

Birch Grove Primary School Family/Student Handbook 2023-2024



Birch Grove Primary School
247 Rhodes Road
Tolland, CT 06084
(860) 870-6750

Message from Birch Grove Administration

We are pleased to welcome you and your family to Birch Grove Primary School, home of “Spirit” the Eaglet. The 2023-2024 school year promises to be very exciting. Our staff is committed to utilizing the very best in instructional practices to provide your child with the necessary skills for academic, social, and emotional success!

We are proud to be part of this outstanding school. We have respectful and high-achieving students, an outstanding and enthusiastic staff, and a supportive parent community. We welcome your support in developing a strong home-school partnership. This cooperative relationship will enhance your child’s educational experience and success.

We look forward to working with you this year. Please read and discuss the information contained in our handbook with your child. We hope that you will find this handbook to be a helpful resource throughout the school year. We encourage you to contact our administration and staff whenever you have questions, comments, or concerns. Working together, we are going to have a great year!

Sincerely,

Tom Swanson, Principal
Suzanne Guglietta, Assistant Principal

INDEX

Absences/Tardy (Excused/Unexcused).....	5
Arrivals/Dismissal.....	6
Bus Guidelines.....	6
Bullying.....	7
Celebrations.....	7
Communication.....	7
Discipline.....	7
Dress Code.....	9
Early closing/inclement weather.....	9
Equal Opportunity.....	9
Family Resource Center.....	10
Field Trips.....	10
Fire Drills and emergency preparedness.....	10
Health Services.....	11
Homework.....	12
Insurance.....	12
Kindergarten.....	12
Library.....	12
Lunch Program grades K-2.....	12
Lost and Found.....	13
Newsletters.....	13
Notifications.....	13
Open House/ Curriculum Nights.....	13
Parent Teacher Organization (TEPTO).....	13
Parking.....	13
Preschool.....	14
Psychologist.....	14
Recess.....	14
Registration.....	14
Safe School Climate.....	19-20
Safety.....	14
Snacks/Birthdays.....	14
School Ceremonies.....	15
Student Progress.....	15
Student Records.....	15
Student Services.....	16
Student Intervention Process.....	17
Special Education.....	17
Supplies.....	17
Suspected Child Abuse.....	17
Technology.....	17
Testing/ Assessment.....	17
Toys, Radios, Valuables.....	17
Teacher qualifications.....	17
Weapons/dangerous items.....	18
What can you do to help your child at home.....	18
Videotaping/Photographing of students.....	18
Visitors.....	18
Voice mail.....	18
Volunteers.....	18

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 high quality 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. – 6:00 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
Bus Coordinator:	860 - 875 - 6378
Website:	http://www.bgp.tolland.k12.ct.us/
<u>Board Of Education</u>	
Superintendent:	860 - 870 - 6850
Business Office:	860 - 870 - 6856

SCHOOL DAY START TIMES

	<u>(A.M.)PreK</u>	<u>(P.M.) PreK</u>	<u>Grades K-2</u>
Regular Day	9:00 a.m.– 11:45 p.m.	12:40 p.m.–3:15 p.m.	9:00 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.
Early Dismissal Days	There is no preschool on Wednesdays	There is no preschool on Wednesdays	9:00 a.m.- 12:55 p.m.
Delayed Opening/ Late Start (two hour)	Session canceled	12:40 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.	11:00 a.m. - 3:30 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 9:00 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 3:30p.m. are considered an early dismissal. This will be noted on our report cards.

Truancy - A student age 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 preventing truancy.

ARRIVALS/DISMISSALS

Approved 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.

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 6:00 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 routes are posted to the Tolland Board of Education Website. Please have your child use the bus starting the first day of school as it is necessary to make an immediate evaluation of the adequacy of the bus schedules.

Birch Grove School Bus Safety Rules

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| • Listen to the bus driver. | 4. Place your backpack on your lap. |
| • Keep your hands to yourself. | 5. Talk using an inside voice. |
| • Sit facing forward and stay in your seat. | |

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 **Request for Special Transportation** that is available on the school website..

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:

Parental or student concerns regarding behavioral or personnel issues on the buses should be referred to the student's school administration. Concerns regarding bus routes or timeliness should be referred to the BOE Business Manager at 860.870.6850

Transportation: contact the bus coordinator at (860-875–6378).

Student discipline: contact the building principal or assistant principal at (860-870–6750).

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/board_of_education/policies

COMMUNICATION

A digital Superintendent’s Bulletin is sent to all families through the district’s email system. The bulletin is sent on a weekly basis.

Notes to School - Notes should have the student’s first and last names, date 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.

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 - PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) is a district initiative to improve student learning and behavior through consistent use of school-wide rules and expectations designed to improve school climate and student outcomes. The acronym GROW highlights the core values of our school community, **G**reat choices, **R**espect and Responsibility, **O**utstanding Students, and **W**orking Together.



