

Principal Message:

Dear Homestead Hills Families,

As we move into December, I want to take a moment to recognize the tremendous effort our students are putting into demonstrating their REPS each day (Responsibility, Empathy, Perseverance, and Self-Discipline). These guiding values show up in our classrooms, hallways, buses, and playgrounds, and it has been inspiring to watch our students grow in character as well as in academics.

There is certainly a sense of excitement building around the holiday season, and it brings a special energy to our school. Through all the anticipation and activity, our students continue to work hard, support one another, and contribute positively to our school community.

I also want to express my sincere appreciation to our families. Your partnership, steady communication with teachers, and genuine support for our staff make a meaningful difference every single day. We are truly at our best when we work together, and I am grateful for the strong, positive connection between home and school.

I am incredibly proud of the togetherness that defines Homestead Hills. Our students show up every day ready to learn, our families stand beside us, and our staff care deeply about every child who walks through our doors. Thank you for helping make this a place where students not only learn, but thrive.

Wishing you a warm and joyful holiday season.

Steve Graetz, Principal

DECEMBER CALENDAR

12/4 Early Dismissal @
11:50

12/8-11 Christmas Shoppe

12/10 PTO Meeting, 4:15 in
Room 3

12/19 FULL Day of school

12/22-1/4 Holiday Break

SEE YOU ON JAN 5th!

**Teachers will keep
you informed of class-
room dates and activi-
ties.**



Winter Health & Safety Update

As we enter the winter months, health and safety become a top priority. Cold weather can trigger respiratory flare-ups—especially in students with asthma—so please ensure emergency supplies are available. If you have any concerns about your student's health or need help managing a chronic illness at school, **contact Nurse Gray**.



Seasonal Illness Alert

Influenza season is upon us, and we are also continuing to see cases of **Mononucleosis** and **Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease**, all of which are highly contagious viruses.

Help prevent the spread of germs:

- Wash hands frequently** – our best defense!
- Cover coughs and sneezes**, then wash hands afterward.
- Do not share water bottles or eating utensils.**



When to Keep Students Home

A student should stay home if they have:

- Fever 100.4°F or higher**
- Uncontrollable cough**
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea**



When They Can Return

Symptom-free for **24 hours** (fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea)
Without the use of medication



Mental Health Matters

The holidays can bring added stress and overwhelm. Make space for quiet moments and self-care. **You matter.** If you or your student needs support, contact:

- Nurse Gray**
- School Counselors - Ms Pritchett (HS), Mrs Ruble (MS), Mrs Dodge (HHE)**
- Mental Health Therapists - Kathryn Flannery or Sara Miller**

They are here to help connect you with the resources you need.

Beyond the BandAid

HOLIDAY MUSIC PROGRAM:

Homestead Hills will have our Christmas Concert on Thursday, December 18, at 6:00 P.M. Participation is not mandatory but is encouraged. Families will arrive between 5:40-5:50 at the BCCS auditorium. If you arrive before 5:40 please wait in your car until the doors are unlocked at 5:40. Students will immediately find their class in the auditorium and sit with them. The concert will be approximately half an hour in length. Students are expected to wear a festive shirt (green, red, Christmas theme) and a nice pair of pants. Students are welcome to wear Santa hats.

Please email roppb@benzieschools.net if you have any

December Birthdays

12/1 Sage Rains
 12/4 Orion Atkinson
 12/5 Braelyn Schick
 12/6 Cash Orman
 12/8 Hunter Colon
 12/12 Freya Beerens
 12/15 Adrian Gray

12/17 Maysen Ballard
 12/23 Adelaide Henry
 12/24 Tristan Greening
 12/26 Lumi Couturier
 12/27 Clayton Poynor
 12/29 Cooper Sauer
 12/29 Jack Smith

THE BENZIE COUNTY CENTRAL SCHOOLS DISTRICT DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX AGE, OR DISABILITY IN ITS PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES. THE FOLLOWING PERSON HAS BEEN DESIGNATED TO HANDLE INQUIRES REGARDING THE NONDISCRIMINATION POLICIES: MRS. AMIEE ERFORTH, SUPERINTENDENT, 9300 HOMESTEAD RD., BENZONIA, MI 49616 – (231)882-9653



GRAND TRAVERSE REGION

Your Neighborhood Network of Playgroups by County

ANTRIM COUNTY

Grass River Natural Area
6500 Alden HWY, Bellaire
1st & 3rd Thursday, 10:30 - 11:30 AM

Mancelona Township Library

202 West State Street
Tuesdays, 10:30 - 11:30 AM
Thursdays, 3:00 - 4:00 PM
** in conjunction with story-time

Lakeland Elementary School - Way to Grow

616 Buckley St, Elk Rapids
Contact Rbirgy@erschools.com for newsletter updates

BENZIE COUNTY

Benzie Early Head Start
9938 Honor HWY, Honor
1st & 3rd Thursday, 10:00 - 11:30 AM

Cognition Science and Discovery Center
232 N Michigan Ave, Beulah
2nd & 4th Thursday, 10:00 - 11:00 AM

Lake Ann United Methodist Church Community Center
19900 First Street
2nd & 4th Friday, 10:00 - 11:30 AM

KALKASKA COUNTY

Kalkaska County Library
247 S. Cedar Street
Fridays, 10:30 - 11:30 AM
** in conjunction with story-time

Kalkaska Early Head Start
424 S. Cedar Street
2nd & 4th Wednesday, 10:00 - 11:30 AM

Clearwater Township Hall with Leap of Faith Gymnastics
5440 River St NW, Rapid City
2nd Friday, 3:00 - 4:00 PM

GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY

The Curiosity Place, Powered by The Children's Museum
Grand Traverse Mall, near Macy's
2nd & 4th Wednesday, 10:00 - 11:30 AM
Mill Creek Academy - Way to Grow
9039 Old State Hwy 72, Williamsburg
Contact Rbirgy@erschools.com for newsletter updates

LEELANAU COUNTY

Playgroups facilitated by Parenting Communities. Subscribe to their calendar for exact dates and locations.

