

# Birch Grove Primary School Family/Student Handbook 2011 - 2012



Birch Grove Primary School

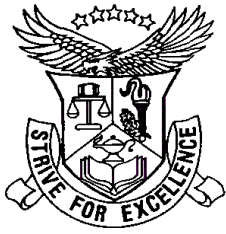
247 Rhodes Road

Tolland, CT 06084

(860) 870-6750

Tolland Public Schools

51 Tolland Green  
Tolland, Connecticut 06084



## **Tolland Public Schools**

51 Tollard Green  
Tollard, Connecticut 06084

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### **Birch Grove Primary School**

Thomas Swanson, Principal  
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## **Message from Birch Grove Administration**

August 2011

We are pleased to welcome you and your family to Birch Grove Primary School, home of “Spirit” the Eaglet. The 2011-2012 school year promises to be very exciting. Our staff is committed to providing your child with the basic skills necessary for success in the future and to providing the best instructional programs possible.

We are proud to be part of such an excellent school, one that has respectful and high-achieving students, an outstanding and enthusiastic staff, and a supportive parent community. In our efforts to make our school’s program effective, we understand and support the importance of a working relationship between home and school. This cooperative attitude will enhance your child’s educational experience.

We look forward to working with you this year. Please read and discuss the information contained in our handbook with your child. You will find this handbook to be an excellent resource throughout the school year. We welcome your support in developing a strong home-school partnership. You are encouraged to contact our administration and staff whenever you have questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,

Tom Swanson

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The material covered in this student/parent handbook is intended as a method of communicating to students and parents regarding general district information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. This handbook is not an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student or parent. Any information in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time to time without notice.



# Birch Grove Primary School



## VISION STATEMENT

Birch Grove Primary School is an educational community dedicated to nurturing life-long learners by providing a high quality of educational experiences that meet the needs of our ever-changing population and society. Through the collaborative efforts of home, school, and community, all students will be given the opportunity to reach their highest potential.

## MISSION STATEMENT

### **The Birch Grove School Community will:**

- Assist students as they strive to reach their highest potential.
- Create a positive, safe, and motivating environment for students and staff.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect and courtesy.
- Promote responsible citizenship.
- Encourage healthy lifestyles for all members of our school community.
- Instill in our children a sense of discovery and a joy of learning.

<u>School Office Hours:</u>	8:00 a.m - 4:30 p.m
<u>Family Resource Center Hours:</u>	7:00 a.m - 5:45 p.m
School Telephone Number:	860 - 870 - 6750
School Nurse:	860 - 870 - 6755
School Cafeteria:	860 - 870 - 6753
School Fax Number:	860 - 870 - 6754
Family Resource Center (FRC):	860 - 870 - 6750 (ext 201)
Bus Coordinator:	860 - 875 - 6378
Website:	<a href="http://www.bgp.tolland.k12.ct.us/">http://www.bgp.tolland.k12.ct.us/</a>
<b><u>Board Of Education</u></b>	
Superintendent:	860 - 870 - 6850
Business Office:	860 - 870 - 6856

### SCHOOL DAY START TIMES

	<u>(A.M.)PK/ Kindergarten</u>	<u>(P.M.) PK/Kindergarten</u>	<u>Grades 1-2</u>
<b>Regular Day</b>	8:50 a.m– 11:35 p.m.	12:35 p.m–3:20 p.m.	8:50 a.m- 3:20 p.m.
<b>Early Release (weather/emergency)</b>	8:50 a.m – 11:05 a.m.	Session canceled	8:50 a.m- 1:20 p.m.
<b>Half Day</b> (9/21, 10/19, 11/23, 12/8, 1/25, 3/7)	8:50 a.m – 11:05 a.m.	11:05 a.m – 1:20 p.m.	8:50 a.m- 1:20 p.m.
<b>Delayed Opening/ Late Start (90 Min.)</b>	10:20 a.m – 11:35 a.m.	12:35 p.m – 3:20 p.m.	10:20 a.m - 3:20 p.m.

### ATTENDANCE

The State Board of Education definition of attendance for public school districts: A student is considered to be “in attendance” if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. Every attempt should be made to confine necessary appointments to after school, weekends and vacation periods. Excused absences are legitimate absences from school due to illness or unavoidable commitments. **When a parent determines that an absence is necessary, parents are requested to contact the nurse (860-870-6755) before 9:00 A.M.** The parent is requested to send a written excuse to the school on the date of the student’s return. The student should submit the excuse to his/her teacher who will send it to the office.

**Excused Absence** -Students receive an excused absence when they are absent from school for the following reasons:

1. Reasons of health, including illness, incapacity, or doctor’s visits. The administration reserves the right to require physician or other appropriate certification for absences in excess of five (5) consecutive days or a total of fifteen (15) days in any school year.
2. Religious holidays.
3. Funeral or death in the family.
4. Approved school activity, including field trips.
5. Suspension or Expulsion.
6. Special activities or emergencies with the consent of the parent or other person having control of the child in limited circumstances.

