

## Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

April 24, 2025

### Upcoming Events:

Friday, May 2 ~ Make Up Day due to Snow Day – We are in Session!

Tuesday, May 6 to Friday, May 9 ~ FastBridge Testing for K-5

Wednesday, May 14 VOA Spring Visit and School Board Meeting

Wednesday-Friday, May 14-16 ~ Wolf Ridge Trip for 2-5<sup>th</sup>

Thursday, May 15 ~ 911 for Kids! (K and 1<sup>st</sup>)

Saturday, May 17 ~ Gala for the Grove!

Thursday, May 22 ~ Tickets To Treasure Drawing

Friday, May 23 ~ K-5 Field Trip to Black Beach and GrandStay Pool w/Waterslide

Monday, May 26 ~ No School-Memorial Day

Tuesday, May 27 ~ Annual COLOR! Day

Wednesday, May 28 ~ K-5 Tofte Park Trip

Thursday, May 29 ~ Saplings and Seedlings Last Day

Friday, May 30 Graduation Celebration! 10:00am – ½ day of school. Release at 12:00.

### 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*

It was another busy week here at Birch Grove and a big year end event completed, getting us closer to the end of the year! MCA testing for 3-5<sup>th</sup> graders was completed this week in reading for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, math for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, and science for 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Many thanks to the families that ensured their child received extra sleep the night before testing and for reinforcing students to do their best work!

Year end FastBridge testing is coming up the week of May 6 for all students, K-5. Please ensure, just like the MCA's, that your child gets plenty of sleep each night. We would like our students to be well

rested when taking these tests. Again, please also ask your child to do their best work and show off their big brains!

The end of the school year can get quite hectic and has many special events. Please make sure that your child gets some good sleep so that they are better able to navigate schedules and activities that are not the norm. Please remind your child that these special activities and events, many of them high-energy, still require our normal behavior expectations. 😊



Going to Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center is a part of Birch Grove Community School's elementary program for grades 2-5 at the end of every school year! We are so excited to be able to include this incredible trip in our programming. Please look for permission slips and return them as soon as possible. This year's trip is Wednesday-Friday, May 14, 15 & 16.



**COLOR! Day is coming!**  
**Tuesday, May 27**



## More Sponsors for the Gala for the Grove 2025!



Cooter's Auto Repair  
\$250 Sponsorship



Lloyd Chase & Deonn Cicak  
\$1,000 Sponsorship



Tofte Circle K: Brian and Marcy Olsen  
\$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*!



Earth Day ~ April 22! Birch Grove celebrated by picking up trash along the bike trail in front of the building, as well as the grounds around Birch Grove. Spectacular job, K-5!



Birch Buddie ~ HIKE! spring session program dates remaining:

Thursday, April 24 ~ Onion River/Ray Berglund Wayside

Thursday, May 1 ~ Dyers Lake/Cramer Road

Thursday, May 8 ~ Cascade River State Park



Birch Buddies ~ ART! after school program dates remaining:

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](#)



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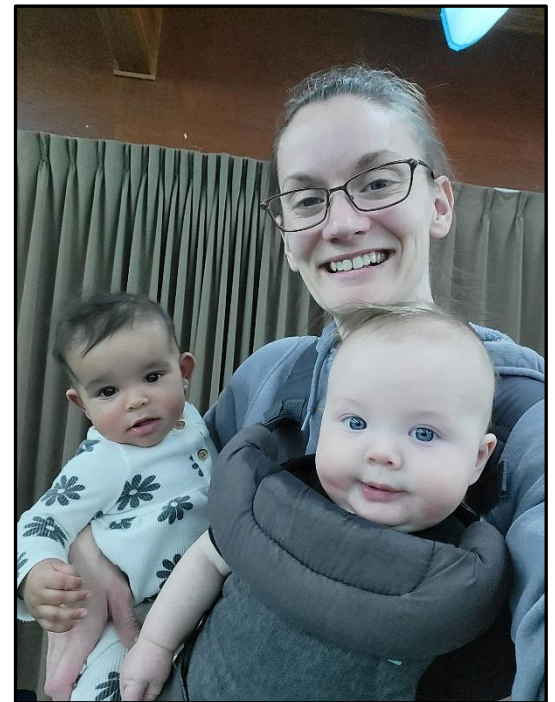
**From Ms. Emily VanDoren**

*Seedling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

Our theme for this week was Earth in honor of Earth Day on April 22nd. We read a variety of books that exposed the Seedlings to different cultures, languages, climates, and animals. We listened to "What a Wonderful World" by Louis Armstrong throughout the week as well.

For our sensory activity, we used blue and green taste-safe paint to paint an abstract Earth on a paper plate. During this activity, the older Seedlings are able to experience different textures while using their fine motor skills to manipulate the paintbrush. The older Seedlings also worked their fine motor skills by coloring a picture of the Earth.

The beautiful spring weather allowed us to get outside for walks this week. With the fluctuating weather and feeding/sleeping schedules of the younger Seedlings, it has been a challenge to get outside. Now that we are getting into more consistent/predictable routines, I am looking forward to taking the Seedlings out for walks every day as the weather allows.



Have a good weekend!

218-663-0170 ext. 7

[emily.vandorenbgcs@gmail.com](mailto:emily.vandorenbgcs@gmail.com)

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## From Ms. Pam Holm

*Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

This week, the Saplings got hands-on with sustainability as the theme was *Reduce, Reuse and Recycle!* We filled a sensory bin with shredded paper and hidden items, sorting them into trash, recycling, and compost bins. We got creative and made paper pulp bowls using recycled paper from our bin, recycled newspaper paper-mache birds and toilet paper roll bird feeders.

