

## Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

May 8, 2025

### Upcoming Events:

Wednesday, May 14 VOA Spring Visit and School Board Meeting @ 4:00

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

Year end FastBridge testing was completed this week (mostly). There may be a few students that were absent that will still need to test, but the majority have been completed. Thank you for seeing that your child got plenty of rest prior to testing, and for your reinforcement at home for students to do their best work on these assessments. We always appreciate support from home! Results will be sent to K-5 families in the year end packet sent home via us postal service.

We are definitely counting down days now until the end of the school year. This is always a busy time with assessments and year





end activities. Please be sure that your child gets plenty of sleep these last days of school. Special high energy activities, schedule changes, and spring fever can sometimes impact student behavior negatively. A well-rested child is able to navigate these special days more easily.



The annual trip to Wolf Ridge Environmental Center is next week on Wednesday-Friday for 2-5<sup>th</sup> graders. An incredible itinerary has been created!! If you are not able to come up with needed items for this trip, please let us know as we can have extra on hand if notified. Ms. Forster, Ms. Coronis, Ms. Silence, Ms. Klemmer and Ms. Grinnell will be accompanying our 2/5 students on this adventure!

BGCS would like to welcome back Gayle Grinnell! Ms. Grinnell will return next week on Monday as a K-5 paraprofessional, school nurse, and Community Service coordinator. We have missed her and are very happy that she is returning to us!



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



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



County Plumbing and Heating  
\$250 Sponsorship



Ken Nettland  
\$500 Sponsorship



Cook County Co-op  
\$500 Sponsorship



Evan and Nancy Anderson  
\$500 Sponsorship



Lisa Hemp  
\$1,000 Sponsorship



Cascade Vacation Rentals  
\$500 Sponsorship



Mike and Carrie Nicklow  
\$250 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!

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### 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*!

Birch Buddies ~ HIKE! after school spring session #3 was to Dyers Lake/Cramer Road.  
It was an ICE adventure!

<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Birch-Buddies>



Birch Buddie ~ HIKE! spring session program dates remaining:  
Thursday, May 8 ~ Cascade River State Park

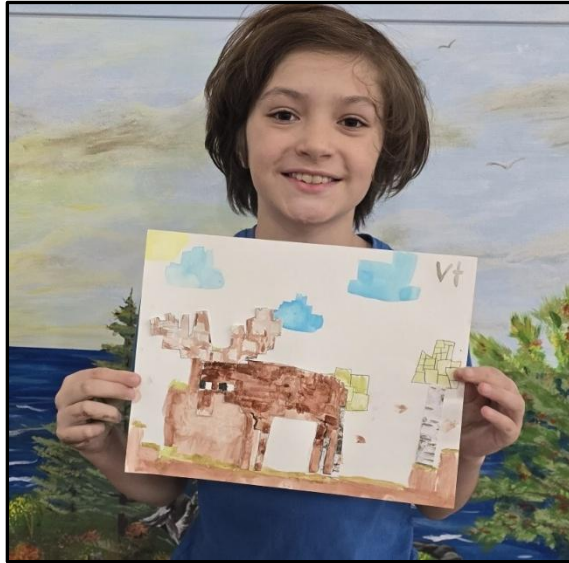


Birch Buddies ~ ART! after school program dates remaining:  
Friday, May 9 ~ Pinecone Owl Family  
Friday, May 23 ~ Paper Pulp Bowls



Birch Buddies ~ ART! After school program: The Moose project turned out great last week!

<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Birch-Buddies>



It's Teacher Appreciation Week! Let's appreciate Sara Knottski, K/1 teacher, Samantha Forster, 2/3 teacher, Stacy Coronis, 4/5 teacher, and Sara Silence, special education teacher - all are amazing teachers in K-5 at Birch Grove Community School. Show them some LOVE!

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



It's Teacher Appreciation Week! Let's appreciate Emily VanDoren, the Seedlings teacher, and Pam Holm, the Saplings teacher - both are amazing teachers for our youngest children, birth to age 5 at Birch Grove. Show them some LOVE!

