



THE BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Jim Sukys, 216-251-2321

Birchwood School Bucks the Trend-Middle School Girls Excel in Regional Math Contest

CLEVELAND— Birchwood School is proud to announce that three of its female students were recent State and Regional winners in the Continental Mathematics League (CML) competition. **Kavya R** (sixth grade, Westlake) **Sunny R** and **Sue R** (seventh grade, Avon) scored 35 out of a possible 36 points (97.2%). The CML was created in 1980 to aid schools in helping their students apply basic math skills to complex logic and reasoning problems. The region they competed in consisted of students from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio.

In addition, four Birchwood girls also placed very high in the Ohio Mathematics League Competition (OML). **Kavya R** placed first in the state, while **Dhweeja D** (sixth grade, Highland Hts.) and **Hajira A** (sixth grade, Rocky River) had the third highest score and **Sue R** had the fifth highest score. The OML Competition is a 30 minute exam covering forty complex word problems that require fluency in computation and problem-solving strategies.

In a recent report on the under representation of women in science and math by the American Association of Women, the effects of the learning environment on girls' achievement in science and math were well documented. The study found that when parents and teachers encourage girls to expand their experience and knowledge in math, they tend to do better on math tests and are more inclined to study math in the future. This helps offset the negative stereotypes that boys are typically better than girls in science and math.

At Birchwood School, children develop the habits and attitudes that will enable them to reach their potential. This includes learning opportunities beyond the core curriculum, such as the CML and OML competitions. Consequently, we believe these teaching tools will encourage our female students to pursue careers in math if they choose to.

Additionally, one of the largest gaps in cognitive abilities is in spatial skills, where boys consistently outperform girls. Spatial skills are considered imperative for success in engineering and other scientific fields. Girls that are in an environment that has spatial skills training are more likely to develop these necessary skills needed to succeed in scientific fields. At Birchwood, we emphasize the hands on approach in science at an early age, with experiments and demonstrations beginning in kindergarten.

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The Birchwood School is a private, coeducational school in Cleveland, Ohio. Founded in 1984, Birchwood serves students in kindergarten through grade 8. Birchwood's mission is to provide an educational setting where challenging academics build solid work habits, an achievement culture nurtures healthy attitudes, and a caring environment forges social responsibility.

www.birchwoodschool.org