### VACATIONS ARE NOT EXCUSED ABSENCES

**Tardiness** – Tardiness at Birch Grove is defined as arriving at school after 8:50 a.m. When a child is late he/she must report to the office before going to his/her classroom.

**Early Dismissal** - Children who are picked up before 3:20 p.m. are considered an early dismissal. This will be noted on our report cards.

**Truancy** - A student ages five to eighteen inclusive with 4 (four) unexcused absences in one month or 10 (ten) unexcused absences in a school year will be considered a truant. Parents have the responsibility to assist school officials in remedying and preventing truancy.

## **ARRIVALS/DISMISSALS**

**Visits during the school day** – Please park in the front and enter the building using the far right door after ringing the buzzer. Doors will remain locked at all times throughout the day. Go directly to the **office** to sign in and get a visitor’s badge.

**Special Dismissal** - Requests for release of students may only be made by a parent or guardian, and must be made in writing. The school must have written permission from the parent or guardian to release a student to a designee. The parent, guardian, or designee must come into the school office to pick up the student and sign the student out. The parent, guardian, or designee must provide proof of identification in order to sign the student out of school before the end of the school day.

**Mid day Kindergarten Pickups** – Children will report to the front office to be picked up.

**End of day pickups** - We request that the parents park in the back lot. The doors will be opened to parents at 3:15 p.m. Go directly to the cafeteria to wait for your child. **If you need to get your child before the 3:15 p.m. dismissal call, please come before 2:55 p.m.** It is important to keep the front entry clear for children who are boarding the buses. We ask that parents wait for their children in the cafeteria. If you need to go elsewhere in the building, please stop in the office for a visitor’s badge.

**Front Door Hours** - The main office will be open until 4:30 p.m. each day. After 4:30 p.m. the only way to enter the building is through the Family Resource Center (FRC) door located near the back parking lot.

**Family Resource Center (FRC) Hours** – 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. Students/families who attend the Family Resource Center may continue to be dropped off and picked up by using the FRC door near the back parking lot. This door is equipped with a buzzer.

## **BUS GUIDELINES**

In August, the transportation schedule appears in local newspapers. Please have your child use the bus starting the first day of school because it is necessary to make an immediate evaluation of the adequacy of the bus schedules.

### **Birch Grove School Bus Safety Rules**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Listen to the bus driver.</li><li>2. Keep your hands to yourself.</li><li>3. Sit facing forward and stay in your seat.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Place your backpack on your lap.</li><li>5. Talk using an inside voice.</li></ol> |
|---|--|

**Process for referring bus conduct problems** - Bus conduct reports are issued by the driver when a student does not follow the bus safety rules. The consequences include:

1. The first report is a warning from the principal.
2. The second report is a call home to the parent.
3. The third (or more) report(s) may include a bus privilege suspension for (one) 1 or more days.

**Transportation Assignments** are made on the basis of the student’s home address. If your child (K-8) is to be picked up from and/or transported to a location other than his/her home residence, please refer to the following guidelines and complete the **Special Transportation Request Form** that is available from the school office.

**Bus Stop Drop Off** – Parents need to complete a form each year indicating that they would like to have their child dropped off with or without a responsible adult present at the bus stop.

### **Request for Special Transportation**

1. Babysitting or daycare transportation will only be provided to a location other than a student’s legal residence in Tolland if it is **for the entire school year**. This alternative transportation will be provided in **the a.m. or the p.m. or both a.m. and p.m.** The a.m. and p.m. locations may be different from each other, but the schedule must be consistent each week for the school year. For example: 3 days home, 2 days daycare/babysitter or mornings from home and afternoons to daycare.
2. For special transportation to/from a babysitter/daycare, the student will be picked up or dropped off if:
  - a. It is at the same location weekly for the entire school year;
  - b. The stop is located on an established destination route; or
  - c. If the required rerouting does not increase the cost of transportation to the district.
3. **Each year a new Request for Special Transportation form needs to be completed prior to August.** The transportation request forms are **not** carried over from year to year.

### **Bus Concerns**

**Transportation:** contact the bus coordinator at (875–6378).

**Student discipline:** contact the building principal or assistant principal at (870–6750).

## **BIRTHDAYS/CELEBRATIONS**

In order to promote healthy eating habits, there will be no food for birthdays, celebrations, instruction, or rewards. This policy is in alignment with Public Act 10-221, An Act Concerning Healthy Food and Beverages in Schools, and will help our school be a safer and healthier place for children with severe food allergies and other food related issues. Students will bring their own food (snacks, lunch, etc.), and will not share with other children.

## **BULLYING**

"Bullying" behavior by any student in the Tolland Public Schools is strictly prohibited and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means any overt act(s) by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate another student while on school grounds, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the year. Students may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators. In addition, parents may also file written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board Policy and Regulation #5081 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request. Additional information can be found at <http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/boe/policies>.

## **COMMUNICATION**

**Digital Backpack** – Is our new method of email communication for news and notices that will be sent to the home/work e-mail of all Digital Backpack subscribers. This is a one directional list, allowing announcements from the school but subscribers cannot post messages to the list.