<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Seedlings-Program>

<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Saplings-Program>



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.logosoftware.com/> You can use GRAB15 for 15% off

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



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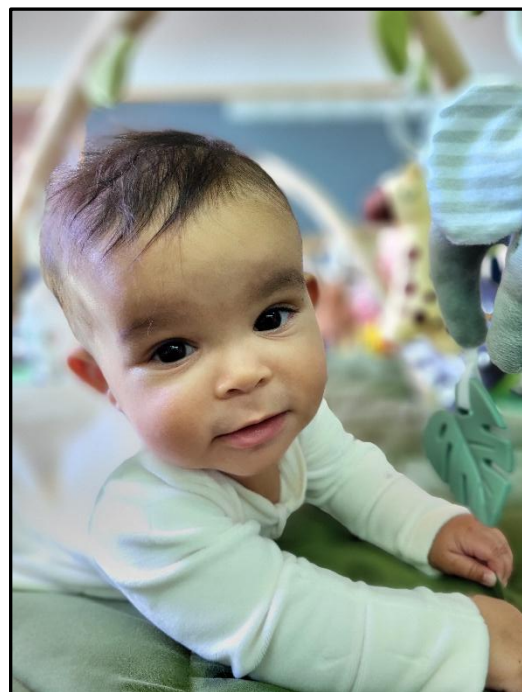


**From Ms. Emily VanDoren**

*Seedling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

Our theme for this week was sports. We read books about karate, gymnastics, soccer, and football. The older Seedlings practiced different stretches by reaching up high and then trying to bend down to touch their toes. They also practiced their jumps by bending knees and counting 1, 2, 3 and jumping. We also worked on their gross motor skills by rolling, throwing, and kicking balls. The younger Seedlings explored balls that had different textures. We also stretched arms by playing "So Big!". I would ask the Seedling "How big are you?" and then slowly stretch their arms up and say "So big!". The game brought out smiles and giggles.

The Seedlings enjoyed our daily walks in the beautiful weather that we had this week. We heard different bird sounds and saw grouse and dragonflies. The older Seedlings enjoyed exercising their legs by walking on the wooded section of the bike path instead of riding in the stroller. This provided an opportunity to let them explore different textures from grass, dry leaves, and rocks.



A special Mother's Day craft was sent home in take home folders on Thursday so be sure to check them. 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*

Monday marked the celebration of Cinco de Mayo in the Saplings room. This significant holiday celebrates Mexico's victory over the French. We practiced Spanish counting throughout the day. I attempted to converse with them solely in Spanish. Upon locating Mexico on the atlas, we deliberated on various travel options, including walking, biking, and flying. Our craft project highlighted the distinguished Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, celebrated for her portraits. Her profound quote, "I paint flowers so they will not die," inspired us. We subsequently crafted traditional Mexican tissue paper flowers.



Lunch featured Ms. Angie's flavorful soft shell tacos, accompanied by lively Mariachi music. The manipulative tables comprised multiple Mexican-themed counting activities designed to enhance number recognition, and the writing table showcased words such as sombrero, maracas, guitar, and cactus to reinforce letter recognition.

The commencement of our intergalactic adventure occurred on Tuesday, as we delved into the wonders of our solar system and planets. Donned in our NEW rainsuits, we explored the outdoors, much like astronauts. Each Sapling crafted a crayon rubbing on a tree, subsequently cutting them out to symbolize a planet. On Wednesday, we incorporated STEM learning into our rocket ship craftivity by introducing a straightforward pulley system, thereby simulating the sensation of launching into space. The Saplings engaged their fine motor skills in cutting, painting and sticking throughout the process of assembling their space craft. The manipulative tables incorporated a countdown and size sequencing exercise utilizing rocket ships. The writing tables comprised letter recognition tasks centered on the planets. The sensory bin consisted of a galaxy of stars with sight word recognition. We ended the week with paper airplane and hot air balloon activities. Engaging and promoting fine motor skill of folding, spatial reasoning, and early science concepts of lift and flight.



The NEW rain suits are Saplings approved!!



#### MESSY PLAY Benefits

1. Playing in the dirt encourages kids to be more creative and imaginative.
2. Playing in the dirt helps with the development of all five senses.
3. Playing in the dirt provides immunity against germs.
4. Playing in the dirt can lessen stress and anxiety.
5. Playing in the dirt kickstarts a love of the outdoors.



