

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

November 14, 2024

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, November 19 ~ School Board Meeting at 4:00

Wednesday, November 27 ~ No School - Staff PD Day

Thursday, November 28 & Friday, November 29 ~ No School-Thanksgiving Break

Monday, December 9 ~ Scholastic Book Fair Opens

Wednesday, December 11 ~ Winter Musical 1:00pm & 6:00pm

Tuesday, December 17 ~ School Board Meeting at 4:00

Monday, December 23 - Wednesday, January 1 ~ No School-Winter Break

Thursday, January 2 ~ School Resumes

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*

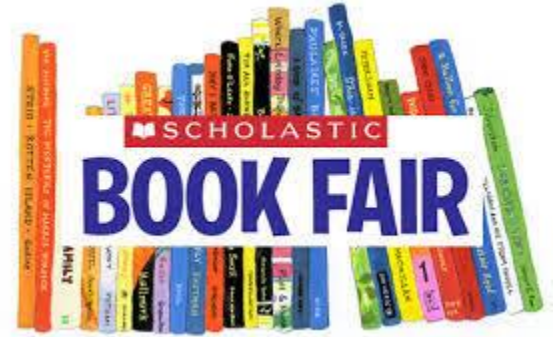
Quarter 1 and K-5 conferences are behind us and we have been moving on to Quarter 2 with gusto! It is in this quarter that we have a block of music for K-5 and begin working on the annual winter musical. Please mark Wednesday, December 11 on your calendars with two performances happening - one during school starting at 1:00 and one in the evening starting at 6:00. If you know that your child will be absent (a planned vacation, for example), please let us know so that we may work around this when it comes to assigning parts.

There was a test voice message that went out last week from the school messaging system on Friday to all Birch Grove families. If you didn't receive this call or text message, please



let us know. If you want to change or add phone numbers, please let us know this as well. Thank you!

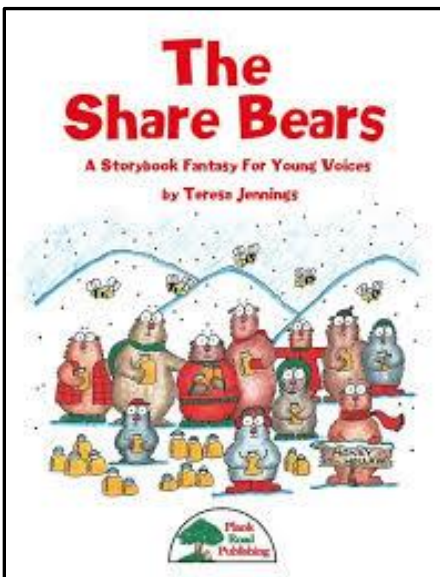
The annual Scholastic Holiday Bookfair will be open on Monday, December 9 during school hours 8:00- 3:30ish until the winter musical. You can shop during school hours without your child(ren) seeing you, just enter the fair through the front office – I can keep a secret! The fair will also be open the evening of the musical after the performance on Wednesday, December 11. Books make great holiday gifts! BGCS receives a % of sales in Scholastic Dollars that are used to buy school library books.



A few weeks ago, 2/3 students in Ms. Forster's class created cards for soldiers currently deployed overseas. Students included a picture with short messages and the cards were sent over so they would receive them just in time for Veterans Day! 2/3 also wrote letters of thanks to their teacher, Ms. Forster as well. *"Veterans Day is extra special to me because of my many friends that continue to serve as well as my own service. I spent 6 years (17 years to 23 years old) serving my state and my country in the Minnesota Army National Guard. I spent my time with a unit out of Duluth, which allowed me to participate within my community. I had always wanted to give back and serving gave me a chance to do so. I was blessed with the opportunity to meet many wonderful veterans. Thank you all for your sacrifice."* ~ Samantha Forster (Back row, far right). Birch Grove is very proud of her!

Save the date to support Birch Grove Community School and its many programs on Thursday, November 21, Give To The Max Day!

