



Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

September 19, 2024

Dates to Remember:

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 Tofte Fire & Rescue Visit!

Tuesday, October 15 ~ Annual Board Meeting, School Board Elections @ 4:00, followed by the Regular Board Meeting

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*

Week three is coming to a close with high spirits! We are off to a great school year with incredible staff and students! K-5 are doing a great job in learning expectations as well as the rules and routines in the classroom and school. Curriculum is underway and we are moving along!

Both the Saplings and Seedlings programs are also off to a great start with everything running smoothly with all spending some time outdoors with walks, or projects and activities – Fall is here and we are enjoying it!

Please continue to 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. Thank you and much appreciated!

Today was our annual Painting in the Woods with Mary LaBerge, local artist. K-5 had a great time creating their colorful canvas paintings in small classroom groups – it took all day! Each masterpiece will be displayed on easels in the entryway of the building in rotating shifts. All paintings will be displayed before the end of the school year and all will be sent home on the last day of the year. Here are a few preview pictures of the event. More will be posted on the school Facebook page soon!



\$10 000

Birch Grove Community School hits \$10,000 in its North Shore Federal Credit Union Patronage account!

Are you a member of North Shore Federal Credit Union? If so, then you have an opportunity to help Birch Grove Community School continue to grow its fund!

Each year, NSFCU celebrates its success by returning earnings to its members in the form of a Patronage Reward. The Patronage Reward is divided equally between borrowers and savers and is prorated based on the amount of interest paid on loans or interest earned on savings for each member. The more you save or borrow with NSFCU, the larger your reward.

NSFCU credits Patronage Rewards to its members on December 31 of each calendar year to each member's special Patronage Reward account. Members are free to withdraw the funds or leave them in the account to earn a high rate of interest, which is currently 10% annual percentage rate. NSFCU has created the Patronage Reward Giving Program, which allows its members to donate any balance currently held in their Patronage Rewards account to any designated Community Advantage non-profit organization, such as Birch Grove Community School.

Consider paying it forward! Donate your Patronage Reward to Birch Grove Community School. Call or stop by your local North Shore Federal Credit Union office and request your donation transfer today.



Snackin' on the trail with Cheez-its at the Cross River hike! This was the second fall hike of the year with Birch Buddies ~ HIKE! after school program at Birch Grove!

4 more hikes remain:

September 23 Oberg Mountain

October 7 White Sky and Agnus Lake

October 14 Temperance

October 21 School to Tofte Peak

Birch Grove Picture Day is next week on 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. Please turn in picture forms as soon as possible. All students will have their picture taken on this day. Smile!....and....Silly Face!





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

This week was all about leaves! On our daily walks we talked about the different colors we could see on the trees and on the ground. We collected lots of leaves to bring back to our classroom so we could investigate them more closely. We saw that the leaves can have more than one color on them at a time and they were all different shapes and sizes.

We also used the leaves during our art/sensory time. We made crayon rub art, used the leaves as paint stamps, and even turned our own hands into leaves! Paint was a big hit this week with everyone and I am looking forward to incorporating it more in our activities.

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From Ms. Pam Holm

Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

As the Saplings fall into Autumn, we have engaged into exploring the season's changing chromatic beauty through leaf hunts. The trees' robust green leaves are morphing into vibrant yellows, reds, browns, and oranges, ultimately falling to the ground for us to crunch on. Our related activities included crafting stained glass Maple Leaves, relief painting Mighty Oak Leaves, creating leaf people, and designing a colorful Birch Grove.

As the harvest moon illuminated the night sky this week we read *By the Light of the Harvest Moon* by Harriet Ziefert. The story focuses on leaf people celebrating the autumn equinox, I decided to focus our craft on the beautiful, bright harvest moon just as displayed on the amazing front cover of the book. The resulting artwork was exceptional! You can see a video about this project on the school Facebook page!



At the corn-filled sensory table and straw-filled sensory bin we have been exploring the wonders of fall, developing their tactile awareness, measurement skills, counting abilities, and sorting techniques. Such activities promote social interaction, cooperation, and teamwork.

The developmental focus was centered on exploring letters L and F in relation to the leaf and fall theme. Mathematical concepts were applied through leaf sorting and classification. Science exploration involved analyzing the leaves' vein structures that carry food/water throughout the leaf. We worked on refining our fine motor dexterity through scissor and painting exercises. Saplings have been immersing themselves in friendships, playful learning and personal growth!

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

*K & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

I can't believe it's only the third week of school! The children learned the rules quickly and are comfortable already! We created our own classroom rules and posted them in our classroom. The students also came up with consequences for themselves if they broke their rules. They were very reasonable consequences. 😊 We finished the week creating classroom jobs.

In Kindergarten, the students learned the letters C, O, and A this week. We read a book about building a school and made connections to our school. In math, we learned the numbers 0-5 and counting. We will continue to practice writing and counting numbers 0-5.

The first-grade students are reviewing letters and learning to read and spell words such as what, he, for, and too. We also read stories about pals. We learned about main idea and supporting details in a book. In math, we are learning about all the different ways to make 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. We are also learning addition patterns of adding 0 and 1.

Often, we will have multiple assignments a day that the students are expected to work on in class. Some of those assignments will go home incomplete because I do not make kids work during break/play time as long as they work the whole-time during work time. If you find unfinished work sent home, you can work on it with your child. Often, assignments are not completed because they are challenging (but grade level) for them or they need additional support. It would offer further support and practice for things that may be hard. However, this is not homework or required!



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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

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

This week has been filled with lots of exciting things! We started our math and reading curriculum this week while transitioning through three separate centers. We explored another North American artist, Jackson Pollock by experimenting in abstract art. We have investigated different aspects of North American like climates, weather, landforms, and bodies of water. Our social studies unit was about voting and the constitution. Students compared and contrasted rules versus responsibilities. We also did painting in the woods, which was a huge hit!

Math was mostly reviewed for both grades as they started the first formal lessons. Second grade practiced math mountains and writing the four equations with those. Third grade has been reviewing multiplication and division concepts. Everyone was very excited to dive into the material!



Reading centers went so well this week. We practiced small group rotations with word study, reading comprehension, fluency, and independent reading worksheets. These were full of exciting discussions and writing practice. As the weeks progress, we will continue to focus on the three big reading pillars; comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. I will continue to focus my direct instruction on these while incorporating phonics and phonemic awareness wherever I can.

Thank you for the constant communication with me and with your children. This year has started great and I can't wait to see where the rest of the year takes us.

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**From Ms. Stacy Coronis**

*4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders have practiced staying focused during work time, engaged in learning and responsibly completing work for math, reading and writing. I see classmates helping each other, working together and giving each other reminders in a kind manner. Things are starting to run very smoothly in our classroom because we are learning to listen carefully and



follow directions the first time. We have earned our 100 compliments for work habits and will be meeting a new classmate next week; a HAMSTER! The class is thrilled!!

We had two special events this week. First of all, we spent time in the warm sunshine writing creatively! Students loved the chance to create their own writing pieces. Secondly, we painted in the forest to create amazing sunset art with the help of our local artist, Ms. Mary! The art pieces look wonderful!

Next week we will start using a weekly Progress Report. This Progress Report will reflect celebrations and/or concerns from the week. These will go home each Friday and need to be signed and returned the following Monday morning. This will be a great communication tool between home and school! Remember that picture day is next week on September 23.

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