

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

April 17, 2025

Upcoming Events:

- Thursday, April 17 ~ Spring HIKE! after school
- Tuesday, April 22 ~ MCA Reading Test for 3, 4, 5th Grade
- Tuesday, April 22 ~ Earth Day! All School Clean Up Grounds in the Afternoon!
- Wednesday, April 23 ~ MCA Math Test for 3, 4, 5th Grade
- Thursday, April 24 ~ MCA Science Test for 5th Grade Only
- Thursday, April 24 ~ Spring HIKE! After school
- Friday, April 25 ~ ART! After school
- Thursday, May 1 ~ Spring HIKE! After school
- Friday, May 2 ~ Make Up Day due to Snow Day – We are in Session!
- Friday, May 2 ~ ART! After School

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 has been a busy week here at Birch Grove with Kindergarten Round Up, special guests, and preparing for the MCA's. To celebrate all of the hard work done this week, K-5 will be making pizzas in the wood-fired oven tomorrow, Friday – yum!!

The MCA (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments) are next week for 3-5th graders! Reading assessments for 3-5th grade is on Tuesday, Math for 3-5th grade is on Wednesday, and Thursday is Science for 5th grade only. **Please, please see that your child gets extra sleep the night before testing.** Breakfast will be served for all testers each morning. Please remind your child to do their best work, take their time, and show off their big brains!

Breakfast menu for:

Tuesday, April 22 – 3-5th graders:

Pancake and Sausage on a Stick!

Yogurt

Fruit

Milk/Juice

Wednesday, April 23 – 3-5th graders:

Waffles

Egg Muffins

Fruit

Milk/Juice

Thursday, April 24 – 5th grade only:

Sausage, Egg & Cheese Burrito

Muffins

Fruit

Milk/Juice

If your child does not like what is on the menu, please be sure they have breakfast in the morning at home!



K-5 families, please check your email concerning transportation, tomorrow, Friday, April 18. There are no Arrowhead Transit routes, so an alternative for transportation has been sent to your email address. Please read this. Thank you!



"Let's Plant Trees", a non-profit based in Lutsen, founded by Mike and Carrie Nicklow, came to Birch Grove this week for our annual presentation. Trees for planting will be delivered in May, at which point students will be planting them in and around The Campsite - and they will take some home as well! We look forward to what is now an annual event of an informational presentation followed up with the action of planting trees. Thank you so much, "Let's Plant Trees"!

Once again, the Grand Marais State Bank in Tofte is the first sponsor to the Gala for the Grove with \$1,000 sponsorship! Thank you so much! More sponsors are needed for the event, so if you know of a business or couples/individuals that may like to sponsor this fundraiser (there are varied sponsorship tiers), please call 218-663-0170 or see more information at: <https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Gala-for-the-Grove> Sponsorships come with event tickets that you can use or give away!



Gala for the Grove!

Saturday, May 17, 2025

This is Birch Grove's biggest fundraiser of the year. We hope to see many at this spirited event to support our elementary school and community service programs all while having a great time out! This year's theme is Back to the 50's!

<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Gala-for-the-Grove>

The Gala for the Grove ~2025

Saturday, May 17



Back to the 50's

Theme for 2025!



