curves – Brooklyn Park
- \* Body & Soul Therapeutic Massage
- \* Caribou Coffee
- \* Scholastic Books
- \* Tastefully Simple – Jackie Pohlmeier
- \* Butterfly Boutique – Katy Marcotte
- \* Birch Grove Teachers

# Integrating arts into the curriculum; what does that mean?

One of the things that the PTO is trying to do for parents of Birch Grove (BG) students this year is to help educate them on what sets our school apart from other public schools. What does it mean to be an arts magnet school?

As a parent of a child in her third year at the school, I understood that children at BG had greater opportunities in the arts, such as actually having specialized art and drama teachers. What I do not have a great understanding of is what is meant by integrating the arts into the everyday classroom curriculum. How can art be a part of a science or history lesson?

By attending the November PTO meeting, I have begun to see some very exciting and unique ideas on how the BG teachers are merging arts into the lesson plans. The 4th grade teachers, Mrs. McNattin, Mrs. Jolivet, and Mrs. Rose, did a fantastic presentation to the PTO members.

Those of us present heard about some exciting and very creative ways that our students are encouraged to learn. A couple of things these teachers talked about in their powerpoint presentation were such creative ideas

the body. How many of you remember things that you learned many years ago because of some silly little jingle that was made up to help you learn? These things helped me to learn the colors of the rainbow, the planets (in order), and a few facts about how a bill becomes a law (that good ol' School House Rock!)

As the teachers presented during the PTO meeting, I found myself getting excited for the opportunities that my daughter would have when she moves up to fourth grade next year.

On December 18th, the 3rd grade teachers will talk about some of the special ways that they have integrated arts into the curriculum for this level. I encourage all parents to consider taking a night off from the holiday bustle to hear about what the BG 3rd graders are up to for this year. It is a great opportunity to educate ourselves as parents about the uniqueness of what BG has to offer.

## Featured Speakers at Future

### PTO Meetings

**December—3rd grade teachers**

**January— 5th grade teachers**

**February—2nd grade teachers**

**March—6th grade teachers**

**April—Special Ed teachers**

**May—Kindergarten**

as using symmetry masks to teach geometry, making up grammar jingles to learn about parts of speech, and using visual arts to learn the joints in



## **SAVE THE DATE!**

**Birch Grove  
School Carnival  
Is coming on  
March 6th**

**Games, prizes, silent  
auction, raffle**

## **Donations Wanted for School Carnival**

There's no better time than now to start asking your employer for a tax deductible donation that the business could contribute for the school carnival. Donations could be goods, services, gift certificates, or cash donations which we would use to buy supplies.

Donations for the School Carnival can be mailed directly to the school or turned into the BG office attention Carnival. The address is 4690 Brookdale Drive, Brooklyn Park, MN 55443..

We are looking for items for items of all price ranges. Smaller items such as fun pencils or little toys can be used for prizes for games. Larger items can be used for the raffle or the silent auction.

**Please do your part to help our Carnival Committee with this fun family event!**