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

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

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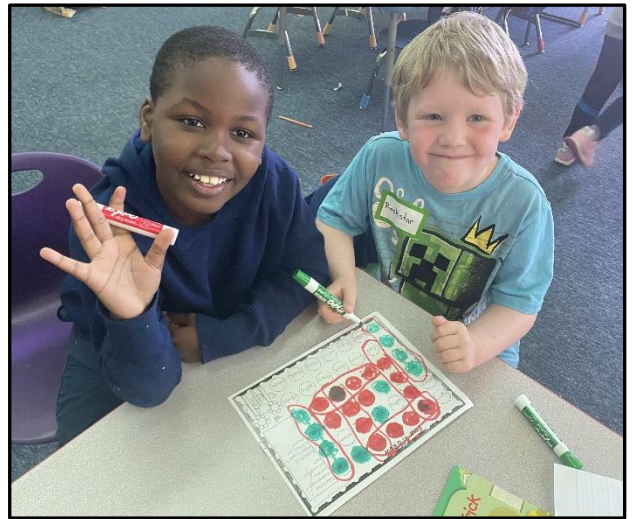


**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

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

The Kindergarteners and 1<sup>st</sup> graders finished FastBridge testing this week. They were all trying their hardest and taking their time! I am excited to share the results with you at the end of the school year. It is always fun to see growth from the beginning of the school year to the end!

K/1 has been doing a lot of writing as of lately. We work together to help each other with ideas, proper spelling, punctuation, handwriting, and spacing. They enjoy creating their own writing pieces and sharing them with the class. The students continued to review math this week. They worked with partners playing whole group and small group math games. They loved to show what they know!



Over the next few weeks of school K/1 will be spending a lot of time outside and walking down to the lake, proper layers are still expected! We planted 'Grass Pets' last week. The students are responsible for their own pet and have been taking it very seriously! We are learning about plants and animals in the classroom and outside the classroom. We received a shipment of 8 caterpillars that we are very excited to observe their transformation. They love to observe the changes in the plants and trees, explore and be curious, and work with each other!

Have a great weekend!

218-663-0170 ext. 2

[sara.knottskibgcs@gmail.com](mailto:sara.knottskibgcs@gmail.com)

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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

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

This week has been another full testing week! We have packed our days assessing how much we have grown this year and spending all extra free time outside! We even did our art outside for Mother's Day! We also had a Queen and King Day, a Playdough and Puzzle day, an Oreo day, new names, AND a mapping day. It was fun every day. Next week is Wolf Ridge. I sent out a packing list along with a small note about Wolf Ridge. Please reach out with any questions or concerns!

We did many word searches and reading passages during their independent work time this week in between reading with me and testing on the computer. Math was filled with review worksheets and



IXL time. Students did an amazing job with their testing this week and I am so proud of how serious they took this.

We are so close to the end of the year! Students have been a little bit of spring fever the last few weeks with emotions running high. Please make sure students have a full night's rest and lots of healthy snacks /food for the day. These two things solve most of our problems here at school.

218-663-0170 ext. 3

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

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**From Ms. Stacy Coronis**

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

What a warm and sunny week! We enjoyed as much time outside as we could this week! The fresh air and sunshine felt wonderful after wrapping up our math and reading Fastbridge testing this week. Fastbridge scores will be sent home along with your child's report card at the end of the school year.

This week in reading we completed a story map for a fiction story and then later in the week we used our social studies book for our nonfiction reading. Students read about the Southwest Region on our USA Tour and learned how to take notes from nonfiction text. This will be a useful skill in middle school! The kids did a great job!



In math we have spent time reviewing the math standards and wrapped up our goal of mastering math facts for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. For students who have not met this goal they will have extra time in school to practice. The students who have already mastered all of their facts will have time to apply that knowledge in math games.

In writing and science your child has chosen an animal to research and has completed a report and created an animal mystery poster. We will use this knowledge next week when we begin our state research for our end of the year USA Tour project. Stay tuned to find out what state your child has chosen!

Woohoo....Wolf Ridge is coming up next Wednesday, Thursday and Friday! A packing list was sent home on Monday so that you and your child can start gathering items needed for the trip. Please reach out if your family is in need of any supplies for the trip as Birch Grove can help supply items needed. Thank you for helping your child prepare for the Wolf Ridge trip!

218-663-0170 ext. 4

[stacy.coronisbgcs@gmail.com](mailto:stacy.coronisbgcs@gmail.com)