Our discussion focused on what materials we can recycle and how it helps reduce waste in landfills. By showing them the recycling process in action, we're empowering them to make a difference with their individual actions.

Our Saplings celebrated Earth Day with a creative twist! They crafted beautiful coffee filter planet earths and then embarked on an eco-adventure outside, exploring designated trails and respecting wildlife. Observing animals in their natural habitats without disturbing them taught our young explorers valuable lessons about responsibility and conservation.

Why getting outdoors matters:

Builds confidence

Sparks creativity and imagination

Teaches responsibility

Provides diverse stimulation

Gets kids moving

Fosters critical thinking

Reduces stress and fatigue

Earth Day fun continued with literacy and math

activities! Saplings practiced writing skills by tracing letters on alphabet sheets and then finding the same letters on recycling bins. Number skills were strengthened by counting and covering dots on earth

and recycling bin-themed printables, focusing on numbers 0-20.

Celebrating Arbor Day, our Saplings explored the wonder of trees! When asked what they love about trees, their creative answers included:

Hanging and swinging from branches

Climbing to new heights

Providing homes for birds and squirrels

Being a source for paper and building materials

Offering shade from the sun



Hands-on fun followed with two tree-tastic matching activities! Saplings matched tree shapes with written words and identical shapes, exploring various forms like circles, squares, triangles, hearts and more. Each tree card featured a unique shape as its "leaves" paired with a sturdy trunk.

Please ensure your child is dressed for warmer outdoor adventures, rain or shine! We explore nature daily, and getting wet and dirty is part of the fun. To make the most of our time outside, kindly send your child with suitable gear, including waterproof rain gear (not just wind-resistant). This will help them stay dry and comfortable.

Proud of our Saplings for embracing the wonders of nature!

218-663-0170 ext. 6

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

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

Sunshine, flowers, and fresh air have been wonderful for the kids this week. They are feeling spring and gaining energy from the warmer weather! For the rest of the year, we will spend Fridays outside as long as the weather cooperates. Please ensure your child has enough layers and proper footwear to spend long periods outside. If it is cold, we will still go out, but not if there is lots of rain.

This week, Kindergarteners are reviewing letters, reading, and practicing writing. We are spending a lot of time ensuring that kindergarten topics are concrete, and we are

starting to excel in our reading skills. The first graders reviewed story structure. We read a story and identified the characters, the setting, the problem, and the solution in the story.

In math, we are all reviewing various topics. We are working on mastering the concepts of time, money, and measuring. We took time to play multiple whole-group math games this week. It was a good review and fun!

Every Friday for the rest of the year, the students will be able to collect tickets and drop them into the prize boxes. Please send their log sheet on Fridays, and remember to continue to record all the hard work they have done at home!

Have a great weekend and remember to read!

218-663-0170 ext. 2

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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

*2nd & 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher*

Testing week has been filled with weird routines and lots of quiet reading. Everyone has worked so hard and did their best. We finished our days with an Earth Day cleanup, extra outdoor time, and African mask art. The weather has been warming up and we will continue to move more and more of our learning completely outdoors.

Second grade spent the week working with me in a small group and practicing various skills. We compared and contrasted 3 Cinderella stories from multiple cultures. This involved a Venn diagram and conversations about the story elements. They also read a passage about "The Power of Dung." It was a nonfiction article for Earth Day that made everyone giggle but provided great information about clean renewable energy. Math has been focused on multiplication and division of facts up to 5.

We are entering the time of year that everyone has lots of energy and there are many different things happening. We will continue to review rules and expectations as we transition into the last month of school. Wolf Ridge permission/liability forms were sent home. I need one for each child before we leave for the trip. Also reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns. This is the first big trip for some and it is common to feel nervous but excited. It will be an amazing time with lots to learn!

218-663-0170 ext. 3

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**From Ms. Stacy Coronis**

*4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher*

This week all of the 4th and 5th graders completed their MCA testing in the areas of math and reading. 5th graders also completed the science MCA test. The students handled the change in their schedule well and tried their best on the tests. Data from these tests help us plan our instruction to meet the needs of all of our students. Thank you for sending your kids to school ready to learn and give 100%! It was wonderful to get outside on Tuesday afternoon to celebrate Earth Day by cleaning up the Birch Grove property after a morning of testing. Not only did we enjoy the fresh air, but we collected so much trash that it filled a large black plastic bag! Wow!

In our USA Tour we have wrapped up our study of the Southeast Region and learned a lot about the land, history, industries and natural resources there. We are now moving on to the Midwest Region and will “visit” 9 important places to learn and journal about in our USA Passports. Our state research projects will be coming up soon and students are starting to think about what state they want to research. In math class we are reviewing 4th and 5th grade standards as well as reviewing all operations basic facts. It is an expectation that all 4th and 5th graders can correctly complete all 4 basic math operations with the digits 0-10. Students who have not mastered them yet will really focus on them the last month of school and students who have mastered them will play math games to build on their knowledge! In reading next week we are starting book clubs which is a great way to practice fluency and enjoy the content of a book with classmates!

Please return your Wolf Ridge permission slip if you have not already. Thank you!

218-663-0170 ext. 4

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