**Subscribing to Digital Backpack**-To receive weekly Digital Backpack email updates, send an email to: [bgpnews+subscribe@tolland.k12.ct.us](mailto:bgpnews+subscribe@tolland.k12.ct.us) NOTE: The "+" sign, spell carefully, no blank spaces. Please put the word "Subscribe" in the subject line of your message. On success, you will receive a confirming message that you have subscribed to BGP News.

**Unsubscribing to Digital Backpack**-To unsubscribe at any time, please send an email to: [bgpnews+unsubscribe@tolland.k12.ct.us](mailto:bgpnews+unsubscribe@tolland.k12.ct.us) NOTE the "+" sign, spell carefully, no blank spaces. Please put the word "Unsubscribe" in the subject line of the message. You will receive a return email that indicates that you are unsubscribed from the list and you will not receive Digital Backpacks from Birch Grove any longer.

**Notes to School** - Notes should have the student's first and last names and the teacher's name on the outside of the envelope.

**Notes from School** - Please check your child's backpack daily for notes from the classroom teacher.

**Monthly Calendar** – Look for the BGP calendar to come home during the last week of the previous month.

**Telephone Calls** - All phone contact with teachers should go through the main phone system and individual teacher's voice mail. Teachers will return phone messages as soon as possible.

**Website** – Please check the website for additional information and to visit links for parents and students.  
<http://www.bgp.tolland.k12.ct.us/>

**Email** – Teacher's email addresses are located on the website. Teachers will return email messages as soon as possible.

## **DISCIPLINE**

At Birch Grove Primary School, classroom teachers use the Responsive Classroom approach to teach students how to make positive choices, which will help them become successful learners. The Responsive Classroom approach focuses on positive behavior using the five character traits of: Caring, Assertion, Responsibility/Respect, Empathy, and Self – Control.

Students become active participants in their learning and participate daily in activities that promote problem-solving. Students learn through the guided discovery approach of using classroom materials and following the class rules. If a student needs redirection, a consistent approach to discipline is taken, which often involves a break for the child to sit and think about his/her behavior. If a student is sent to the office for inappropriate behavior, parents will be notified.

## **Our School Rules**

1. Respect everyone and everything around you.
2. Be your best in every way. Do your personal best each day.
3. Have fun learning.

## **Recess**

At recess students will:

1. Play in the designated area (black top, field, and playground) for the recess period. Play areas rotate every day for the students by class.
2. Walk on the black top.
3. Freeze when the whistle is blown.
4. Keep their hands and feet to themselves.
5. Use appropriate language at recess.

## **Lunch**

At lunch students will:

1. Raise their hand to leave their seat.
2. Talk quietly while eating.
3. Be quiet when lights are off.
4. Focus on eating their lunch to insure they finish before the end of the period.

## **DRESS CODE**

Students are encouraged to dress in clothing appropriate for seasonal conditions. Heelies are not allowed, and students are discouraged from wearing “flip-flops”. Children are requested to wear sneaker-type shoes and comfortable clothing on days when they have physical education. In the event of snowy weather, children must wear boots, gloves, hats, and snow pants if they wish to play in the snow.

## **EARLY CLOSING FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER**

**Grades 1-2: 8:50 a.m -1:20 p.m**

**A.M. PK/ K: 8:50 a.m – 11:05 a.m**

**P.M. PK/ K: canceled**

In the event school is closed because of weather or other emergencies, announcements will be made on radio stations **WILI- (AM 1400/FM 98.3), WTIC- (AM 1080/ FM 96.5), WRCH (FM 100.5), and WZMS (FM 93.7).**

Emergency closings will also be posted on the district’s website, <http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/>. Additional sites include: [www.nbc30.com](http://www.nbc30.com), [www.wfsb.com](http://www.wfsb.com), [www.wtic.com](http://www.wtic.com), [www.965tic.com](http://www.965tic.com), [www.wdrefm.com](http://www.wdrefm.com), [www.wdrc.com](http://www.wdrc.com)

In the event school is closed because of weather or other emergencies, parents will be notified by phone through the **ALERTNOW** Rapid Notification Service.

### **What you need to know about receiving calls sent through ALERTNOW.**

1. **Your caller ID will display your school’s or the district’s main number anytime a non-emergency call is generated. Caller ID will not display a name with the number.**
2. **Your caller ID will display 411 anytime an emergency call is being sent. Examples of an emergency include evacuation or lockdown.**
3. ALERTNOW will leave a message on your voicemail or answering machine.
4. If you have such things as Telemarketer Zapper or Privacy Director on your telephone lines, you may not receive the call.
5. ALERTNOW does not call extensions. If you have a direct dial number at work, you should provide your child’s school with the direct dial number, not a main number plus an extension.

Emergency notices will also be sent to families who have requested to use our listserv. (See Communication, p.7)

**Please be aware that emergency closings can occur at any time.**

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources.