The *Gala for the Grove*, a spirited fundraiser for Birch Grove Community School, is semi-formal and held in the Lakeside Ballroom at Surfside in Tofte. The theme this year is "Back to the 50's"! Dress for the theme or not, the choice is yours – it will be a great time either way!

~~~

### 5:00 Champagne Social

Appetizers and champagne will be served. You can purchase tickets for items in the raffle drawing and browse live auction items to see what may catch your fancy. A cash bar is available all evening.

### 6:00 Dinner and Wine

Each dinner choice will include two glasses of red or white wine. Fine dinner choices are listed below. The raffle drawing will take place during the latter part of dinner.

### 7:00 Live Auction

Entertaining auctioneers will auction off special items live!

### Music To Follow



### Menu for the Evening:

A house salad with maple-Dijon dressing, dinner roll, and a choice of:

\* Filet Mignon with mashed potatoes and seasonal vegetables or

\* Pineapple Orange Baked Cornish Game Hen with mashed potatoes and seasonal vegetables or

\* Teriyaki Tofu Vegetable Stir Fry with Jasmine Rice

A selection of desserts will be available

To attend, please send this form with check payable to:  
Birch Grove Community School - Post Office Box 2383 Tofte, MN 55615

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guest's First and Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guest's First and Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guest's First and Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guest's First and Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number and Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_ x \$75 per ticket = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount enclosed

Dinner selection - please indicate a choice for each ticket:

\_\_\_\_ Filet Mignon

\_\_\_\_ Cornish Game Hen

\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian Stir Fry

Your tickets will be waiting for you at the door in the names listed above. Questions? Please call the school at 663-0170 or email [birchgrove@boreal.org](mailto:birchgrove@boreal.org). Please use an additional piece of paper to include more guest names if needed.

Interested in being a *Gala for the Grove* Sponsor?

#### Sponsorship

\$1,000 Sponsorship includes 6 tickets

\$500 Sponsorship includes 4 tickets

\$250 Sponsorship includes 2 tickets

Sponsors are recognized the evening of the Gala, in the Cook County News Herald, as well as on the Gala for the Grove page on the school website. Sponsors will also receive tickets to the Gala event itself, so that you, or others of your choosing, can enjoy a night of revelry!

To become a sponsor, please send this form with a check payable to Birch Grove Community School ~ Post Office Box 2383 Tofte, MN 55615

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsorship Amount (see above)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sponsorship Name (Business, Organization, Individual, Couple, etc.)

Please include what you want to have happen with your sponsorship tickets. Include a name and a meal choice for each ticket received for sponsorship. If you choose to not use the tickets, please indicate this.

Thank you and we hope to see you at the *Gala for the Grove*!



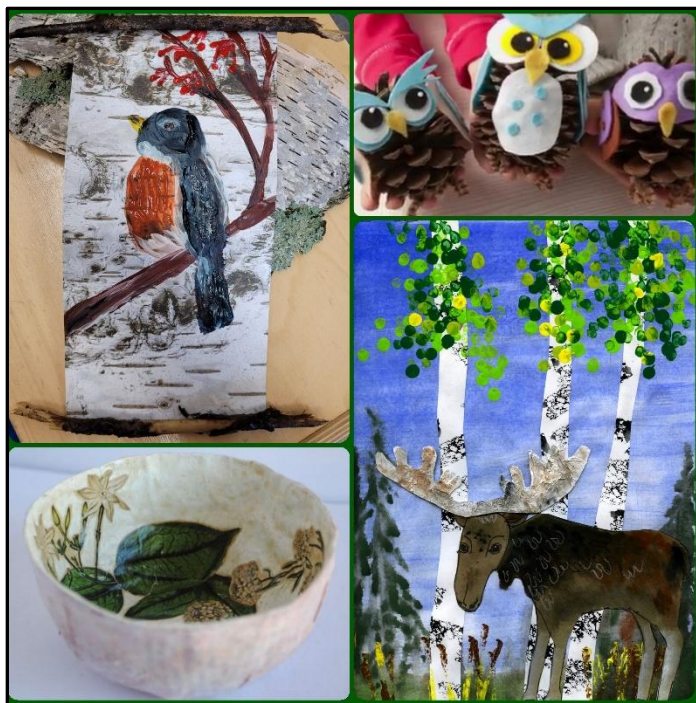
Yeehaw! It was a great Kindergarten Round Up at Birch Grove Community School! If you know of someone who missed this event, please tell them they can always check out Birch Grove at our annual Dress To Play Open House on August 12 from 5-7pm or, schedule a personal tour any time! Birch Grove Community School... "Where Roots Grow Deep and Branches Reach High!"

<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/>



Birch Buddies ~ ART! after school program  
4 sessions will be offered to 2-5<sup>th</sup> grades. Space is limited. There are a few spots left!

Friday, April 25 ~ Robin Painting on Birch Bark  
Friday, May 2 ~ Moose in Birch Grove  
Friday, May 9 ~ Pinecone Owl Family  
Friday, May 23 ~ Paper Pulp Bowls



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!



[birchgrove@boreal.org](mailto:birchgrove@boreal.org)

[www.birchgroveschool.com](http://www.birchgroveschool.com)

School Spirit Store Link: <https://birchgrove.logosoftwear.com/> You can use GRAB15 for 15% off

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



~~~~~

From Ms. Emily VanDoren

Seedling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

Bugs, bugs, bugs! This week our focus was on all things bugs. We had lots of fun buzzing around like flies and bumblebees, wiggling like worms and caterpillars, and crawling like beetles and ladybugs. We sang "Shoo Fly Don't Bother Me", "I'm Bringing Home a Baby Bumblebee", and "Itsy-Bitsy Spider" this week and practiced simple hand movements with the songs.