	Classroom	Hallway	Bathroom	Recess	Cafeteria	Bus	Assembly
G Great choices	Listen & follow directions	Walk at all times	Flush toilet Wash hands	Follow the recess rules Stop, look, & listen when the whistle blows	Use indoor voices Sit properly, stay in your seat Eat what you take	Listen to the bus driver Use your indoor voice	Sit with your hands in your lap
R Respect and Responsibility	Respect everyone & everything Be ready to learn	Control your body & your voice	Give privacy Use quickly & quietly	Keep hands to yourself Respect others' personal space Listen & follow directions	Clean up your area Be safe Keep hands & feet to yourself Raise your hand	Keep your hands to yourself	Listen to the performance Voices off Participate when asked
O Outstanding students	Try your best Challenge yourself	Wave quietly Model safe behavior	Use only as needed	Include others Clean up, leave nothing behind	Use & model safe behavior Use & model restaurant manners	Sit facing forward Stay in your seat	Clap & laugh at appropriate times
W Working together	Be a problem solver Be a part of the Birch Grove team	Stay in line Be safe	Keep it clean	Take turns Share equipment	Take turns Stay in quiet lines	Place your backpack on your lap	Enter & exit assembly quietly Be in control

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 K-2: 9:00 a.m. -12:55 p.m.

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, www.wfsb.com, www.wtic.com, www.965tic.com, www.wdrcfm.com, www.wdrc.com

In the event school is closed because of weather or other emergencies, parents will be notified by phone through the **Blackboard Connect**.

What you need to know about receiving calls sent through Connect.

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. Blackboard 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. Blackboard 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.

Suzanne Waterhouse 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. Patti Hess is the district compliance officer for ADA and IDEA of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Patti Hess, is the 504 Coordinator.

The Tolland Board of Education hereby advises students, parents, employees and the general public that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, or gender identity or expression, in its educational opportunities (including career and technical*), activities, and employment practices as set forth in compliance with Office of Civil Rights, Title VI, Title IX, the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act and Section 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act. Any person having inquiries concerning the Tolland Public Schools' compliance with the Title VI, Title IX and Section 504, should contact either the Title IX Coordinator, Suzanne Waterhouse, Chief Personnel Officer, Board of Education, 51 Tolland Green, Tolland CT 06084, via telephone at 860-870-6850 x 3 or via email at swaterhouse@tolland.k12.ct.us or The 504 Coordinator, Patricia Hess, Director of Pupil Services, Tolland High School, 1 Eagle Hill, Tolland CT 06084, via telephone at 860-870-6818 or via email at phess@tolland.k12.ct.us
*Tolland offers courses in Family Consumer Science, Business, Technology Education, Computer Science and Fine Arts in which students may opt to and are encouraged to enroll in any course. All courses and prerequisites are described in the course catalog.

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

The Family Resource Center is open to all Tolland residents. It is located at Birch Grove Primary School in Green Street hallway B. 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 9:00 a.m. and from 3:25 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The FRC offers weekly playgroups, before and after school care, 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 has developed a plan to efficiently manage many types of emergencies. Although we cannot anticipate all problems 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. 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.
8. 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.

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

Insurance forms are located on the front page of the Birch Grove Primary School website under "Quicklinks", 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 may 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 to not send their child to school until the child is six (6) or seven (7) years of age.

LIBRARY

Students in Grades K-2 borrow books weekly. Preschool 4's borrow a book each week starting mid-year. 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. Pomroy, the school librarian, at 870-6750, hpomroy@tolland.k12.ct.us.

LUNCH AND BREAKFAST PROGRAMS GRADES K-2: **School Year 2024**

All students are eligible for a free breakfast each day. Students who qualify for free or *reduced-price meals* will also be eligible to receive one free lunch daily. **ALL OTHER LUNCHES WILL BE CHARGED AT THE**

CURRENT LUNCH PRICE PER SCHOOL. Payment for these lunches is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and Breakfast Program which offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily. The lunch period is 30 minutes. Proper manners are always expected in the cafeteria. Free and reduced-price meals 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 or 870-6854. We use a Point-of-Sale System that allows you to put money into an account for your child to purchase meals.

Scanning – All students will be scanned unless the parent or guardian opts out of this biometric identification procedure. When your child comes through the service line, he/she will scan his/her finger as a means of identification.

Payments – The cost of lunch at Birch Grove and Tolland Intermediate school is \$3.15. One school breakfast is free for all students. One milk is provided for each lunch and breakfast. Ala carte milk is \$0.75. You may sign up for [“My School Account”](#) and make your payments online. 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 mealtime. Your payment may take us a few days to process. It is important to keep a positive balance in your students’ accounts. If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact us at 860-870-6854 or aharned@tolland.k12.ct.us

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 lost and found area 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. The Principal communicates to parents/guardians through Parent Updates, which are posted on the Birch Grove Primary website.