Dr. Kathryn Eidson is the designated district compliance officer, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Civil Rights Act of 1964. Kathleen Raymond is the district compliance officer for ADA, IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

### **FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER**

The Family Resource Center is open to all Tolland residents. It is located at Birch Grove Primary School on the first floor of the E hallway. The Family Resource Center is open during regular Birch Grove School hours.

The School Age Care Program is open Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.

The FRC offers weekly playgroups, before and after school care, extended day kindergarten, summer camp, parent and childcare provider courses and hosts a number of evening family events. The staff is available for home visits and referrals, to assist with the search for childcare, preschool, after school programs and family services, as well as provide information about childhood development.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be scheduled for educational, cultural, or extracurricular purposes. Any student whose behavior is considered detrimental to the well-being of other students may be barred from participation by the principal. While on a field trip, all students are considered to be "in" school. This means that school conduct and dress standards will be appropriate for the field trip activity. A signed permission slip is required for each trip. Information concerning departure date, destination, and cost of each trip will be sent to parents/guardians prior to each trip.

### **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the **exit** directions posted in each classroom. Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner. When the alarm sounds, students are to proceed along the posted exit routes in a quick, quiet, and calm manner. Students should not return to the building until the return signal is given.

### **Lock Down**

In collaboration with the Tolland Director of Emergency Management and the Resident State Trooper's office, the Tolland Public Schools have developed a plan to efficiently manage many types of emergency. Although we cannot anticipate every single problem associated with an unexpected emergency, it is important to have all school employees and students prepared to minimize confusion should such an event occur in our community.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

In the interest of your child's health and the health of other children, please observe the following:

- 1. If your child has a fever of 100° F or above, please keep him/her home for 24 hours after the fever has subsided without medication, with the exception of antibiotics.**
2. Please keep your child home with any contagious symptoms for 24 hours after symptoms have subsided.
3. Flu season. We will be following the CDC guidelines during the flu season.
4. If your child has a contagious disease or is likely to be absent for three or more days, please notify the school nurse at 870 - 6755.
5. A student absent five consecutive days or more may be requested to see the school nurse upon returning to school. A student with any contagious illness requires a note from the physician stating that the student is safe to come back to school.
6. A written excuse should be sent to school for any absence. A note from your physician is required for prolonged or frequent absences.
7. It is felt that any child well enough to come to school is well enough to participate in all activities, including recess and physical education.
8. Any exceptions from this rule must be accompanied by a note signed by a physician. A parent may send a note to extend the excuse up to two days after the doctor's excuse ends.
9. Please dress your child warmly with boots, hats, coats, gloves, and sweaters on chilly days.

## **Requirements**

1. Connecticut State Law requires each school child to have several physical examinations during their school years. State law mandates a physical prior to entering kindergarten. A physical examination done within one year prior to the child's entering kindergarten is acceptable, and evidence of such must be submitted to the school by July 15. Physicals are also required in our school system in grades 6 and 10. A State health assessment form is available at school or at the physician's office; it is to be completed by both physician and parent. Contact the school nurse before June 1 regarding eligibility for the Health Services of CT, Inc.

## **Illness and Injury**

When a child becomes ill, you will be asked to bring him/her home. In case of injuries we may need to contact you. It is necessary that the school always have a phone number – yours and two emergency numbers – that may be reached at all times. Parents or designee must provide transportation. Please notify the school when any emergency card information changes during the school year, such as a new phone number, new job, etc. New emergency cards go home at the beginning of each school year.

## **Administration of Medicine in School**

State Laws govern the administration of medicine (**prescription and non-prescription**) in the schools. Forms are in the school health office, doctor's offices, emergency rooms, walk-in health offices, etc.

Medications cannot be administered during school hours when the desired effects can be achieved by home administration. For each medication ordered there must be an Authorization for the Administration of Medicine in School form completed and on file in the school Health Office. This form includes:

- a. Physician's written order
- b. Parent or guardian's written authorization

### **Medications to be administered at school must be**

- a. Delivered to the school nurse by the parent.
- b. In a container, labeled by the pharmacist, specifically for school use. The label must state the patient's name, physician's name, name and strength of the medicine, directions for administering, and date of original prescription.

No more than a 45 day supply of medication may be kept in the health office except those used for chronic conditions (i.e. Asthma, allergic reactions, Diabetes).

At the end of the school year, medications must be picked up by the parent or they will be disposed of by the school nurse.

All medication orders are to be renewed at the beginning of every school year.

## **Hearing/Vision Testing**

Hearing and vision testing are done yearly for all pupils by the school nurse. Any problems in these areas are reported to the parents by the nurse. If parents have questions regarding any health problems, the nurse is available for consultation.

## **HOMEWORK**

The purpose of homework is to help students become self-directed, independent learners and is related to the educational progress of the student. It serves to help all students reach their instructional goals.

