

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

April 4, 2025

Upcoming Events:

Friday, April 11 ~ No School-PD for Staff

Monday, April 14 ~ *Let's Plant Trees!* at 1:00

Tuesday, April 15 Kindergarten Round Up!

Tuesday, April 15 ~ School Board Meeting at 4:00

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

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

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 a crazy week coming back from spring break. Snow storms and no school made this a shorter week. We are happy to be back from break and look forward to heading full steam to the end of the year!

There are many events and activities scheduled for this and next month, so be sure to check the Upcoming Events at the top of this newsletter. Please be especially sure that your child gets plenty of sleep the night before any scheduled testing. We always appreciate this support from home. 😊





This program is on FIRE!

CAMPSITE KIDS ~ Summer program 2025 is full!

We look forward to an amazing summer! The first day of Campsite Kids is Monday, June 9. <https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Campsite-Kids>

Wednesday, April 2 was a snow day! As such, Friday, May 2, that was previously a scheduled day off, will now be a make up day. School, Saplings and Seedlings are now scheduled to be in session on Friday, May 2. Thank you!



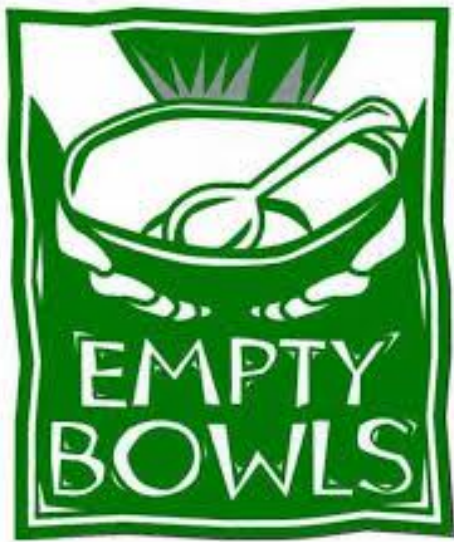
Save the date for the Gala for the Grove! Saturday, May 17, 2025. This is Birch Grove's biggest fundraiser of the year. We hope to see many at this spirited event to support our elementary school and community service programs all while having a great time out! This year's theme will be announced soon!

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





Kindergarten Round Up is scheduled for Tuesday, April 15 this year. If you know of a child that will be eligible for Kindergarten next year (must be 5 by September 1), please recommend this special day to them where they can experience BGCS. We appreciate all parent recommendations!



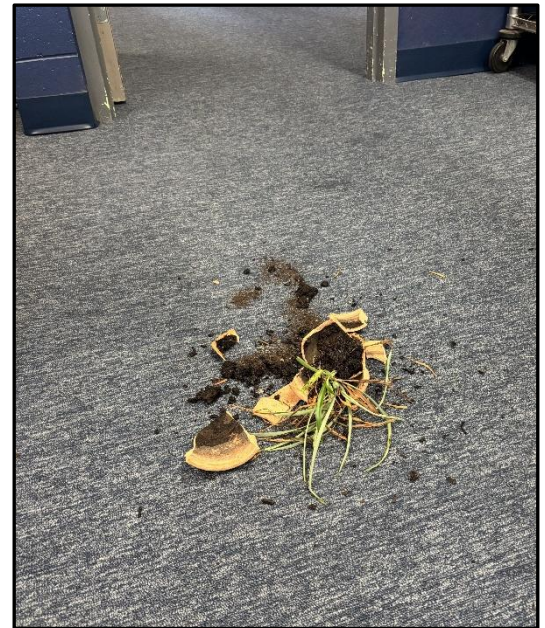
\$10,000 was just granted to Birch Grove Community School and Birch Grove Community Services from Empty Bowls! Thank you so much for helping us to provide the in-house hot lunch program, free breakfast bars and free snacks for several programs throughout the building and throughout the calendar year. Your support makes a difference. Many thanks!



The spring session of the after-school program, Birch Buddies ~ HIKE!, has been scheduled for the last two weeks of April and the first two weeks of May. Registration forms were emailed home today as well as sent home in folders. . This spectacular program is limited to 15 participants only, and spots will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Hike the Shore!