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.

Annual Notifications-[click here](#)

OPEN HOUSE/CURRICULUM NIGHT

PreK, Kindergarten, Grade 1 & Grade 2 “Meet & Greet” will be held in late summer, before the first day of school. Curriculum Night is an 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/STUDENT DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Morning Drop Off - Parents/Guardians will enter the first entrance on the right and proceed around the back parking lot area to the unloading zone.

End of the day pickup – **Parent Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures**– Please follow the link to review the procedure for drop off and pick up. Each student will be given a name tag that will be placed on their backpack and the parent will receive the matching name card, to be placed in the car. Parents are expected to have identification visible to the BGP staff as they enter the pick up area. Link: [BGP Drop off and Parking Directions](#).

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: 9:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Monday – Thursday

Afternoon Class: 12:40 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Monday – Thursday

Preschool Arrival - Morning Drop Off - Parents/Guardians will enter the first entrance on the right and proceed around the back parking lot area to the unloading zone.

End of the day pickup – **Valet Parent Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures**– Please follow the link to review the procedure for valet drop off and pick up. Each student will be assigned a number that will be placed on their backpack and the parent will receive the matching number card, to be placed in the car. Parents are expected to have identification visible to the BGP staff as they enter the pick up area. Link: [BGP Drop off and Parking Directions](#).

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 register online at the Tolland Public Schools main website at www.tolland.k12.ct.us. There will be an evening Kindergarten parent informational meeting prior to registration.

SAFETY

Building security is a top priority at Birch Grove Primary School. All students are fully supervised while in school. **The earliest arrival time for students is 8:35 a.m.** All doors will be locked while school is in session. We ask all guests to wear a visitor's badge for the entirety of their visit. **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.

STUDENT PROGRESS

Grading/Conferences – Parents/guardians may monitor student academic progress through a parent portal online throughout the year. At the end of each trimester, teachers update student report cards, which can be viewed through the parent portal. Parent conferences are scheduled 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. 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. Notification of class placements are made in August.

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 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 his/her records, unless the student is a dependent for tax purposes.

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, member 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.

Grade K,1, 2 Small Group Intervention The reading teacher will pull out a small group of students for 40 minutes per day during the literacy block time. The instructional focus will be based on the specific needs of each student as determined by multiple assessments. The math teacher will pull out a small group of students for 10 minutes.

STUDENT EARLY INTERVENTION PROCESS

Student Assistance Team (SAT) – The SAT 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 SAT meeting. The team, made up of the classroom teacher, administration, 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.

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.

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 mandated 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 Ipads and/or computers in the classroom. 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.

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.

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 shall not be permitted if the 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

Prior to any assignment, new 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.

The BOE will now do background checks every three years. If volunteering for the first time in the upcoming school year, please complete the online form which can be found on our Tolland district website at www.tolland.k12.ct.us under Quick Links. After you have submitted your application, please call 860-870-6850 extension 1 to provide your social security number. You can check with the school secretaries to verify your status.

Please note these procedures are required for safety and legal reasons. A person **will not** be permitted to join trips, work in classrooms, or do other work associated with the students in the schools without **completing** this process. Doing paperwork in advance and in a timely manner will prevent applicants from missing important events and avoids unnecessary disappointment and exclusions.

TOLLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN DECEMBER 14, 2011

The Tolland Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe educational environment free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. In order to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, the Board has developed the following Safe School Climate Plan, consistent with state law and Board policy. This plan represents a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying and sets forth the Board's expectations for creating a positive school climate and thus preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying. Questions about the Safe School Climate Plan may be addressed to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator, Superintendent Walter Willett, at 860-870-6850.