Kindergarten: up to 10 minutes per day - 2 days a week

Grade 1: up to 15 minutes per day - 4 days a week

Grade 2: up to 20 minutes per day - 4 days a week

Specific homework assignments may strengthen basic skills, extend classroom learning, stimulate and further develop interests, reinforce independent study skills, develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction, stimulate worthwhile use of leisure time, and acquaint parents with the student's work in school. All students are encouraged to practice reading daily either independently or with an adult.

## **INSURANCE**

You will receive forms in September if you are interested in this option.

## **KINDERGARTEN**

**Entry and enrollment** - If your child is five (5) years old on or before the first day of January of any year, he or she can enter Kindergarten. Connecticut law requires public schools to be open to all children who reach the age of five (5) on or before the

first of January of any school year. [C.G.S. \*Sec. 10 -15c] Parents of a child who is five (5) years of age have the option not to send their child to school until the child is six (6) or seven (7) years of age.

**Mid-day Kindergarten Pickups** – Children will report to the front office to be picked up.

**End-of-the-day Kindergarten Pickups** - We request that parents park in the back lot. The doors will be opened to parents at 3:10 p.m. Go directly to the cafeteria to wait for your child. **If you need to get your child before the 3:15 p.m. dismissal call, please come before 2:55 p.m.** It is important to keep the front entry clear for children who are boarding the buses. We ask that parents wait for their children in the cafeteria. If you need to go elsewhere in the building, please stop in the office for a visitor's badge.

## **LIBRARY**

Students in Grades one (1) and two (2) borrow books weekly and Kindergarten students borrow books every two weeks. The books are expected to be returned on the due date. Students are responsible for lost or damaged books. Parents are always welcome to help in the library. Please contact Mrs. Larose, the school librarian, at 870-6750.

## **LUNCH PROGRAM GRADES 1-2:**

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. The lunch period is 30 minutes. Lunch is served each day except the day before Thanksgiving and the last day of school. Students are expected to sit, by class, in designated areas and proper manners are expected at all times in the lunchroom. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information on this program may be obtained from the main office or Abby Kassman-Harned, the Food Service Director, at [aharned@tolland.k12.ct.us](mailto:aharned@tolland.k12.ct.us) or 870-6853. We use a Point-of-Sale System that allows you to put money into an account for your child to purchase lunch.

**Scanning** - When your child comes through the hot lunch line, he/she will scan his/her finger as a means of identification. Be assured that if your child sees a "sad face" which says "Access Denied," this does not indicate how much money is in his or her account. The student simply needs to tell the cashier his/her name.

**Payments** – The price of lunch is \$2.00 (subject to change) and milk is \$.50 cents. Your child may give payment along with a form to his/her classroom teacher to send to the office, or he/she may bring payment directly to the cashier in the cafeteria at lunchtime. Your payment may take us a few days to process. However, as long as we have received a payment from you your child will receive a lunch. It is important to keep a balance in your account to avoid charging for lunch. If you have any questions or concerns, you may e-mail Mrs. West, the cafeteria manager, at [rwest@tolland.k12.ct.us](mailto:rwest@tolland.k12.ct.us) or leave a voice mail message at 870-6753.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

**Please label all articles of clothing and lunch boxes to minimize lost articles.** Any articles found in the school or on school grounds should be turned into the main office. Lost and found articles are located in the cafeteria. Unclaimed articles will be disposed of mid-year and at the end of the school year. Loss or suspected theft of personal or school property should be reported to the main office.

## **NEWSLETTERS**

A school calendar of events is distributed monthly. The PTO distributes a monthly newsletter with upcoming events and pertinent information.

## **NOTIFICATIONS**

**Asbestos Notification** -Tolland Public Schools asbestos management plan is available for review at the superintendent's office located at 51 Tolland Green, Tolland, CT 06084.

**Pesticide Application-** [Public Act 99-165 allows for the notification of staff and parents and guardians of students prior to the application of pesticide. Any individuals who wish to be notified may register at the school office to receive notice. Notice will be mailed so as to be received 24 hours prior to pesticide application. Additional information regarding pesticide application on school property is available at the superintendent's office located at 51 Tolland Green, Tolland, CT 06084.](#)

## **OPEN HOUSE/CURRICULUM NIGHT**

Kindergarten orientation will be held in late August. Grade 1 & Grade 2 "Meet & Greet" will be held prior to the opening day of school. Curriculum Night is an informal evening session for parents. The exact date for Curriculum Night and program format will be announced at the start of the school year.

## **PARENT – TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The Tolland Elementary Parent Teacher Organization (TEPTO) is a group of parents and teachers working for the good of all elementary students in Tolland. TEPTO supports the staffs of both Birch Grove and Tolland Intermediate Schools, through monetary and equipment donations each year. TEPTO sponsors fund-raisers and family events allowing children and their parents to spend time at school together having fun and interacting with faculty and staff.

## **PARKING**

**Mid-day Kindergarten Pickup** – Children will report to the front office to be picked up. Please park in front of the building.

**Morning Drop Off** - We request that parents pull up to the curb/unloading area in the back lot and encourage the children to enter the building using the back door.

