



Birch Hill Newsletter

October



Rooted in Friendship, Growing in Knowledge

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
29	30	1	2	3 Kindergarten to Parlee Farms	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Book Fair Family Night 6-8	11	12
Scholastic Book Fair						
13	14 Columbus Day No School 	15 Fire Department to visit K	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Flu Clinic 9-11 am	23 Early Release Dismissal 1:25 pm Kindergarten dismisses at 12:50 pm	24	25 PTO Halloween Dance 	26
27	28	29	30	31 Halloween 		

PARENTS, IS YOUR CHILD GOING TO BE LATE OR ABSENT? IF SO, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE at 966-1820. Your child's safety is a primary concern. If you do not contact the school we have no way of knowing if your child's absence is routine, or if a safety issue is involved. The answering machine is on during evening and early morning hours for your convenience. Even though our school has Email capability, for security reasons, we are not accepting Email as a valid option for attendance reporting. It is not necessary that you speak to your child's teacher. The office staff will let them know that they are out. If you would like homework sent home, just let us know and we'll contact your child's teacher. If you are bringing your child in late, please make sure you escort them into the office. Thank you very much for your continued cooperation.

EARLY RELEASE DATES THIS YEAR:

The Early Release dates for this year are ALL Wednesdays as follows: October 23 and December 11, 2019, and January 15, March 18, April 15, May 13, 2020.

FROM THE PRINCIPALS OFFICE:

Thank you for making the opening month of school a smooth one! We've all settled in and are looking forward to a productive year.

Here are some helpful hints to remember:

General Notes

- **Parents needing to enter the building for a lengthy period should now park in our main lot. 5 minute parking only in the main loop during non drop-off / pick up hours. (Preschool parents may park during drop-off and pick up.)**
- Parents, please do not get out of your car during drop off and pick up.
- Please do not drop off students in grades 1-5 before 8:40. There is no one on duty.
- It is not necessary that you arrive early for pick up or drop off. If all parents arrived at our approximate drop off and pick up times traffic will flow smoothly through the Main Entrance Loop.
- Early dismissals will not be allowed after 3:00 as our office is extremely busy at that time of day. If you absolutely need to dismiss early, please do so before 3:00.

Reminders:

In order to reduce the number of distractions in our classrooms we ask that you contact your child's teacher via email or phone to discuss any issues or concerns. Teachers will respond to parent contact within 24 hours unless a teacher is absent. Please do not drop in to discuss issues with teachers. Don't forget to sign up for a November conference.

All volunteers must sign in at the office and wear a visitor's badge. Once you have finished your volunteer duties for the day we ask that you sign out. When you are here volunteering, please refrain from discussing with your child's teacher any issues or concerns directly relating to your child.

Please do not call the office between 8:45 and 9:05. We are very busy at that time of day with the arrival of students.

HALLOWEEN 2019

It is our intention, as well as the Nashua School District, to downplay the significance of Halloween as a school-wide event. Therefore, we are limiting the celebration to Kindergarten, First and Second Grade only. The wearing of costumes will be limited to the above grades and should be associated with non-violent themes, such as literary characters, nursery rhymes, or suggestions given by your child's teacher. Per our party policy, no treats should be sent in for parties unless requested by the teacher.



RED RIBBON WEEK

A Nationally recognized week for Drug and Alcohol Abuse Awareness is October 23rd-31st. The National and local theme this year is "Send a Message, Stay Drug Free". At the Elementary level we will be focusing on healthy choices that lead to living a healthy life. Each day we will have a different theme to show our commitment to living strong, healthy lives. You can support us in this effort by talking with your children about this important topic at home.



ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

We have had an increasing number of complaints about parents bringing dogs onto school grounds during arrival and dismissal at many of our schools. These tend to come at the elementary level where parents often walk children to school and often socialize with other parents while doing so. Therefore, the district wanted to send a reminder to all of our schools that we do have information in the student handbook that addresses this. The information is listed under Animals in School section of the handbook.

It states:

Due to health, safety, and air quality concerns, fur-bearing animals (dogs, cats, rodents, rabbits, etc.) are generally not allowed in school. However, identified individuals with disabilities may be allowed to bring a service animal to school in accordance with the Nashua School District Policy 6512: Service Animals for Students, Employees and Guests of the Nashua School district. Certified therapy dogs will be permitted at school not more than three days per week. Building principals may approve an animal's visit to the school if the animal in question is part of an approved science curriculum. Students or their parents must obtain permission of the school's principal before bringing any animals onto school property.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

One out of every six drivers in school zones is distracted.

Common Traits of Distracted Driving

Seatbelt use. Drivers that don't wear a seatbelt are 34 percent more likely to be distracted than drivers who are buckled up. As a driver, if you engage in one risky behavior – you are more likely to engage in multiple unsafe driving behaviors.

Time of day. Afternoon drivers are 22 percent more likely to be distracted than morning drivers. Throughout the year, one in three child pedestrian deaths occur between 3 and 7 p.m., making afternoons the most dangerous time for children to walk.

