

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

September 12, 2024

Dates to Remember:

Monday, September 16 ~ Birch Buddies ~ Fall HIKE!

Tuesday, September 17 ~ BGCS Board Meeting at 4:00

Thursday, September 19 ~ Annual K-5 Painting in the Woods!

Monday, September 23 ~ School Picture Day!

Thursday, September 26 ~ *Hazard Heros!* show- The National Theater for Children

Monday, September 30 ~ No School, PD/Workshop for Staff

Tuesday, October 1 ~ BGCS Hosting the DNR Field Day! 4/5 are Attending!

Thursday, October 10 ~ Fire Prevention Week – Annual Tofta Fire & Rescue Visit!

Tuesday, October 15 ~ Annual Board Meeting, Elections, and Regular Meeting at 4:00

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*

The second week of school went just as well as the first week, and we are on our way to a great school year!

Please be sure to take a little time each week to check out these weekly newsletters to see what we have been up to. The newsletters may also be able to answer some of the questions that you may have now or in the future. There is some information below that is a repeat of last week, as I want to make sure everyone reads it, but there is new information below as well.



Many thanks to all of the teachers who contribute to this weekly newsletter – your efforts are appreciated! 😊

The front entry doors open at 7:55am and close at 8:10 am. If you arrive after 8:10 and the doors are shut, please ring the bell for entry. All K-5 students are able to walk themselves into the building – we got this! At the end of the school day, you may pick your K-5 or Sapling up in the afternoon between **3:05 and 3:15 by the pavilion.**

Newsletters will be emailed each week, usually on Thursdays (sometimes Fridays if it is really busy around here!). Newsletters will be emailed to the address that you indicated on enrollment forms. If you would like to add an email address to the newsletter email group, please let us know. Newsletters are also posted on our school website at www.birchgroveschool.com

Be sure to check out our website at www.birchgroveschool.com. You can find the school year calendar, weekly newsletters, lunch menus, school board minutes, upcoming events, resources, and more. I hope that you will be a regular visitor to our site.

Facebook:

Be sure to “Like” and “Follow” Birch Grove Community School and Community Services #4145 Facebook page, and be sure to share with others! We post regularly – it can help to keep you up to date with events and activities!

Each Sapling and K-5 student has been given a Take Home Folder. Please check this folder daily. Use this folder as one form of communication with your child’s teacher. You can return forms and paperwork, send bus passes, etc. **Take Home Folders are checked every day – backpacks are not!**

Bus passes – if you have a change in your child’s normal busing, please send a written note. For instance, if your child is being picked up by someone and not riding the bus home, please send a note, email, or call. If your child is getting off at a different scheduled bus stop than normal, please send a note. Email will also work, but send it to both me and your child’s teacher in the event that one of us is absent. Also, emails should be sent well before the end of the day so that they are sure to be opened. If you decide to come to Birch Grove and pick your child up instead of having your child ride the bus home, you don’t need to email or call to let us know, you can just show up. If you want to do this, you just need to wait for your child to come out between 3:05-3:15 and let your child’s teacher know you are there. Buses leave at 3:15, so just be there before that. Thank you!

An email about school lunch was sent home to all families. If you have questions, please check the School Lunch tab on the school website at www.birchgroveschool.com

My Opinion Piece! 😊

In my experience, a good portion of the children that have a “bad day”, “melt down”, make poor choices, refuse or have a hard time focusing on their work, or end up in the school office to see me for challenging behaviors, **ARE TIRED.** In my opinion, if all of the children that came to school were well rested each and every school day, I believe that it would cut down on at least 50% (maybe more) of challenging behaviors, and would increase the percentage and gains of academic growth across the board.

I have included a few sleep charts below. All children are different – your child might require more/less sleep than what you see below.

Average Sleep Needs	
Age	Hours
Newborns (0-2 months)	12 - 18
Infants (3 months to 1 year)	14 - 15
Toddlers (1 to 3 years)	12 - 14
Preschoolers (3 to 5 years)	11 - 13
School-aged children (5 to 12 years)	10 - 11
Teens and preteens (12 to 18 years)	8.5 - 10
Adults (18+)	7.5 - 9



At what time should your child go to bed?

Age	Wake-up time						
	6:00 AM	6:15 AM	6:30 AM	6:45 AM	7:00 AM	7:15 AM	7:30 AM
	Sleeping time						
5	6:45 PM	7:00 PM	7:15 PM	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	8:00 PM	8:15 PM
6	7:00 PM	7:15 PM	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	8:00 PM	8:15 PM	8:30 PM
7	7:15 PM	7:15 PM	7:30 PM	8:00 PM	8:15 PM	8:30 PM	8:45 PM
8	19:30	7:30 PM	8:00 PM	8:15 PM	8:30 PM	8:45 PM	9:00 PM
9	7:30 PM	8:00 PM	8:15 PM	8:30 PM	8:45 PM	9:00 PM	9:15 PM
10	8:00 PM	8:15 PM	8:30 PM	8:45 PM	9:00 PM	9:15 PM	9:30 PM
11	8:15 PM	8:30 PM	8:45 PM	9:00 PM	9:15 PM	9:30 PM	9:45 PM
12	8:15 PM	8:30 PM	8:45 PM	9:00 PM	9:15 PM	9:30 PM	9:45 PM

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.

