

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

October 10, 2024

Dates to Remember:

- Thursday, October 10 ~ Fire Prevention Week – Annual Tofte Fire & Rescue Visit!
Tuesday, October 15 ~ Annual Board Meeting, School Board Elections @ 4:00, followed
by the Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, October 17 & Friday, October 18 ~ MEA – No School
Friday, October 25 ~ VOA, School Authorizer, Fall Site Visit
Sunday, October 27 ~ Annual Halloween Carnival 2:00-4:00
Friday, November 1 ~ Staff PD – No School
Monday, November 4 ~ Staff PD – No School
Tuesday November 5 – Friday, November 8 ~ K-5 Conferences

Mission Statement:

Birch Grove Community School will promote academic excellence utilizing our unique natural setting to prepare students to become socially and environmentally responsible, self-directed, life-long learners.

From Ms. Diane Blanchette:

*School Director, Birch Grove Community School
Lead Coordinator, Birch Grove Community Service*

It was another spectacular October week here at Birch Grove! The building has been busy – with K-5 elementary and two daycares on site, there is never a dull day! All of the children know that it is October as our big pumpkin has been in the entry since the 1st. Most children say hi to it every morning as they skip on by!

Everyone will get a well deserved break next week with no school during MEA. MEA (Minnesota Educator Academy) break is next week on Thursday and Friday. There is no school,



no Saplings, and no Seedlings. Remember that if there is no K-5 school, that automatically means there are no daycare programs as well. You can always see the scheduled non-school days on the calendar on the school website at www.birchgroveschool.com.

Many thanks to Tofte Fire & Rescue for coming to Birch Grove today for Fire Prevention Week. Tofte members talked with the children about home fire safety, “Stop, Drop, and Roll” and answered many “What If” questions. The team asked the children to take their fire safety booklet home and review it with the adults in their household – please do so! Everyone then went outside and rotated to different areas with the firetruck and the firehose being the favorite, of course. Everyone got to take home a goodie bag that included a cool red fire hat. Many thanks to Tofte Fire & Rescue for sharing important information with Birch Grove children during Fire Prevention Week! You do good work!





Birch Buddies ~HIKE!

White Sky and Agnus Lake this week!
They caught some color!



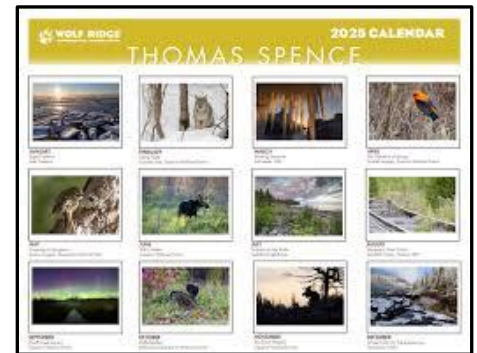
Upcoming hikes:

October 14 Temperance - 5:30 Pick Up
October 21 School to Tofte Peak - 6:00 Pick Up



Calendar sales have been crazy great!!!

Birch Grove is selling Wolf Ridge calendars again this year as a fundraiser to help contribute to the expense of the annual 2-5th graders 3-day, 2-night trip to Wolf Ridge at the end of the school year. We sent home 1 calendar per K-5 family last week and ask that you buy or sell the calendar for \$15 – just one calendar! Once sold, please send the \$15 in an envelope with your family’s name on it with the note “Wolf Ridge Calendar”. If you choose not to sell one calendar, please send the calendar back to Birch Grove letting us know. If you should want to sell more than one, please let me know and I can get you additional calendars. Tom Spence, the chosen photographer for this year’s calendar, donated two boxes of calendars for us to sell – thank you so much Tom! Your photos make this calendar especially beautiful!



Wolf Ridge Calendars
Only \$15



Annual Halloween Carnival at Birch Grove – VOLUNTEERS are NEEDED! Please consider volunteering for the carnival that is on Sunday, October 27 from 2:00-4:00. Lots of volunteers are needed to pull this annual event off. For those BGCS families that are planning on attending and enjoying the carnival with their child(ren), perhaps consider bringing two adults to the carnival so that one can enjoy the carnival with your child(ren) while the other volunteers to work, then change places halfway through the carnival! It’s a win-win for everyone! Also, be sure to let grandparents, neighbors and friends know. The volunteer activities are easy to do, and consider the joy you will be bringing to many children! Please go to this link to sign up to volunteer! Volunteers must be 16+

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C45AAA92AA2FF2-52035793-bgcs>

All K-5 students will have an opportunity to earn a \$5 carnival ticket to the Annual Halloween Carnival that is on Sunday, October 27 from 2:00-4:00. The opportunity will be linked to academic work. 😊 We will need many volunteers to work at this event to make it successful, so please mark the date on your calendar, as a volunteer sign-up link will be coming soon. Grandparents make great volunteers for this event, so put a bug (so Halloween!) in some ears! Thank you!