The older Seedlings had fun going on a worm hunt in sensory bins to find plastic worms to fill their buckets. They also worked on fine motor skills by practicing their grasp of crayons to color a bug coloring sheet. We also used fly cutouts to practice two-step directions to find an object and place it in a basket. The same fly cutouts were used to practice visual tracking with the younger Seedlings and to introduce a new sound, "buzz".

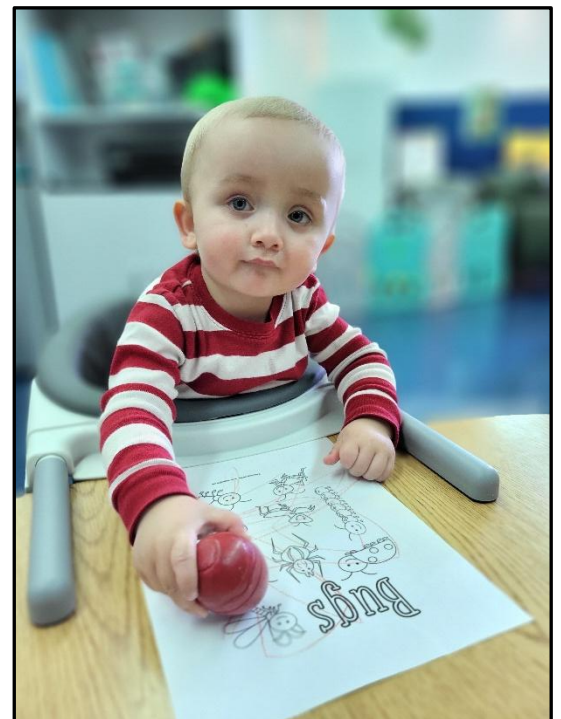
Lots of books were read this week including a few with a focus on bugs. We read *Bugs, bugs, bugs* by Bob Barner, *Ten Little Ladybugs* by Melanie Gerth, and *Ten Wiggly, Wiggly Caterpillars* by Debbie Tarbett.

A special keepsake craft was made this week and was sent home in take home folders so be sure to check for a cute surprise!

Have a good weekend!

218-663-0170 ext. 7

emily.vandorenbgcs@gmail.com




~~~~~  
**From Ms. Pam Holm**

*Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

Saplings had a Hippity Hoppity week! The sensory bin this week concentrated on alphabet letter matching, pairing uppercase and lowercase letters amidst a grass-filled bin containing colored eggs to match and collect in baskets. The numerous table activities included: Feeding the bunny carrots by the number on the rolled dice. Sequencing eggs according to size. Counting and quantifying chicks and bunnies. Shaping playdough into egg forms. Completing carrot color matching worksheets and pre-writing practice.

On Tuesday we read *10 Little Ducks* by Eric Carle. The story was inspired by a real life incident of a cargo ship containing 28,800 rubber ducks that spilled into the ocean, when the ship encountered a storm. Using a map and globe we discussed the directions the rubber ducks floated in the oceans, north, east, south and west. Afterwards, we expressed our creativity by finger-painting the ocean and crafting 10 rubber ducks floating along.



The spotlight was on bunny rabbits on Wednesday, with lessons on their herbivorous habits, their continuous teeth growth and impressive 180-degree ear rotation. Saplings participated in a directed drawing of whimsical bunnies.

The life cycle of baby chickens was explored on Thursday, highlighting the presence of a temporary small bump known as an 'egg tooth' on the beak of newly hatched chicks, as well as their use of chirping to communicate with their mother, culminating in a simple egg hatching craftivity. We used this activity to talk about how the chick grows inside the egg.

On Friday Saplings used two different approaches to create paper eggs, Ukrainian eggs, known as pysanky, and Lithuanian eggs, called margučiai. Both are beautiful, intricate works of art traditionally done on raw eggs using wax or scratching technique and colored dyes. They have a rich history in Ukrainian and Lithuanian tradition dating back to ancient times. Made during springtime to celebrate the end of winter and the beginning of new life. Each color and symbol has a special meaning, like happiness, love, good health, good harvest and the interconnectedness of all living things. Some eggs were even used to tell stories.

A warm spring welcome is extended to our newest Sapling friend!

218-663-0170 ext. 6

[pam.holmbgcs@gmail.com](mailto:pam.holmbgcs@gmail.com)

~~~~~

From Ms. Sara Knottski

K & 1st Grade Elementary Teacher

Kindergarten Round Up was a huge success! K/1 did great being the older kids in the classroom. They had a blast painting their pot, planting sunflower seeds, and showing the younger students our classroom.