Gender. Female drivers are 21 percent more likely to be distracted than male drivers. Moms today have a million things on their to-do lists and too often women are multitasking behind the wheel. But that doesn't mean male drivers are off the hook—their rate of distraction was still way too high.

Traffic volume. People driving on roads with a lot of traffic are 16 percent more likely to be distracted than those driving on roads with less traffic

Some Safety Tips

For Children

- Always cross the street with an adult until age 10
- Pause your music, hang up the cell phone and don't text until you've safely crossed the street
- Never play hand-held games while walking
- Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks
- Look left, right and left again when crossing
- Always walk, never run, when crossing streets
- Walk on sidewalks or paths
- Walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible if there are no sidewalks
- Never run out into the street or cross in between parked cars

For Drivers

- Slow down and be especially alert in residential neighborhoods and school zones
- Eliminate any distractions inside your car so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings
- Watch for children on and near the road in the morning and after school hours

This info came from this survey by SafeKids USA.

<http://www.usa.safekids.org/rtw/documents/Research08.pdf>

BIRCH HILL CROSS COUNTRY TEAM; RUN STRONG, RUN LONG!

The Cross Country team is going strong this season with over 80 runners hitting the pavement each week. We are so grateful for the coaches, volunteers, teachers, and parents who help keep these kids moving and improving at every practice. With two local races under our belt we are looking to Run Strong in the City Championships.

KINDERGARTEN NEWS

The Kindergarten students were very excited to begin their school years at Birch Hill! We have been working on class rules, routines, and safety, as well as becoming good citizens. We support our learning with good listening, kindness, and trying to do our best in all that we do. We are practicing our sight words and phonics skills on a daily basis. In Math, we're working on finding number partners to make a whole, and lots of counting, both up and back to 10 and 20. We will be taste-testing different colored apples, and we will write about apple life-cycles in our Science Notebooks. Autumn is here, and we're off to our Parlee Farm trip soon! It's looking like a warm, fun season ahead! Oh, and just a reminder, please send a healthy snack for your child each day.

FIRST GRADE NEWS

Welcome Mrs. Laura Nelson to our first grade team! Welcome to the month of October! First graders have settled into the routines and expectations of first grade and are ready for a fun-filled month ahead. We will explore topics including seasons, citizenship, apples and pumpkins. We look forward to participating in a fall Storybook Character Parade on Oct. 31st. We anticipate many creative costumes! In language arts, we will be practicing high frequency words and emerging reading skills, including blending and segmenting letters and sounds. We will learn about short vowel sounds and word families. In math, we continue to practice fact fluency and ways to make numbers, as well as solve addition facts and missing part number stories. Enjoy this beautiful and busy month!

SECOND GRADE NEWS

The beginning of second grade has been busy with learning new routines and adjusting to the expectations of second grade. In language arts we are working hard to learn phonics patterns, improving reading fluency, and writing narrative stories. Please check your child's take home folder each night as this is an essential tool for parent-teacher communication. Be on the lookout for information about an upcoming Pumpkin Book Report project. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend open house. We enjoyed meeting all of you. If you have not yet signed up for a November conference, please contact your child's teacher via email. This conference is when you will receive an update on your child's progress. Happy fall!



THIRD GRADE NEWS

Thank you for all the classroom donations of tissues, cleaning supplies, and more! The third graders are off to a great start! These first two months we are having fun learning about how the government works and our place in the world. We are working hard learning about multiplication and how it fits into the real world, using real world math problems. Please be practicing basic addition facts each night, as this does wonders in helping your child to understand repeated addition and multiplication concepts.

Also, each evening please be sure your child completes the homework that is written in their student planner and that you sign the student planner. There is math homework most every night and the students should be studying their weekly spelling words. Additionally, reading each night from an independently selected book is an amazing way for students to not only gain more than an extra hour of reading time each week, but to build on so many skills! It adds to their comprehension, fluency, confidence and so much more!

We hope students enjoyed their first book from our Scholastic Book sponsors! We can't wait to see what book students will come home with in October!

If you have not signed up for a November conference, please contact your child's teacher. We'd love to hear from you! It's a terrific time to learn about what your child's successes have been and what they are working on to become even more successful. See you then!

FOURTH GRADE NEWS

Our year is off to a great start! Thank you, parents, for such a wonderful turnout for our Open House in Sept. It was very nice having the opportunity to meet so many of you. We are looking forward to a productive year with your children. If you did not sign up for a November conference that night, please e-mail your teacher to arrange one.

We have been hard at work in Social Studies learning about the five themes of geography, locations on a map and will be creating maps to reflect our understanding of these concepts. In Math we have been focusing on place value, which includes addition subtraction and rounding numbers up to the hundred thousands.

You can help your children by checking their assignment books regularly and practicing those math facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division for automaticity. Thank you for your continued support.