We have had a few illnesses on site across a few programs. Please keep your child home if they are ill. If your child comes down with a contagious illness, please keep them home until symptoms are gone and they are fever free (without the use of fever reducers).

Good Attendance is Necessary for Learning:

We understand that families sometimes take vacations, have family emergencies, special people may come up north to visit, or families may go out of town early for special events, etc., and some families may pull their students from school on these days. Please keep in mind that your child could (and most likely will) get sick later in the school year and may be absent for a number of days, adding to the total number of absences that were not illness related. Please plan for your child to be sick **5-10** days in the school year, and consider this when pulling your child from school for other reasons. We are required by law to report excessive truancy/excessive absences whether excused or unexcused, to the appropriate agencies, and no one wants that. Should your child's absences become concerning, we will always reach out to you first. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Many thanks to Zoar Lutheran Church in Tofte for donating \$670 to support the school lunch program at Birch Grove. Your support is very much appreciated! We live in a great community! Thank you!



Please have your child read (or be read to) 20-30 minutes per day/night (or more!). If there is one thing that you can do at home that has a huge positive impact on your child's academic growth, this is it! Happy reading!



If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us:

birchgrove@boreal.org ~ 218-663-0170

Website: www.birchgroveschool.com

School Spirit Store Link: <https://birchgrove.logosoftwear.com/> You can use GRAB15 for 15% off and free shipping for orders over \$125

Face Book: [Birch Grove Community School and Community Services #4145 | Facebook](#)



THE ANNUAL BIRCH GROVE HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL!



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

2:00 - 4:00

AT BIRCH GROVE IN TOFTE



- ~ FUN FOR ALL AGES!
- ~ KIDS GAMES!
- ~ WIN PRIZES!
- ~ CAKE WALK!
- ~ COOKIE DECORATING!
- ~ FABULOUS FOODS!
- ~ BINGO! WITH CASH PRIZES FROM
GRAND MARAIS STATE BANK~TOFTE



**WEAR A COSTUME (OR NOT) AND
BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY!**



**IT WILL BE A SPOOKTACULAR TIME!
RAIN, SHINE, OR SNOWFLAKE!**



**CARNIVAL TICKETS ARE \$5 EACH - CASH OR CHECK ONLY.
MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES CAN BE ENJOYED FROM ONE TICKET.**



**STACY'S NORTH SHORE TREATS:
CASH, CHECK, CREDIT CARD, VENMO OR PAYPAL ONLY.
CARNIVAL TICKETS NOT APPLICABLE.**

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**From Ms. Emily VanDoren**

*Seedlings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

This week the Seedlings learned all about pumpkins! During our morning snack time, we read "Hello, FALL!" to introduce the topic and explore all the fun things that fall has to offer us. We learned about the life-cycle of pumpkins, how they start as a seed that is planted in dirt and needs water and sunshine to grow into a sprout. Once a sprout grows, we will get a vine with flowers that will grow a green pumpkin that will then become orange. We also talked about the way pumpkins can grow to be different shapes and sizes. While on our walk, we spotted a pumpkin growing in the Tofte Community Garden. The Seedlings loved being able to see the finished process of the life-cycle that we learned about.



We had several pumpkin activities and crafts this week that focused on different areas of learning such as counting, shape recognition, and fine motor skills. We colored our own pumpkins and made a shape jack-o-lantern. Each child was able to pick which shape they wanted to glue down for the mouth, nose, and eyes. We also practiced our counting skills with a worksheet where we counted pumpkins and drew a line to the matching written number. Each child also brought home a small counting coloring book to continue their learning at home. The children liked playing the pumpkin shape match game where they had to identify the shape and find the matching pumpkin to place the piece on to. We finished our week with a fun painting activity where we used cotton balls held with clothes pins to dip into paint to create our very own pumpkin patch. It was a wonderful week to introduce our upcoming Halloween themes!

The Seedlings were also able to check out the awesome fire trucks on Thursday afternoon. Thank you to Tofte Fire & Rescue!

