

## Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

April 18, 2024

### Dates to Remember:

- Tuesday, April 23 ~ MCA Testing for 3-5<sup>th</sup>
- Wednesday, April 24 ~ MCA Testing for 3-5<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, April 25 ~ MCA Testing for 3-5<sup>th</sup>
- Friday, May 3 ~ No School - Staff PD/Workshop Day
- Monday, May 6 ~ Climb Theater show for K-5
- Tuesday, May 7 ~ MAP testing for K-5
- Wednesday, May 8 ~ MAP testing for K-5
- Thursday, May 9 ~ MAP testing for K-5
- Wednesday, May 15 ~ Wolf Ridge Trip 2-5<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, May 16 ~ Wolf Ridge Trip for 2-5<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, May 16 ~ 911 for Kids! - Saplings & K/1
- Friday, May 17 ~ Wolf Ridge Trip 2-5<sup>th</sup>
- Saturday, May 18 ~ Gala for the Grove!

### 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*

Next week we will be administering the MCA's (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments) tests for 3-5<sup>th</sup> grade on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday:

Tuesday: Reading for Grades 3-5

Wednesday: Math for Grades 3-5

Thursday: Science for Grade 5 only (and any make-up testing needed)

Breakfast will be served to all test takers each morning (thank you, Angie!) **PLEASE! be sure that your student gets lots of sleep the night before testing** - we would greatly appreciate it! Remind

your student that this is an opportunity for them to show off their “big brains” and that you expect them to do their best work. Thank you!



Yee Haw! Kindergarten Round Up and Step-Up Day went well. It was a fun and exciting day for all! Please keep BGCS in mind if you know of families that are considering where to send their child for kindergarten (or any grade K-5, actually). We appreciate any and all referrals given by BGCS families. Thank you!

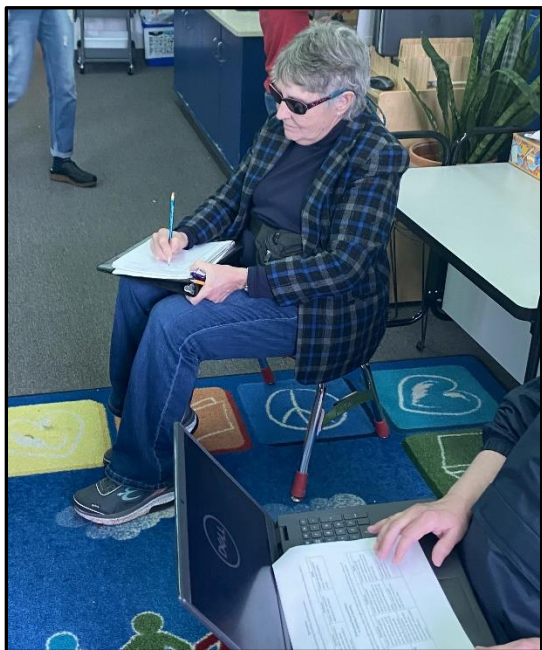
Birch Buddies ~ HIKE! starts next week on Tuesday!

Thank you so much to avid hikers Sara Knottski, K/1 teacher, and Gayle Grinnell, paraprofessional and LPN, for creating Birch Buddies ~ *HIKE!* Your enthusiasm for North Shore hiking adventures is positively affecting our K-5 students and the Birch Buddies program!



This Saplings is posing with a grouse. Do you see it? What a great smile (on the Sapling, not the grouse)!

Deonn Cicak, long-time Birch Grove teacher when it was a part of 166, has worked with the current BG public charter school for over a decade within the Q-Comp program. Deonn has been instrumental in leading Q-Comp teacher observations 3 times annually, as well as serving as a teacher mentor. Sadly, this will be Ms. Cicak's last year, but we want to celebrate her many contributions of time, experience, skills and wisdom shared with our school and staff. She will be greatly missed. Please, if you see Deonn, give thanks, or feel free to comment on this post, as she will see it. Thank you so much Deonn from Birch Grove Community School - you're the best!



Sponsorship so far for the 2024 Gala for the Grove:

**\$1,000**

**Grand Marais State Bank-Tofte  
Lisa Hemp**

**\$500**

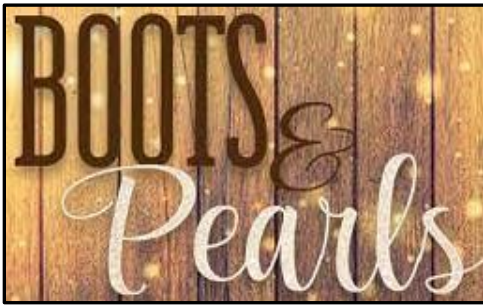
**Anonymous  
North Shore Federal Credit Union**

**\$250**

**Arrowhead Cooperative  
Krevechenko Services LLC  
Mark Buckman & Sisa Nikula**



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, please call 218-663-01760 or see more information at: <https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Gala-for-the-Grove> Sponsorships come with tickets that you can use or give away to employees, friends or family!



Saturday, May 18! Ticket/meal choice forms are available: <https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Gala-for-the-Grove>  
 This spirited fundraiser for Birch Grove Community School, is semi-formal and held in the beautiful Lakeside Ballroom at Surfside in Tofte. The theme this year is "Boots & Pearls!" – think fancy Western! Enjoy champagne, appetizers, a fine dinner with wine, and an enthusiastic live auction. Join other supporter for a great night out in support of BGCS!