<https://www.givemn.org/.../Birch-Grove-Community-School...>



Please save the date: Wednesday, December 11th with two performances at 1:00pm and 6:00pm. K-5 students will be performing "The Share Bears" by Teresa Jennings. We look forward to another great musical and hope that you will all come to see it! Bring family, friends and neighbors to see a great show! Don't forget to shop at the annual Scholastic Holiday Book Fair after each of the performances or during the school day from December 5-11.

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!



If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us:

birchgrove@boreal.org ~ 218-663-0170

Website: 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. Emily VanDoren

Seedlings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

This week our theme was farm animals. We read both fiction and non-fiction books about farms to learn about the different animals that live on a farm and the different activities that may happen on a farm such as caring for animals and growing crops. We also identified the different animals and talked about their features and what they may provide for the farm such as milk and wool. We put together puzzles that required lining up pieces in number order from 1-5 to form the picture of different farm animals. We also did some prewriting practice by tracing dotted lines from a farmer to a pig. During art, we colored a picture of a farm and used rubber stamps to add some extra farm animals to our pictures.



“Old MacDonald” was a very popular song this week so we added it to our playlist that we listen to throughout the day. The Seedlings had a blast pretending to be different animals during our morning playtime by waddling like ducks, galloping like horses, hopping like bunnies, and stomping like cows.

218-663-0170 ext. 7

emily.vandorenbgcs@gmail.com

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

*Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

Veterans Day was observed by the Saplings on November 11. We talked about how it's a day when we come together to pay tribute to the brave men and women who have selflessly served in our armed forces, protecting our freedoms and way of life. We then produced artistic renditions of poppy flowers to remember those who served.

Since the winter is coming upon us, the rest of the week focused on preparing for winter. We started by introducing a BIG word, hibernation, and seeing who knew what it meant. We came up with questions to explore - do all animals hibernate? What does hibernation look like? How long does hibernation last? In addition to H or hibernate, we also focused on the letter B for bears, as they are the most commonly



associated hibernating animal. Our classroom was transformed with cozy bear dens for hibernation and featured bear den artwork with cotton balls representing snow, following our reading of The Bear Snores On by Karma Wilson.

The Saplings engaged in a letter identification game, feeding alphabet letters to a bear, and subsequently created animal habitats using sticks, pebbles, and brown play dough, showcasing their immersion in the activity. They really enjoyed both activities!

Winter preparations are underway for the Saplings, too. Through reading Froggy Gets Dressed by Jonathan London, winter readiness was demonstrated. Froggy wakes up during hibernation, eager to play in the snow. His mother emphasizes the importance of dressing warmly, including snow pants, jackets, boots, hats and mittens. To promote independence and fine motor skill mastery in our classroom I have started a Zipper List. Once they have mastered zipping their jacket their name will be on the Zipper List!

Your child's Take Home Folders included copies of the two songs the Saplings will be performing at the winter musical – they are the opening act! We have started practicing and I encourage you to practice with your child.