**End of the day pickup** - We request that parents park in the back lot. The doors will be opened to parents at 3:10 p.m. Go directly to the cafeteria to wait for your child. **If you need to get your child before the 3:15 p.m. dismissal call, please come before 2:55 p.m.** It is important to keep the front entry clear for children who are boarding the buses. We ask that parents wait for their children in the cafeteria. If you need to go elsewhere in the building, please stop in the office for a visitor's badge. There are eight parking spaces directly in front of the school for visitor parking.

## **PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

The Preschool Learning Center (PSLC) is a language based preschool program for children with special needs. The program is integrated with typically developing children to model age appropriate speech/language, behavior, motor, and learning skills. A child with special needs is placed in the program as a result of a decision made by the planning and placement team (PPT). A lottery and screening process selects typically developing children. The program includes two three-year-old classes and two four-year-old classes.

### **Preschool Class Hours**

Morning Class: 8:50 a.m. – 11:35 a.m. Monday – Thursday

Afternoon Class: 12:35 p.m. – 3:20 p.m. Monday – Thursday

**Preschool Arrival** - Parents may drop off students between 8:35 -8:50 a.m. and 12:30 -12:40 p.m. using the front door or the preschool classroom door. Parents need to sign in their child in the notebook outside the classroom. The outside door will be locked during class times. Parents will need to use the front door to enter the building after the start of school.

**Preschool Dismissal** - Parents may pick up students at 11:20 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. Parents need to sign out their child in the notebook outside the classroom. Please park in designated parking area to ensure that buses can load and unload students.

## **PSYCHOLOGIST**

The school Psychologist administers appropriate assessments and assists the team in determining eligibility for Special Education or 504 services.

## **RECESS**

Students must dress appropriately for the climate conditions as **they will go outside every day unless the temperature/wind chill factor is 20° F, or less, or it is raining.** Recess is an integral part of the school day and students go outside for 30 minutes.

## **REGISTRATION**

Kindergarten registration takes place in March. Parents are requested to bring a copy of the child's birth certificate, proof of residency, and an updated health form with immunizations. There will be an evening Kindergarten parent orientation meeting prior to registration.

## **SAFETY**

Building security is a top priority at Birch Grove Primary School. All students are fully supervised while they are in school. **The earliest arrival time for students is 8:30 a.m.** All doors will be locked while school is in session. We ask all guests to wear a name tag for the entire day while visiting. **Security is everyone's responsibility.** Please notify a school staff member should you observe suspicious behavior or an unsafe condition.

## **SNACKS/ BIRTHDAY TREATS**

We encourage children to bring healthy, nutritious snacks (fruits, vegetables, etc.) and avoid high sugar or salty foods. In some classes, we ask that you avoid peanut and nut products as a way to **reduce the potential allergic reactions** in the classroom. In order to promote a healthier school there will be no food allowed at birthday celebrations.

## **SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

An opportunity will be provided, at the beginning of each school day, for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Participation in these activities is voluntary.

## **SCHOOL SONG**

“We are the Birch Grove kids. We love to sing and play. We love our school. We love our class. We do our best work every day.”

## **STUDENT PROGRESS**

**Grading/Conferences** -Report cards are sent home three times a year. Parent conferences are scheduled twice, once in the fall and, by invitation, in the spring. Conferences with teachers may be requested at any time during the school year. Parents, teachers or administrators may initiate a conference. The teachers will contact parents to schedule a conference on an as needed basis. Conferences are held during school hours though every effort will be made to accommodate parent schedules.

**Class Placement** – In the spring, parents and teachers will have an opportunity to provide information relative to placement. Every effort will be made to cluster students with familiar children, and be placed with a teacher where a positive student-teacher relationship will be established. The final decision for placement rests with the principal or his/her designee. Placements are mailed home to parents on August 1.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

A student’s school records are confidential and are protected by federal and state law from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is the custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Superintendent of Schools, William Guzman, is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed, during regular school hours, upon completion of the written request form. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student’s records. “School officials with legitimate educational interests” include any employee, agents, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

1. Working with the student;
2. Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504;
3. Compiling statistical data; or
4. Investigating or evaluating programs.

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to the release of their records.

The parent’s or student’s right of access to and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers’ personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher and records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students in the district, do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

A student over 18 and parents of minor students may inspect the student’s records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy or other rights. If the district refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student’s record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student’s grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they

believe the district is not in compliance with the law regarding student records. The district's policy regarding student records is available from the principal's or superintendent's office.

Family Policy Compliance Office  
US Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Copies of student records are available at a cost of \$.50 per page, payable in advance. Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the district is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. This objection must be made, in writing, to the principal within ten school days after the issuance of this handbook. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade levels, photograph, computer and/or video images, e-mail address, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

The District will release to the Parent Teacher Organization the names, addresses, telephone number and grade levels of students (unless the District is informed by September 15 of the school year that designation of such directory information has been refused as to a particular student), provided such information is to be used by the PTO for its own school activities or school business.