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](mailto:birchgrove@boreal.org) ~ 218-663-0170

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



**From Ms. Rista Sharma-Connor**

*Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

Great week of welcoming April showers! Along with the showers came a lot of worms. We learned about the importance of rain and worms and how they are beneficial for our gardens. Saplings are really enjoying collecting worms on our walks and placing them in our community garden. As it is the month to bring out our umbrellas, Saplings are exploring the letter U and understanding the sound of the letter. To go with the theme, we talked about life underground and underwater. Saplings made an underwater craft using paper plates, sawdust, paint and stickers, which turned out beautifully and are displayed in our hallway.

Kindergarten Round Up went well! The future kindergarteners came back from their time in the K/1 classroom with some stories to tell and projects to take home. We hope that these Saplings join Birch Grove Community School next year!



We are still taking the musical journey with our community member Dave Gustafson and the Saplings are thoroughly enjoying it. Saplings are also looking forward to a campfire and s'mores like most Forest Fridays.

Have a wonderful weekend!

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

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

Kindergarten Round up was a success! The new '1st graders' did great being the older kids in the classroom. They had a blast painting birdhouses, going on a nature walk, and showing the younger students our classroom. I heard that the new '2nd graders' did very well too.

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 money. We learned about the penny, nickel, dime, and quarter. We practiced counting them all together. We played a few whole group money games. The older kids got to pair up with the younger kids and practice their leadership and helping skills! We are also reviewing a few key concepts in preparation for the NWEA testing in a few weeks.

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!

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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

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

This week was full of test preparation plus excited for the next year! We focused on different strategies to use for testing, testing language, and MCA tools practice. We also got to do a “step-up” to the next grade which was full of fun for everyone and gave an insight of what the next year may feel like.

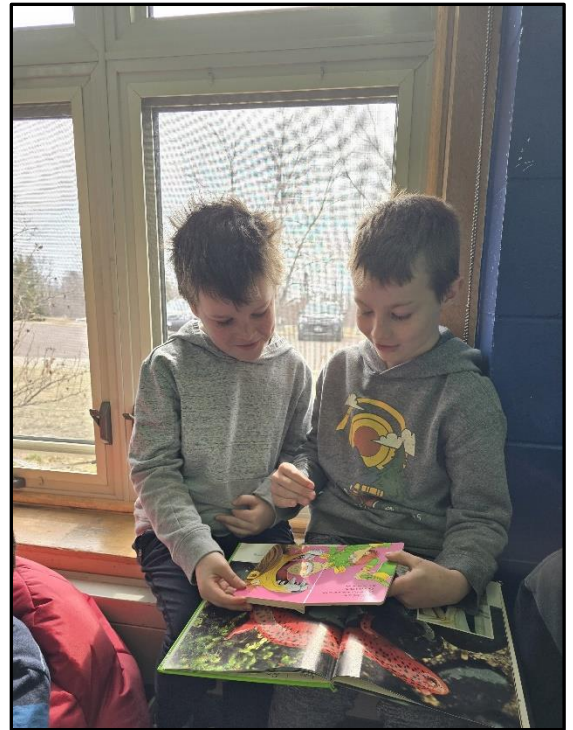
In math, third grade continued on prepping for testing with a tutorial on MCA tools and reviewing language of what questions on the test will sound like. I went through previous year’s questions with the students and helped them through the language. In second grade, we continued to work through multiplication/division concepts while refreshing 4-digit addition and subtraction.

In reading, we worked on vocabulary word spellings and definitions. The graphic organizer we used this week was a “create a character” organizer to increase comprehension of the story we read. We have been working with possessive nouns and spent more time with examples this week.

Step-up day was full of excitement for both grades as they got to transition up to 4th grade or get new classmates in our classroom. This allowed the younger students to be the “big kids” in the classroom and shifted the dynamic of the room. There was lots of excitement for everyone about next year!

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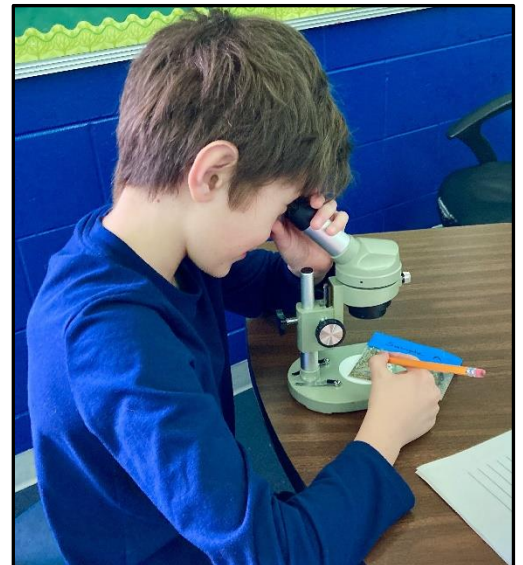


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**From Ms. Laurie Roberts**

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

The fourth and fifth graders have been studying about sand this week as a final activity for our geology unit in science. They had to use their observational skills to examine all the features of 10 different types of sand. They looked at individual sand grains underneath a microscope and looked for things such as colors, angled or rounded grains, and sizes of grains. The students took detailed notes on the sand types. Their final test was when they had to look at “mystery” sand and match it to one of the 10 types they had observed. They eventually matched all 10 types of sand. They have come a long way in their science skills since the beginning of the year!



We have been reviewing language arts and math skills this week, in preparation for MCA testing next week. We will be testing on Tuesday 4/23 and Wednesday 4/24. The fifth graders will take their first MCA science test on Thursday 4/25. Please make sure your children get good sleep next week, as that helps them on testing days. The students are feeling confident in their skills, as is their teacher!

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