Component	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline
Safe School Climate Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Safe School Climate Plan in accordance with PA 11-232 Submit Safe School Climate Plan for Board approval Submit Board-approved Safe School Climate Plan to CSDE Publish Safe School Climate Plan on District Web Site and in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks 	<p>Superintendent</p> <p>Superintendent Superintendent</p> <p>Safe School Climate District Coordinator</p>	<p>By January 1, 2012</p> <p>By January 1, 2012 By January 1, 2012</p> <p>By February 1, 2012</p>
Safe School Climate Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint District Safe School Climate Coordinator Appoint Safe School Climate Specialist in each school Establish Safe School Climate Committee in accordance with PA 11-232 (include at least one parent/guardian of a student at the school) Establish roles, responsibilities and procedures for Safe School Climate Committee including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying; Identify and address patterns of bullying among students in the schools; Review and make recommendation to amend school policies relating to bullying; Review and make recommendations to the district's safe school climate coordinator regarding the District's Safe School Climate plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school; Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying; Collaborate with the district safe school climate coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying, in accordance with the law; Perform any other duties as determined by the school principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying for the school. 	<p>Superintendent Principal Safe School Climate District Coordinator and Safe School Climate Specialists Safe School Climate Committee</p>	<p>By July 1, 2012 By July 1, 2012 By July 1, 2012</p> <p>By July 1, 2012</p>
Notification Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district Safe School Climate Plan. Notify students and parents or guardians of students of the process by which students may make reports of bullying. Provide students with notice of the definition of bullying, cyberbullying and the potential consequences of engaging in such acts by the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying. Publish Safe School Climate Plan on the school district's Internet web site and ensure that such plan is included in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks. 	<p>Safe School Climate District Coordinator</p> <p>Safe School Climate District Coordinator</p> <p>Safe School Climate District Coordinator</p> <p>Safe School Climate District Coordinator</p>	<p>By July 1, 2012 and annually</p> <p>By July 1, 2012 and annually</p> <p>By July 1, 2012 and annually</p> <p>By July 1, 2012 and annually</p>

Component	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline
Reporting Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or school Administrator after being witness to acts of bullying or receiving reports of bullying. File a written report with the Safe School Climate Specialist after being witness to acts of bullying or receiving reports of bullying. Any student who believes s/he has been victim of bullying/cyberbullying may report the matter to any school employee, either in writing or anonymously. Parent(s)/guardians(s) may file written reports of Suspected bullying/cyber-bullying. 	All School employees All School employees All Students All Parents	Within one school day after witnessing or receiving report Within two school days of oral notification Ongoing Ongoing
Investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and disseminate investigation procedures that align with PA 11-232 and comply with FERPA Investigate all reports of bullying & ensure that the investigation is completed in accordance with PA 11- 232. Determine whether the alleged conduct occurred & whether such conduct constitutes bullying as defined in the district policy. 	Safe School Climate Specialist Safe School Climate Specialist Safe School Climate Specialist	By July 1, 2012 Upon receipt of report Upon completion of investigation
Response to Verified Acts of Bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take prompt corrective action that is reasonably calculated to stop the bullying and prevent any recurrence of such behavior, if it is determined that bullying has occurred. Notify the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation. This notification shall include a description of the response of school employees to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying. Invite the parent(s)/guardians of students who engage in any verified acts of bullying after the completion of the investigation to a meeting at which the following will be shared: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A description of the verified act(s). A description of the school's interventions in response to the act(s). Any consequences that may result from the commission of any further acts of bullying. <i>Except in rare circumstances, such meetings with parents and guardians should be held separately.</i> Develop a student safety support plan for any student against whom an act of bullying was directed. The plan shall address safety measures the school will take to protect such students against further acts of bullying. Develop case-by-case interventions to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline. Notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when principal, or designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct. 	Safe School Climate Specialist Safe School Climate Specialist Safe School Climate Specialist Safe School Climate Specialist Safe School Climate Specialist Principal or designee	Upon determination that bullying has occurred 48 hours after the completion of the investigation Upon determination that bullying has occurred. Upon determination that bullying has occurred Upon determination that bullying has occurred As appropriate

Component	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline
Prevention and Intervention Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify effective evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies approved by CSDE. Strategies may include, but are not limited to the following: Students will participate in an evidence-based approach, program or process approved by the State Department of Education that is designed to ensure a positive school climate & prevent bullying. Students will be made aware school rules prohibiting bullying and harassment Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur; Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school; Individual interventions with the bully, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied child, parents and school employees; School-wide training related to safe school climate; Student peer training, education and support; Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions. Implement the prevention and intervention strategies identified by the Safe School Climate Committee Provide students with access to evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies. 	<p>Safe School Climate District Coordinator, Specialists and Safe School Climate Committee(s)</p> <p>All School Employees</p>	<p>By July 1, 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Assessment of School Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an assessment using the school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the State Department of Education for each school Submit assessment results for each school in the district to the State Department of Education Review data obtained from climate surveys to make necessary modifications to the district plan and ongoing practices. 	<p>Safe School Climate Committee</p> <p>Safe School Climate District Coordinator</p> <p>Safe School Climate Committee</p>	<p>By July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter</p> <p>By July 1, 2012 and according to CSDE guidelines Annually</p>
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide all certified school employees training on the prevention, identification and response to bullying and the prevention of and response to youth suicide. The training will be provided to teachers, administrators and pupil personnel who hold the initial educator certificate via in-service training. Provide all other school employees training provided by the State Department of Education. 	<p>Safe School Climate District Coordinator and Specialists</p> <p>CSDE</p>	<p>By July 1, 2012, and annually thereafter</p> <p>Annually</p>