The District, when a student moves to a new school system or charter school, will send the student's records to the new district or charter school within ten business days of receiving written notice of the move from the new district. Unless the parents/guardians of the student authorize the record transfer in writing, the sending District is required to send a notice when the records are sent to the new district.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

Services will be provided to students on an as needed basis.

**English Language Learners Students (ELL)** – An appropriate educational program and placement for any new ELL student will be provided within 30 days of the student's registration. Each spring, a review of each student's progress will occur and a tentative program for the subsequent year will be planned. The assessment is used to meet the *No Child Left Behind* annual testing requirements.

**Kindergarten Literacy** - A literacy paraprofessional assists the classroom teacher for a 30-minute period, four times a week. The literacy paraprofessional works with individual or small groups of students at the teacher's discretion.

**Grade 1 Small Group Pull-Out** The reading teacher will pull-out a small group of students during the literacy block time. The instructional focus will be on developing phonemic awareness and the alphabetic principle through the reading of decodable texts.

**Teaching Literacy Competence (TLC)** helps students become proficient readers through one-on-one instruction. Students meet with a literacy paraprofessional for a 40-minute period, five days a week. The reading teacher works periodically with each student and will communicate each student's progress to the classroom teacher via a short progress report (each time she works with that student). Students read leveled texts daily in TLC and at home. TLC will focus on supporting second grade students in the first half of the year, and first grade students in the second half of the year.

**Reading Excellence Achieved Daily (READ)** - helps students become proficient readers through small group pull-out instruction. The small groups rotate between a reading teacher and literacy paraprofessionals for a 30-minute period, four days a week. The reading teacher, the literacy paraprofessionals, and the classroom teacher meet at least once a month to discuss student progress and reading objectives. The success that this program has achieved is due to the collaboration between classroom teachers, the reading department staff members, and through parent participation at home. READ will focus on supporting second grade students in the first half of the year, and first grade students in the second half of the year.

**Grade 2 Small Group Pull-Out** The reading teacher will pull-out a small group of students during their literacy block time. The instructional focus will be on developing fluency and/or reading comprehension skills.

**START** assists kindergarten students with learning letter names and sounds, and increases the ability of first and second graders to rapidly and consistently decode words. A reading teacher facilitates this program on an as-needed basis throughout the school year.

### **STUDENT EARLY INTERVENTION PROCESS**

**Child Study** -The purpose of the Child Study Team is to discuss children’s learning and identify possible strategies to support their learning. Teachers meet monthly to informally identify a plan of action for a student of concern. This internal process is a first step before initiating the TAT process.

**Teacher Assistance Team (TAT)** – The TAT team incorporates a team approach to provide prompt and sustained support to classroom teachers who request assistance in working with at-risk students. Parents will be notified prior to any TAT meeting. The team, made up primarily of classroom teachers and a variety of support staff, is trained to use a proven problem-solving framework that incorporates data as well as curriculum-based and observation-based assessments to identify areas of concern. Once the concerns have been identified, strategies are brainstormed and an action plan is created for the student.

**Student Assistance Team (SAT)** – The goal of the Student Assistance Team is to improve student performance and school adjustment through early intervention, accurate assessment of problems, and pro-active efforts to assist students. The Student Assistance team (SAT) utilizes a holistic approach to student development and is concerned with the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of the student. Members of the Student Assistance Team include the Principal, School Nurse, School Psychologist, parents and representatives from the teaching staff. Referrals to the SAT team can be made by staff members or parents. The team works collaboratively to identify student strengths and needs. An action plan is developed to assist the student so that learning and school adjustment is enhanced. The SAT process is used predominantly with students who are functioning at grade level, but are exhibiting social/emotional adjustment issues.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Special Education services are available to students with disabilities. The Tolland Public Schools follow all the statutory requirements regarding the identification of, and service delivery to, students with disabilities. Parents are involved during all phases of the special education process.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (SEPTA)**

SEPTA is an organization of parents and teachers whose primary goal is to support, educate and empower other members. The group works collaboratively with Birch Grove staff and administration to foster the growth and well being of children with special needs.

### **SUPPLIES**

Parents are asked to provide supplies and materials for their child’s personal use. Parents may volunteer to provide materials for classroom use or special projects during the school year, but may not be asked to do so by school staff.

### **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

All staff members are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Department of Children and Families Services (DCF). The Tolland Public Schools follow all statutory requirements in regard to reporting child abuse/neglect.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

Students have access to computers in the classroom and computer lab. Internet use is strictly regulated and supervised. There is also highly effective filtering software operating throughout the district to help eliminate visits to undesirable internet sites. Tolland District Schools has developed a specific Computer Skills Curriculum that specifies skill expectations, by grade, from kindergarten through high school.

### **TESTING/ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

Assessment is a continuous, ongoing process in our classrooms. We are continually assessing the children’s progress and adjusting their programming, as indicated. Teachers will administer regular classroom assessments and benchmark assessments throughout the year.