Day 1 with the new carpeting! 😊 A freshly watered plant in black dirt bit the dust. No worries, it cleaned up nicely. Tofte does own a commercial carpet cleaner for the building, but if a stain is persistent, the carpet was installed in squares, so the area can be replaced. Extra carpet has been stored. Splendid. The new carpet in the classrooms, library, Community Room and hallway looks fantastic! Thank you, Tofte Township! (The carpet in this picture looks grey, it is actually blue!)



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
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

I hope you all had a wonderful spring break! It was great to see all the Seedlings again after the break, they all looked so much bigger! A big part of our week was getting back into the routine of the classroom.

This week's theme was "In the Garden". We read the book *How Does Your Garden Grow?* by Pat Patterson. It tells the story of a young girl and boy growing a garden from the perspective of an earthworm, ant, and caterpillar. We used caterpillar, butterfly, and ladybug hand puppets to spark imagination and creativity.



We worked our sense of smell by trying to smell artificial flowers that had been scented with lavender. We also painted with our taste safe paint again this week for our sensory activity.

218-663-0170 ext. 7

emily.vandorenbgcs@gmail.com

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

*Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

Saplings were welcomed back from spring break with a celebration of National Crayon Day. They engaged in a color analysis of every crayon in the 24-crayon box and drew the letter 'C' using their most preferred color. Following a reading of the classic *Harold and the Purple Crayon* by Crockett Johnson, each Sapling drew their own world of adventure with a purple crayon. This was succeeded by a nature walk, where the Saplings took note of diverse objects and used their power of imagination to make their own world of play. In the writing center, a variety of *Harold and the Purple Crayon*-themed pre-writing skill sheets were available, featuring line tracing, shape tracing, mazes, and picture tracing.



Ahhh, April Fools! Saplings were fooled with some brown-Es for a snack, followed by real brownies. Many made their own brown-Es to fool their family. But we were all fooled by the weather!

The week's theme revolved around Branches, Buds and Blossoms, where we discussed the life cycle of trees. Identifying the letter 'B', we discovered objects in the room that start with this letter. The Saplings produced Wassily Kandinsky-style trees, utilizing concentric circles and vibrant colors. While outdoors exploring we discussed different deciduous trees and examined their different barks.

Our conversation also covered the topic of tulips, focusing on their development from bulbs, and was complemented by a painting exercise inspired by Georgia O'Keeffe, where





the Saplings were prompted to explore nature and amplify its details.

Our math and manipulatives activities consisted of sequencing flowers by size and sequencing the life cycle of tulips, in addition to counting flowers and creating graph tallies. Shape and number recognition and tracing sheets were also utilized.

Spring weather is full of changes and surprises. Please make sure your child is prepared to stay warm and dry for extended periods of time outdoors each day with lots of weather appropriate layers and footwear. Also needed, a complete change of indoor clothes.

Saplings love when everyday is different – that's what makes life fun and beautiful!