First grade worked on opinion writing this week. We focused on identifying a topic sentence and giving detailed sentences to tell the reasons for our opinions. The kindergartners are practicing reading, writing, and letters. We are working on including spacing, punctuation, and correct spelling in our writing. In math, the first graders and kindergartners learned about time and shapes. We can tell time to the hour and half hour. Students practiced drawing and identifying key traits of shapes.

The students don't seem to be phased by the temperamental weather. They are excited when it is warm and sunny and when it's cold and rainy. This week many of them were experimenting and manipulating the thick mud, puddles, and the new 'rivers' in the woods. Expect them to come home wet and happy!



Have a great weekend!

218-663-0170 ext. 2

sara.knottskibgcs@gmail.com

~~~~~  
**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

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

We are halfway through April! Everyone is feeling the spring fever and the students are itching to get outside and explore. The biggest focus of our week has test preparation, building boredom stamina, and exploring different test strategies. Part of this "boredom stamina" (my nickname) is to focus on completing many series of questions quietly and reviewing each question with me. I want them to be prepared to take an extended test without rushing through to the next thing. We still were able to spend our afternoons enjoying ourselves with extra outdoor time, an art project inspired by Lois Mailou, and spending the afternoon on Friday making pizza on the wood-fired grill!

In reading, second grade read a fantasy story about a mysterious tadpole. We reviewed genre, story elements, and life cycles. Third grade spent each day reading articles with a focus on our testing strategies (re-reading, eliminating answers, previewing, and finding text evidence). Math has been a little different as second grade has been learning the basics to multiplication! They are loving the new



material and have been so excited to learn this new operation. Third grade has spent all the time reviewing material they have learned throughout the year. We have been doing lots of packets with make up after lunch. After MCA's, we will learn some new material to prepare for fourth grade.

Keep on the lookout for Wolf Ridge permission forms. They will be coming out next week. It is coming up quick!

218-663-0170 ext. 3

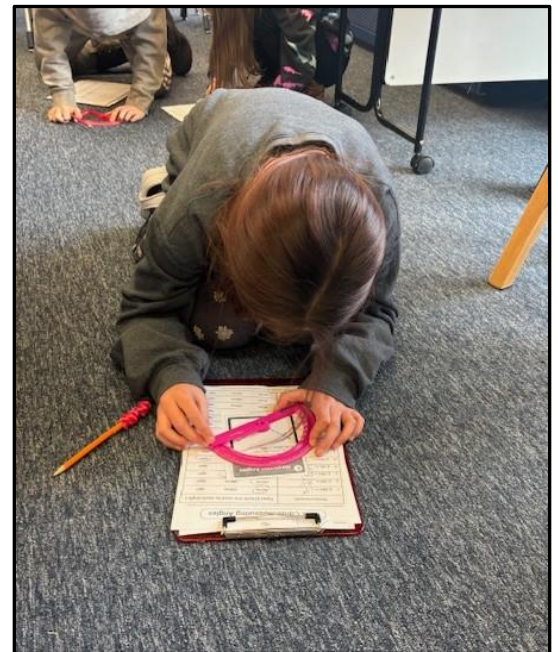
[samantha.forsterbgcs@gmail.com](mailto:samantha.forsterbgcs@gmail.com)

~~~~~  
From Ms. Stacy Coronis

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

Woohoo!!! I am thrilled to be back with our 4th and 5th graders! I am thankful for the support and flexibility of the Birch Grove staff, students and families to support my leave to help my mother. Mrs. Silence and I have worked together to ensure a smooth transition with the student needs and curriculum. Thank you to Mrs. Silence for doing such a wonderful job with the class over the winter!

This week we reviewed several math concepts to prepare for the MCA testing next week. This can prove to be a challenge because students navigate several math problems about different topics learned throughout the year. They are staying positive and trying their best and it shows! In reading we have been practicing a comprehension strategy called PRESTO to use with our fiction and nonfiction articles. Ask your child to explain the PRESTO steps to use as a test taking strategy. On Thursday the 3rd graders joined our class to learn about how to use the online tools available to them during testing. Because of all of our hard work on MCA practice we took some time for some extra recess this week and will also be making pizzas tomorrow, on Friday afternoon, using the wood-fired oven. We have definitely worked hard and played hard!



MCA testing is next Tuesday (reading), Wednesday (math) and Thursday (science, 5th graders only). While these tests don't define student academic success, it is important for them to come to school with a positive attitude to try their very best. Please make sure your child gets plenty of sleep next week. Please continue to encourage your child to record their reading or math fact practice minutes on the "Tickets To Treasure" worksheet and turn it in for tickets for a chance to win end of the year prizes.

218-663-0170 ext. 4

stacy.coronisbgcs@gmail.com