## **TOYS, RADIOS, VALUABLES, MONEY, ETC.**

Students are not permitted to use such items as radios, CD players, MP3 players, tape recorders, camcorders, DVD players, cameras, cell phones, electronic devices or games at school. Students may be allowed to use electronic games and small individual CD/MP3 players on the bus, but they need to be placed in their backpacks before entering school.

## **TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The response will indicate whether the teacher is certified for the subject matter and grade taught, the teacher's undergraduate major and any graduate degrees or certifications a teacher may have.

## **WEAPONS AND OTHER DANGEROUS ITEMS**

No guns, knives, firearms, weapons, or any other dangerous instruments, including martial arts weapons, capable of threatening or causing injury or death may be brought on to school grounds. Any object used to cause injury will be considered a weapon. Violators will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **VIDEO TAPING/PHOTOGRAPHING OF STUDENTS**

Professional staff may tape individuals or groups in order to improve teaching and planning. These tapes are not used publicly or for other purposes. In the event that your child has been selected for a special photo opportunity, a permission slip will be sent home for you to sign. On occasion, photographs of students are placed in newspapers or on the school website, concerning events at school. **If, for any reason, you do not want your child photographed for the newspapers or the website, please send in a written request stating such at the start of the school year.**

## **VISITORS**

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit and must **wear a visitor's badge throughout their stay at school.** All visitors must first report to the office. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only by making an appointment with the classroom teacher. These visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction, or disrupts the normal school environment.

Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School administration is authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering the building or from loitering on the grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

## **VOICE MAIL**

All staff members have voice mailboxes. **Please leave urgent messages with the office,** e.g., changes in a child's pick-up or transportation or when you require an immediate response.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Classroom volunteers are always welcome. Some of the ways parents may help include: in the classroom, art room, library, recess, lunch room, computer lab, and assisting students with reading in the reading room. If interested, please call the office or tell your child's classroom teacher. **Prior to any assignment volunteers must complete a Volunteer Form and give permission for the Tolland Public Schools to complete a background check to determine whether any criminal convictions are on record.**

## **WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD BE SUCCESSFUL IN SCHOOL**

- Praise your child each day for something he/she has done and listen attentively to what is said about his/her day.
- Read/ talk with your child everyday. Read during vacations and the summer break.
- Keep the lines of communication open between yourself and your child's teacher. Inform the teacher of any family situation that could influence your child's behavior.
- If you have concerns about your child's academic or social performance at school, the first step is to contact your child's teacher immediately.



# BIRCH GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL 2011-2012 CALENDAR

August	31	School Begins – Full day
September	5	Labor Day – NO SCHOOL
	6	Pre K Open House (AM 10:00-11:00, PM 1:00-2:00)
	20	Grade 1 - Curriculum Night 6:30pm -7:30pm
	21	HALF DAY–Professional Development **
	23	Ice Cream Social – <u>Tolland Intermediate School</u> 6:00-8:00 pm
	27	Kindergarten Open House 6:15-6:45 (AM K) 7:00-7:30 (PM K)
October	1	Cider Mill Race
	5&6	Picture Day
	6	Grade 2 - Curriculum Night 6:30-7:30 pm
	10	Columbus Day – NO SCHOOL
	11	Teacher In-Service – NO SCHOOL for students
	19	HALF DAY– Professional Development **
November	10	Teacher In-Service – NO SCHOOL for students
	11	Veterans Day – NO SCHOOL
	23	HALF-DAY SESSION
	24 & 25	Thanksgiving Vacation – NO SCHOOL
December	7	Report Cards go home
	8	Parent-Teacher Conferences – HALF DAY SESSION
	9	Parent-Teacher Conferences – NO SCHOOL for Students
	23	Winter Sing-Along 10:00am & 1:45pm
	26	Winter Recess begins
January	3	Return to school from Winter Recess
	16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday – NO SCHOOL
	25	HALF-DAY- Professional Development
February	20	Presidents' Day-NO SCHOOL
March	6	Report Cards go home
	7	Parent-Teacher Conferences – HALF DAY SESSION
	15	2012 Kindergarten Parents Meeting – 7:00 p.m. (PARENTS ONLY)
	19-23	2012 Kindergarten Registration
April	6	Contractual Holiday-NO SCHOOL
	16-20	Spring Vacation – NO SCHOOL
May	28	Memorial Day – NO SCHOOL
June	20	Report Cards go home
	20	Scheduled last day of school – HALF DAY SESSION

1. A delayed opening because of weather on any half-day will result in conferences or other special activities being canceled for the morning
2. Any early dismissal because of weather on any half-day will result in conferences or other special activities being canceled for the rest of the day.
3. All teacher in-service days listed on the calendar are observed in all Tolland schools.

### Half Day Session

**AM Pre K & Kindergarten 8:50 – 11:05**

**PM Pre K & Kindergarten 11:05 – 1:20**

**Grades 1 & 2 8:50 – 1:20**

### Late Openings

**AM Kindergarten 10:20-11:35**

**PM Kindergarten 12:35-3:20**

**Grades 1 & 2 10:20-3:20**