Please send your child to school in layers. We go outside everyday in all but the worst weather! Children can leave a sweatshirt/jacket here at school so that they will always have it and it is not forgotten at home.

The first hike of Birch Buddies ~ Fall HIKE! was Caribou Falls! 15 children and two lead BGCS staff members ventured to this beautiful oasis of North Shore beauty! This was the first of 6 fall adventures scheduled for the after-school program, Birch Buddies ~ Fall HIKE!



There are more Birch Buddies ~ Fall HIKE! pictures on the school [Facebook](#) page!

Birch Grove Picture Day is Monday, September 23! Seedlings and Saplings start at 9:00. Enrolled Seedlings or Saplings that are not attending this day can come at 9:00 just for pictures! Ring the bell for entry. K-5 pictures will start after the littles. Picture forms will be sent home next week. Smile!....and....Silly Face!



We have had some beautiful September days! On Wednesday, K-5 ate lunch out at the Campsite. It is one of the best things about Wednesday-Cold Lunch from Home days! Look at the beautiful backdrop! Eating lunch in the woods and getting to hear the black-capped chickadees while talking with friends is the best! We will continue to eat outside every Wednesday until it is too cold. Wednesday "Lantern Lunch" will kick in after that. What is that? See the school lunch page for more information! 😊

[School Lunches - Birch Grove Community School \(birchgroveschool.com\)](http://birchgroveschool.com)



BGCS is seeking another K-5 parent school board member, as we currently have an open chair on the school board. If you are interested, please let me know and I can talk with you about what being a board member will require as far as time, commitment and training. Become a school board member and help contribute to an award-winning team and school! Go Birch Grove!



School board elections are on Tuesday, October 15. There are 2 seats up for re-election: Skip Lamb and Sarena Crowley. While no one is running against them, we are still required to go through the motions of an election. 1 ballot will be sent home to all K-5 families, K-5 employees, and current school board members. Families will find their ballot in an envelope sent home in Take Home Folders in October. Please fill out your ballot and return in the folder, or you can drop off here at Birch Grove.

Please have your child read (or be read to) a minimum of 20-30 minutes per day/night. 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](#)



One of the joys of living up North -
Every Friday is "Flannel Friday" at Birch Grove! Join us!



From Ms. Emily VanDoren

Seedlings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

The week of beautiful weather allowed us to spend some extra time outside. Now that we have had some time to settle into our routine, we added in a few fun things on our morning walks. We were able to play on the tennis court, try out the small slides on the big playground, and used the swings as well.

We added on to last week's topic of facial features by talking about our five senses. While we were outside, we talked about all the things we could see, hear, smell, and touch, then at lunch and snack we talked about the different foods we were tasting.

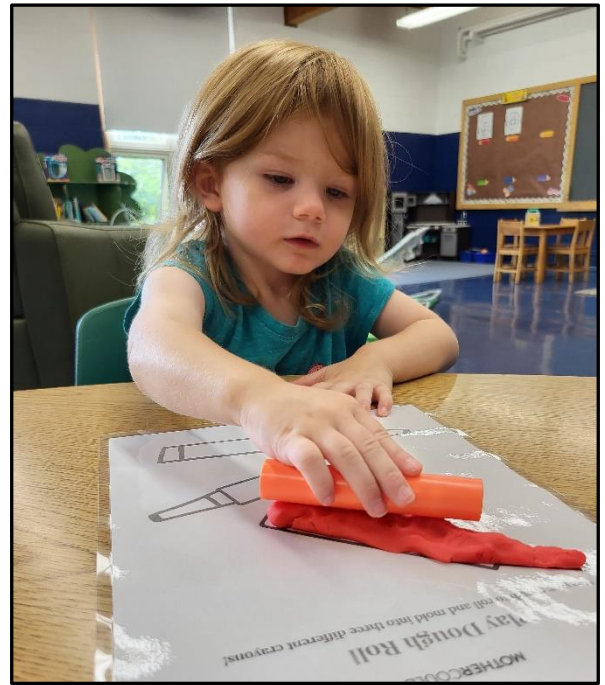
During our art/sensory time this week, we focused on letter recognition through the use of play dough stamps.

It was a huge hit! We also practiced counting through the song "5 Little Ducks" with visual aids.