218-663-0170 ext. 6  
[pam.holmbgcs@gmail.com](mailto:pam.holmbgcs@gmail.com)

~~~~~

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

The students came back from spring break with lots of stories of their time off. They also came back excited to be at school and play with their friends. They were all ready for learning!

It was another busy week in K/1! In language arts, we discussed character traits. We identified the actions and what the characters say to identify traits about that character. In math, we learned about time. We can read analog clocks to the hour and half hour!

April showers are supposed to bring May flowers! Maybe April snow will bring lots of sunshine in May! The continued change of weather makes dressing for outdoors varied. Winter gear including snow pants, waterproof gloves, jackets, and hats are still required. Please send your child with them every day until the snow is gone. If you wish for them to leave them at school let me know. On a similar note, students have been coming in from recess soaking. If you noticed that your student comes back home with different pants on, please send back more back-up clothes. We like to play hard and sometimes that means very wet pants!

Please continue to read and practice math facts at home. The students are excited to get tickets for treasure. Be sure to keep logging all reading and math practice at home so that students can get tickets!

Enjoy the 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*

I hope everyone had an amazing and restful spring break! I certainly did enjoy my time with my family. This week has been refocusing on our routine and getting ready for the last part of the school year! We are going to spend April embracing the (hopefully) warm weather, preparing for standardized testing, and revisiting any material that hasn't been fully mastered yet. We are in the continent of Africa for our final destination. This week, we did a Kente Adinkra cloth weaving inspired project. We also watched a video about Africa and its many amazing attributes! We finished up our 5 paragraph essays for our biographies and we will be focusing on the timeline and slideshow next.

Language arts was back in full swing with vocabulary words, writing activities, and fluency. Our word part was "rupt" this week. It was so fun to make connections between words like "erupt", "corrupt", and "interrupt" just based on that part of the word. Student's fluency activity was about squid and octopuses this week. Students compared and contrasted the two creatures as well as making sure I knew all the cool facts there is to know about them. We also read passages about Frida Kahlo, which was exciting because we have done artwork inspired by her in the past. We are making our way through our group books which are still "Tracker", "Because of Winn Dixie", and "Tale of Despereaux." Reading books together creates opportunities to listen to other's expressions, learn words that may be hard to pronounce, and focus on comprehension instead of decoding.

In math, our main focus is revisiting old concepts to make sure we have them mastered. Third grade is preparing for MCA's that are in a few weeks so we are going to spend lots of time looking at concepts that may be challenging still. In second grade, I will be introducing the concept of multiplication and division to prepare them for next year's material. I try to include IXL group jams, Blookets, and Kahoots for a fun engagement tool when we may be feeling stagnant in learning math.

Keep sending warm things! I make students wear snow pants throughout the spring as I don't want them cold and wet when we come back in. With all the snow we received, it will continue to be a very muddy spring. Also keep reading with your children at home! I notice a huge difference when students are reading aloud to their parents, family members, and even pets at home!

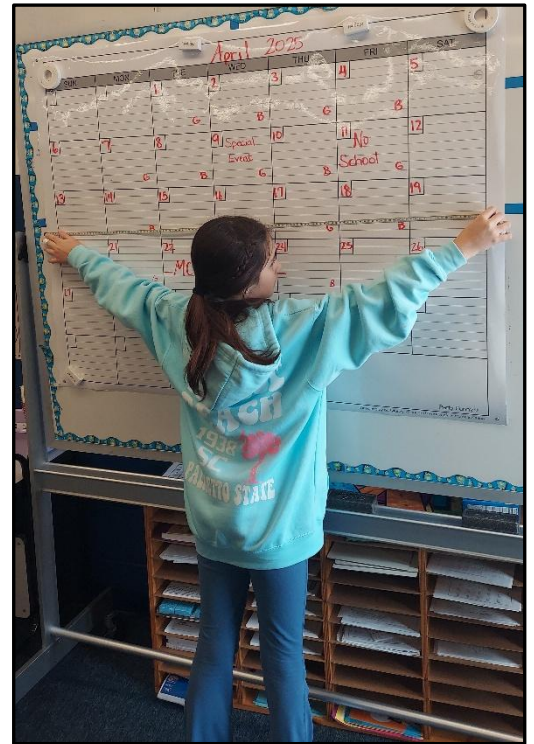
218-663-0170 ext. 3  
[samantha.forsterbgcs@gmail.com](mailto:samantha.forsterbgcs@gmail.com)

~~~~~  
From Ms. Sara Silence
4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

What a weird week! On Monday we were celebrating warmer weather and spring vacation, Wednesday no school, and Friday we are back outside with melting snow! The class embraced this

week and rolled with it. We worked on our writing skills to share a story about spring break to Mrs. Coronis. Students continue working on their computer skills and formatting as they type their letters. Our reading stories this week focused on Greek Mythology. Some students had some background knowledge which helped the whole group with understanding and sparked interest.

Monday and Tuesday in math, we reviewed fraction concepts by scooting around the gym to stations for problem solving. Thursday and Friday, we moved onto the last units for math. Students explored units of measurement by measuring things in the classroom in both centimeters in millimeters. Next they built towers and calculated the volume in centimeters and millimeters. We have also begun our review tasks for the upcoming MCA's. Students have two sources of review work to look for trouble spots. This could be content they need more practice with, something they don't understand, something using new vocabulary, or maybe something they haven't seen yet. The goal is to have students identify any areas and get support instruction now so they are not frustrated later.



Next Wednesday, April 9th, the class will have an outdoor learning day.

The weather should be around 40 degrees. Please make sure your child has layers to be outside for most of the day. Since it will be above the melting point, an extra pair of pants or mittens might be a good idea to send along.

218-663-0170 ext. 4

sara.silencebgcs@gmail.com