

Birch Grove Community School

School Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

At Birch Grove Community School at 4:00pm

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.

1.0 Call the Meeting to Order, Roll Call of Members, Quorum Declaration: 4:00pm

Members Present: Judy Motschenbacher, Sara Knottski, Sarena Crowley, Mary VanDoren, Skip Lamb and Ex-officio Diane Blanchette. Members Absent: none Visitors: Stephanie Olsen from VOA-MN

2.0 Reading of the Mission Statement: Read by Skip Lamb.

3.0 Review and Approve the Agenda: **Motion to approve made by Sarena Crowley, seconded by Mary VanDoren. Motion carried unanimously.**

4.0 Review and Approve Meeting Minutes from August 19, 2025 **Motion to approve made by Mary VanDoren, seconded by Skip Lamb. Motion carried unanimously.**

5.0 Declaration of Conflict of Interest: Mary VanDoren will abstain from voting on CD renewals

6.0 Community Comment: N/A

7.0 Financial Reports

7.1 Cash Flow Projection **Motion to approve made by Sarena Crowley, seconded Skip Lamb. Motion carried unanimously.**

7.2 Monthly Register **Motion to approve made by Sarena Crowley, seconded by Mary VanDoren. Motion carried unanimously.**

7.3 Revenue Report **Motion to approve made by Mary VanDoren, seconded by Skip Lamb. Motion carried unanimously.**

7.4 Expenditure Report **Motion to approve made by Sara Knottski, seconded by Mary VanDoren. Motion carried unanimously.**

7.5 Bank Statement **Motion to approve made by Sarena Crowley, seconded by Sara Knottski. Motion carried unanimously.**

7.6 Balance Sheet Report **Motion to approve made by Sarena Crowley, seconded by Mary VanDoren. Motion carried unanimously.**

8.0 Enrollment Updates: 2025-2026: Budgeted at 43, Enrolled 43 (4 students will not be with us all year)

9.0 Policy Review/Approval: Policy 103 COMPLAINTS – STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES, PARENTS, OTHER PERSONS **Motion to approve with changes made by Mary VanDoren, seconded by Sarena Crowley. Motion carried unanimously.**

10.0 Old Business

11.0 New Business

11.1 Accept Donations **Motion to approve donations made by Mary VanDoren, seconded by Skip Lamb. Motion carried unanimously.**

11.2 CD Renewal with GMSB: CDs in packet renewed on 8/2/ Short term CD for \$250,000 that is coming up for renewal does not renew automatically. Maturity date 10/3/2025. **Motion to approve at 3.75% or above at the term which we can get the highest rate made by Sara Knottski, seconded by Sarena Crowley. Mary VanDoren abstained. Judy Motschenbacher yea, Skip Lamb, yea, Sara Knottski yea, Sarena Crowley, yea. Motion carried.**

11.3 Board and Director Training: MN Charter Board Training & Development: *Safeguard Personnel Data and Respond to Data Requests*: Watched by all.

12.0 Academics Review: Reviewed 24-25 MCA Scores and Comparison to Resident Districts

13.0 Reports and Information

13.1 Administrative Report: Written report reviewed

13.2 Teachers Report: Good start of school. Painting in the woods this week with Mary LeBarge, DNR field day coming up for 4/5 graders and picture day this week.

- 13.3 Board Member Report: Meeting in Schroeder on 9/30
- 14.0 Committee Up-dates
- 14.1 Finance Committee: Met 30 minutes prior to this meeting
- 14.2 District Advisory & Academic Excellence Committee: N/A
- 14.3 Fund Raising Committee: N/A
- 15.0 School Board Reflection: *Present, On Time, Progress Made, Open & Honest, End on Time*
- 16.0 Set Date for the Next School Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 following the Annual Meeting that starts at 4:00 at BGCS.
- 17.0 Adjourn: **Motion to adjourn at 5:01pm made by Mary VanDoren, seconded by Skip Lamb. Motion carried unanimously.**

Birch Grove Community School Guidelines for Community Comments
Approved 5/20/2014

1. Anyone indicating a desire to speak will be acknowledged by the Board Chair. When called upon to speak, please state your name and topic.
2. All remarks shall be addressed to the board as a whole, not to any specific member(s) or to any person who is not a member of the board.
3. If there are a number of individuals present to speak on the same topic, please designate a spokesperson to summarize the issue.
4. Please provide at least 8 copies of any documents that you plan to share.
5. If you need electronic equipment or other assistance setting up, please contact the school and the school will try to accommodate your request(s).
6. Please answer the following questions (if appropriate) within your presentation:
 - a. What agenda item does the proposal relate to?
 - b. How would students benefit from the proposal?
 - c. How does the proposal impact the future educational services and financial responsibility of the school?
 - d. What data or research supports the proposal?
7. Please limit your comments to three minutes. Longer time may be granted at the discretion of the Board Chair.
8. If you have written comments, the board would like to have a copy, which will help them better understand, investigate and respond to your proposal.
9. During *Community Comments* the board and administration listen to comments and respond immediately whenever possible. If additional research is needed, responses will be shared at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. Board members or the administration may ask questions of you in order to gain a thorough understanding of your concern, suggestion or request.

10. Please be aware that disrespectful comments or comments of a personal nature, directed at an individual either by name or inference, will not be allowed. Personnel concerns should be directed first to the administration and then in writing to the board.
11. Please refrain from making comments at other times during the board meeting.
12. If you have a concern which arises after *Community Comments* have been presented, please make note of your concern and share it with the board chair following the meeting.
13. After *Community Comments* have been heard refrain from interrupting the meeting. Personal comments, opinions, grammatical corrections, etc. should not be made during the meeting.