Once the weather starts to cool down, please be sure to send light layers such as jackets, hats, and mittens as we will be going outside for fresh air as much as possible.

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**From Ms. Pam Holm**

*Saplings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

The Saplings engaged in the 'All About Me' week, which entailed a collaborative tracing activity to create a pop art mural inspired by Keith Haring. Additionally, they have utilized mirrors to observe their reflections and create individual self-portraits, providing a fascinating glimpse into their self-perception. We have also conducted a range of measurement activities, using counting blocks, hand spans, and footsteps to measure length and heights.

Our science activity involved tracing hands and creating fingerprints with ink pads for each finger, followed by a magnifying glass examination and comparison with our friend's prints. What did they find? Everyone's fingerprints are unique - just like each of them!



On Friday the Saplings read The Dot by Pete H. Reynolds. They are making their mark by celebrating International Dot Day, a day to connect, collaborate and create! The Dot is the story of a caring teacher who dares a doubting student to trust in her own abilities by being brave enough to “make her mark”.

They are starting to gain familiarity with their friend's names as I am using this to introduce them to letters and letter sounds. We did an activity called "Who's Name is it?", where I slowly revealed the letters of each name.

We continue to work on rules and routines as they are the foundations to profound learning. We talked about safety while playing outside and how to have fun while still taking care of each other.

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From Ms. Sara Knottski
K & 1st Grade Elementary Teacher

We are working hard in K/1st grade! We started math and reading groups this week. Students are working at different stations during math and reading times. We are also working on a poster called “All About Me.” The students drew and wrote about their favorite things, family, and themselves. Check out the posters that will be hanging in the hall all year.

This week we are focusing on the letter C. We are learning the procedure of how we are going to learn new letters throughout the year. The students have been writing C, saying the C sound, and talking and reading about words that start with C. Kindergarten will build their alphabet knowledge as the weeks go on. 1st grade will review the letters as we focus on reading and writing.



In math, we are learning to write and recognize numbers. 1st grade is reviewing how to write numbers and counting up to 120. They are also learning about partners of 5, such as 3 and 2. Kindergarten learned to write, recognize, and count numbers 0, 1, and 2. Ask them to write these numbers at home, and see if they remember!

Reminders: Please send students with backup clothes and a backup lunch to keep in their locker. We have a snack twice a day, please send something healthy (especially on hot lunch days!)

As always, feel free to contact me by phone, email, or in person if you have any questions!

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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**  
*2nd & 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher*

This week has been full of fun routine learning things. We have started to transition throughout our rotations this week and it has been going well. We did an art project inspired by Emily Carr, a Canadian artist that fits with our North American theme for the month. We also spent time taking care of our garden and picking the vegetables that grew over the summer.

We continued talking about reading and writing within our classroom. This included how to select a book, how to create sentences, and the process of writing longer pieces. We also incorporated word study elements to help us prep for the coming weeks.

In math, we spent time reviewing while transitioning between stations. This was a great way to remind students of the different strategies while solving math problems. It also will help as we start new material next week.

Please send your child with a snack and a water bottle each day. It is every student's goal to read and write each day, so encourage this at home as well. This could look informal like reading a recipe while cooking, writing a letter to a loved one, or reading to a sibling. Students love showing off what they learn each week! Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns!

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From Ms. Stacy Coronis
4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

Classroom routine and procedures are coming together nicely in our classroom. Students are learning about each other and what Mrs. Coronis' expectations are in our room. All students worked together to create our class rules and then completed a self-portrait to put on our expectations wall. Students are doing their very best to follow these rules and I have been so impressed! We have earned almost 70 compliments for our hard work over the past two weeks towards our class goal of 100 to earn a class hamster.



In math class we reviewed how to break down big numbers into expanded form and how to write them in word form. We also reviewed subtraction and addition with regrouping. After a few tries most students were very proficient. Your child has math facts in a plastic sleeve in their take home folder. If your child has time at home, have them set a timer for 6 minutes and see how many they can successfully complete. We are working hard on our facts every day! In reading we played the "guess the genre" game and have started recording the chapter books that students are already completing in their reading log. The class also learned how to map out a fictional story by practicing with our read aloud book! In writing we are working to refresh our grammar and handwriting skills and we've also started our cursive writing. The weather has been so nice so we went out to the school garden plots to gather the cucumbers that were ready to be picked. We compared the tastes between the large, medium and smaller cucumbers and decided that the biggest cucumber wasn't as tasty as the smaller and medium sized ones. We also sampled some cucumbers that had been pickled.... Kids either loved them or did not like them at all!

Please check your child's "Take Home" folder each night and have them return it to school every morning. Remove any notes home or corrected papers. Send any notes for me to school back in the folder and I will check the folders each morning. I know it can be busy at home, but if your child sees you checking the folder each night and briefly looking at what learning took place that day it really makes a difference to your child.

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