FIFTH GRADE NEWS

Fifth grade is now in full swing! For all the details, parents, please be sure you are looking over the work that is sent home and your child's Assignment Planner. Procedures vary a little among the four teachers, but this is one tool all the classes have in common, and it is your most important link to your child's school responsibilities. If you are not sure of the systems in each class, to keep you apprised; your child's teacher will be delighted to talk to you about them.

There should be no such thing as no homework. Your student should always be reading a pleasure reading book, and it is always helpful to spend a few minutes in reviewing key vocabulary and ideas in the subject areas like Social Studies and Science.



NURSES NOTES

With cold and flu season approaching please remember to keep your child home from school if he/she has any of the following symptoms: fever of 100 degrees or higher, vomiting, diarrhea, severe cough, sore throat, severe cold, or conjunctivitis. Your child must stay home for 24 hours after the fever is gone without the use of medicine to reduce the fever.

Any medication should be delivered to the school by the parent or guardian. For safety reasons, please do not send any medicine in with your child. No prescription medication may be administered to your child without a written doctor's note, a release form signed by the parent or guardian, and the medication in a closed, labeled container. The prescription bottle does not suffice for a doctor's note.

Every year, students miss school and their parents miss work, because of influenza (the seasonal flu). In an effort to protect as many children as possible from seasonal flu, the Nashua School District is working with the Nashua Public Health and Community Services to provide FREE seasonal flu vaccines to students. Our school's flu clinic is scheduled for October 22nd from 9-11am. Consent forms went home the first day of school, if you need a new form or have questions don't hesitate to contact me: speidelk@nashua.edu.

NEWS FROM THE GYM

Hello Birch Hill Family! My name is David Varano and I am the Physical Education teacher at Birch Hill. I look forward to working with all your children. If you have any questions or want to give me any feedback at any time, please feel free to E-mail me at varanod@nashua.edu or call the main office.

We have started the year off with my expectations of Physical Education along with cooperative activities and then went into frisbee skills. We will then be going into soccer activities including dribbling, passing, and trapping. We are then going to play modified soccer games.

Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for physical activity on their correct physical education day. They will need sneakers that fasten securely with no opening in back, no dresses or skirts, no jewelry that is dangerous, and their hair pulled back if it is long- I have suggested that they put extra hair elastics or head bands in their backpacks in case they need them. If they are not dressed appropriately for physical activity, they WILL NOT BE permitted to participate that particular day. I would suggest placing a reminder at home as to what day(s) they have PE so that they do come to school prepared to participate.

Thank you for your support through the year!

NEWS FROM THE GUIDANCE OFFICE

The school counseling program is off to another great start this year. I have already been into the Kindergarten and First Grade classes teaching about safety. Now I'm going into 2nd grade classes teaching friendship lessons. Informal "Lunch Bunch" groups have started up and I'm seeing children who have been referred to me by parents, teachers or self-referral. Groups are currently forming for children struggling with many forms of adjustment. If you feel your child may need to be seen by me for any reason, don't hesitate to call or send in a note at any time. The

school counseling program at Birch Hill is not only for those children who might be seen as "troubled", I am here as a resource and helper for all children.

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

Our Birch Hill readers are off to a great start with new books each week and old favorites! Each week I read one of the ten nominated books for the Ladybug state picture book award to the younger classes. In December the students will vote for their favorite and we'll sent their votes to Concord to be combined with those of children from across NH. Older students are learning how to find a book in any library, refine their digital searching skills, and are studying different genres.

Would you like to volunteer in the Birch Hill library? No experience is needed and we are happy to provide training. If you have an hour or two a week (or even on alternate weeks) to help with shelving, checking in books, helping younger children look for books, and various other book-related tasks, please let me know your availability. (ullriche@nashua.edu) It is fun and your child will be proud. Don't forget to read tonight!

NEWS FROM THE ART ROOM

Birch Hill's amazing artists have been quite busy in the art room. Every grade level embraced Peter Reynold's book "The Dot" and celebrated International Dot Day with dots inspired by artists such as Wassily Kandinsky, Keith Haring, and Vincent Van Gogh. We also used these artists to highlight themes such as kindness and reaching for the stars. The showpiece of the month though was our school wide installation of the Tiny Art Gallery in the main hall! It is a must see! Please visit my website for a glimpse of this masterpiece! You can also scan the QR code on the walls when you visit the school.

<https://mrsgracesartworkshop.wixsite.com/website>

NEWS FROM THE MUSIC ROOM

Welcome back everyone! For those that do not know my name is Chris Milner and I am the music teacher here at Birch Hill. There is a lot going on in the music room this fall! Band and string lessons are now in full swing. Ms. Basilla, Mr. Davis, and Ms. Thorpe will be here every Friday for band and string lessons. Please make sure to encourage your child to practice their instrument at home. Third graders will be starting recorders this fall. Information will be coming home to parents about this soon.

Our October Composer of the Month is Camille Saint Saens, a French Romantic composer who is most famous for his chamber orchestra suite Carnival of the Animals. We will learn about his songs Fossils and Dance Macabre as they are the perfect spooky tunes for October! I hope everyone has a great start to the new school year!