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From Ms. Pam Holm

Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

The week commenced with a Ghoulish Green theme. In the Saplings laboratory...they achieved the resurrection of Frankenstein! Through the chemical reaction between vinegar and baking soda producing carbon dioxide thereby inflating a Frankenstein balloon.

Following the reading of Little Goblins Ten by Pamela Jane the Sapling Goblins went for a walk. On the way they laughed and they leaped in the deep green glen. Their joyful antics persisted as they congregated in the stick-built hovel.



Witches were also in the air this week. Witch inspired manipulatives involving matching and counting were undertaken. The cauldron was still brewing as they created potions. We utilized a fork to paint a melted witch.

Second half of the week we focused on fire prevention. Firefighters dressed in heavy coats, masks, and oxygen tanks can seem scary to children. During a fire, young children tend to hide because of this. To alleviate this, I provided a helmet, mask and hose for them to familiarize themselves with, promoting comfort and understanding.



Through teamwork they tackled fictional blazes, usually the Haunted House, and skillfully rolled up the 50 foot fire hose. We learned and practiced "Get Low and Go" crawling out of the room, with our simulated fire.

Trick-or-Treat 🎃 our classroom has been transforming as we get ready for the Halloween Carnival. The Sapling have been actively engaged in every aspect. It is such a rewarding community to be a part of.

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**  
*K & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

For the first month of school, K/1 discussed classroom rules and how we should behave. We read "How Full is Your Bucket" and used the concepts from the book as our social and emotional vocabulary. If you are not familiar with the book, essentially every person has an imaginary bucket on top of their head. Each person's actions will either fill or dip into a person's bucket. The fuller your bucket is the happier you are. We often use the term 'how can you fill their bucket'. This week we continued our social and emotional learning. We focused on what emotions are and how to identify them. We will continue talking about our social and emotional skills throughout the year!





Kindergarten learned the letters L and M and continue to learn about numbers! We can identify numbers up to 10 and count various groups of objects. We finished our first unit in math! First grade continued to practice with letters of the alphabet, decoding, spelling, and reading! A group of 1<sup>st</sup> graders helped to make pumpkin poems for our bulletin boards. In math, we started our second unit! We are learning about representing addition and subtraction through pictures.

Please look for an email later next week about online programs you can access for extra support at home. Also, make sure to be reading to/with your child for twenty minutes every day. I notice a difference when students read at home! Another basic support you can do at home is practicing identifying letter names, letter sounds, and numbers!

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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

*2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

What a beautiful fall week! It has been a great start to October. The students have grown so much in the last month and work through their routines well. We studied Da Vinci this week in art and recreated the Mona Lisa. In science, we focused on motion and the effects of balanced and unbalanced forces. This was paired with an experiment that allowed students to be engineers! We continued to go outside at every spare chance to soak up the warm weather.

In reading, we spent a great amount of time working on comprehension and fluency. Third grade read a fiction story about the Golden Gate bridge. They compared and contrasted two main characters while practicing their inference and fluency skills. Second grade read a humorous fiction story about a spider. We practiced the cause and effect strategy while reading this story. In phonics, we practiced sounds of g and long o spellings. In word study, we looked at word families, the prefix over-, and common and proper nouns. Students love these whole group lessons as we create words in front of the whole group. For fluency practice, students did repeated reading with partners where they read to themselves then out loud to each other, then every other sentence, then every word. This is lots of fun for everyone and a great strategy to help build fluency.

In math, second grade focused on word problems all week. There were different strategies that we learned about as we practiced solving these problems. In third grade, students looked at the 4's multiplication and division facts and word problems with bigger numbers. A strategy we worked on was the distributive property. This was exciting and new so students spent their free time using this strategy to solve large multiplication problems. We will be finishing up Unit 1 next week and using all that knowledge to start Unit 2 after MEA.



Continue to have students read to themselves and to you. You can have your child show you our fluency activity and you can practice with your student. I have found that the majority of my class likes to read aloud and engage with others about books so this is a great activity to do at home! Please reach out with any questions or concerns. Thank you for the great first part of the year!

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From Ms. Stacy Coronis

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher



Ms. Coronis has been out this week, but we have been keeping the students busy! They have been working on math facts through flashcards, games, and Ascend Flashcards as well as IXL Math. They also worked on their Pirate Island project that included some hands-on landform activities, and they continued to read their planned stories and worked on identifying text evidence. This afternoon, 4/5 joined the rest of the school and enjoyed the visit from the Tofte Fire & Rescue.

Ms. Coronis will be back in the classroom tomorrow and we are so happy! We have missed her!

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