Early Art Exploration
Friendship Community Center, Suttons Bay
2nd & 4th Monday, 1:30 - 3:00 PM

Glen Lake Community Reformed Church
4902 W MacFarlane Rd, Glen Arbor
Tuesdays, 10:00 - 11:00 AM

Northport Public School
104 S Wing St, Northport
Wednesdays, 10:00 - 11:00 AM

Keswick United Methodist Church
3376 S Center Hwy, Suttons Bay
Thursdays, 10:00 - 11:00 AM

West Bay Covenant Church - Baby Feeding Group
12720 S W Bay Shore Dr.
Thursdays, 10:00 - 11:00 AM



The Neighborhood Network of Playgroups is a Great Start Collaborative initiative that brings families and local partners together to play, connect, and build community in a fun and welcoming environment. Find event calendars at GreatStartKids.com!



This program is funded through a grant provided by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential. The materials are funded through a grant provided by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential.



Christmas Magic

DOWNTOWN BEULAH
SECOND SATURDAY IN DECEMBER

10a-2p Darcy Library Cookie Sale - At trailhead

10a-5p Christmas shopping - Sales & giveaways

11a-1p Benzonia Public Library Holiday Party - At Mills Community House (upper level)

3p-5p Free Family Activities - At trailhead

- Face painting, cookie decorating
- Visit with Santa
- Horse drawn wagon rides

5:30p Christmas Magic Lighted Parade - Everyone is welcome! Join the lighted parade, entry form required, prizes to be won!

5p-7p Moonlight Madness (participating stores open late for shopping, refreshments, sales, and merriment)

SPONSORED BY CLCBA

MORE INFORMATION AT CLCBA.ORG



The Copemish American Legion Post 531 and Auxiliary
present....

A COMMUNITY



CHRISTMAS PARTY!

When: Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025
1PM to 3 PM

Come and visit Santa and his elves!

Enjoy treats! All children will receive a special gift!
All children will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a bicycle! Need not be present to win!

Sleigh Rides (Weather permitting)
Post located at 10915 Cadillac Highway,
Copemish, MI.

Come to the Village of Thompsonville
Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration,
Sponsored by the Village of Thompsonville!
Dec. 6, 2025 at 7PM



Visit with your friends at the Library Holiday Open House from 6 to 7 PM! Enjoy the Christmas Tree Lighting at 7:00PM! Afterward, The TVille Community Caroling Crew will lead us in singing carols! Visit with your neighbors and enjoy some yummy treats!

Dec. 6, 2025 at 7PM

Located at 21999 Thompson Ave., Thompsonville
Questions, please call 231-378-2716



Read with Skye and Ava!

Don and Cecelia will be visiting with Skye on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 4PM to 5PM! Miss Jan and Ava will be visiting the 1st Friday of the month, 5PM to 6PM!

You can read your favorite stories to them!

They would love to see you!
Betsie Valley District Library,
14744 Thompson Ave.,
Thompsonville.
Tel. 231.378.2716



HOMESTEAD HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CALENDAR 2025-2026

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| December 5 | Half Day Students/Staff PD. Student Dismissal @ 11:50am |
| December 8-11 | Christmas Shoppe |
| December 10 | PTO Meeting in Mrs. Dameron's Room 3 @ 4:15 |
| December 22-Jan 4 | No School Holiday Break |
| January 5 | School Resumes |
| January 12 | Surprise Fundraiser |
| January 14 | PTO Meeting in Mrs. Dameron's Room 3 @ 4:15 |
| January 16 | Half Day for Students/Records Day Staff. End of Semester 1, Dismissal @ 11:50 am |
| January 19 | No School |
| January 29 | Movie Night at the Garden Theater |
| January 30 | Half Day for Students/ PD day for Staff. Student Dismissal @ 11:50am |
| February 11 | PTO Meeting in Mrs. Dameron's Room 3 @ 4:15 |
| February 13 | Half Day for Students/ PD day for Staff. Student Dismissal @ 11:50am |
| February 13 | Boys Night |
| February 16 | No School |
| February 27 | Preschool Prom |
| March 11 | PTO Meeting in Mrs. Dameron's Room 3 @ 4:15 |
| March 16-20 | Reading Month Spirit Week |
| March 27 | End of Third Marking Period |
| March 27 | Half Day for Students and Teachers. Student Dismissal @ 11:50am |
| March 28-April 6 | Spring Break |
| April 7 | School Resumes |
| April 8 | PTO Meeting in Mrs. Dameron's Room 3 @ 4:15 |
| April 24 | Half Day for Students/ PD day for Staff. Student Dismissal @ 11:50am |
| April 24 | Girls Night |
| May 4-8 | Walk-A-Thon Fundraiser/Teacher Olympics |
| May 4-8 | Spring Book Fair **tentatively |
| May 11-15 | Teacher Appreciation Week (Volunteers needed to provide meals for staff) |
| May 22 | Half Day for Students/ Full Day Teachers |
| May 25 | No School- Memorial Day |
| May TBD | Fifth Grade Camp |
| June 9 | Field Day **tentatively |
| June 10*** | Last Day of School- Half Day for Students. Dismissal @11:50 am |

Last day, tentative as weather/acts of God may extend the school year. Calendar is subject to change.
 All BLUE events are PTO sponsored events. Please direct questions to huskyhelperspto@gmail.com