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

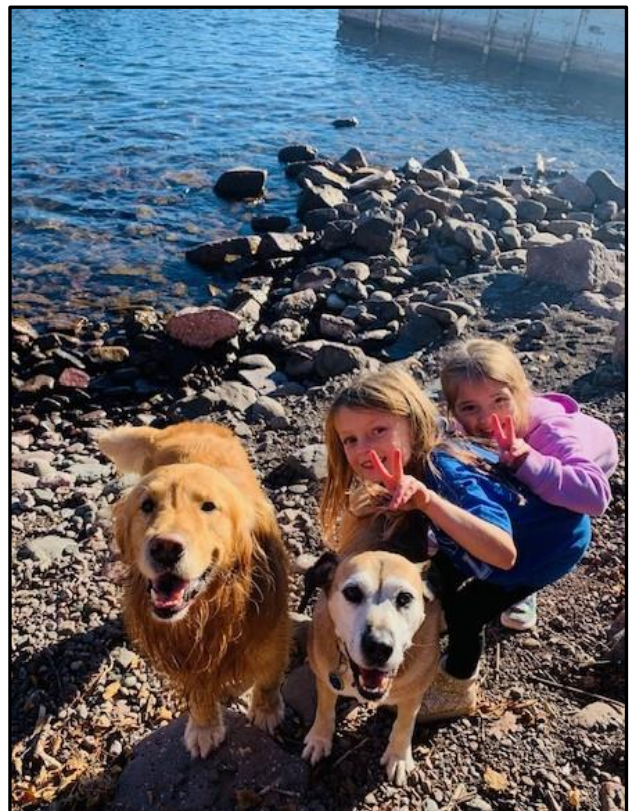
---

**From Ms. Sara Knottski**  
*K & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

We are approaching our 50<sup>th</sup> day of school so far this school year! Wow, how time flies! This week K/1 was introduced to a little spot of emotion. This is a book character that talks about what emotions are, what facial expressions are shown when feeling emotions, and what to do when emotions arise. The students enjoyed making their own spot of emotion and identifying emotions.

In Kindergarten, we focused on the letter P and K this week and the word to. We are starting to read words and practice reading sight words in books! In math, we are working on addition and subtraction stories, shapes, and teen numbers!

First grade learned about a biography and non-fiction text features. We also focused on l blends and are starting to get fluent with reading words with blends. In math, we are learning about math fact families.



Remember to keep reading with your student at home! Practice makes perfect! The students can practice their skills on Raz-Kids, Lexia, and Freckle as well!

218-663-0170 ext. 2

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

~~~~~  
From Ms. Samantha Forster

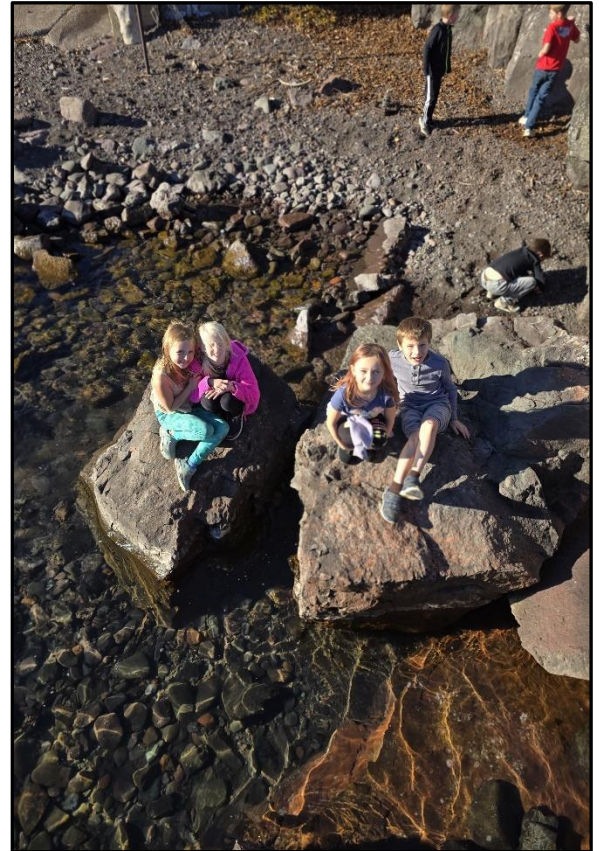
2nd & 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher

We are well into November already and the students are fully involved in our routine. We continue to add more onto each task and students love the responsibility of having more. Our focus in social studies was finishing up our habitat poster and creating timelines with the terminology decade, century, and millennia. Students have been learning the importance of their “best work” and also reflecting upon their own work. We spent time exploring pop art by a Brazilian artist named Roberto Britto. This was a lot of fun and included learning a new type of art. We started learning the music for our winter musical this year. It is called Share Bears and you can look it up on Youtube if your student would like to practice at home.

Reading has been requiring more stamina and fluency as we move through this second unit. Students are having to draw from prior knowledge to master the skills. We have been learning more strategies on how to decode multisyllabic words and this has been so fun to watch. We are writing a narrative paragraph about a special event. Writing is very important for reading comprehension and is a necessary skill throughout life. We spend time revising and editing each other's work as well as learning how to properly construct a paragraph. The sentence writing routine that we focus on each morning helps students apply those skills into building more complex sentences and paragraphs.

We are finishing unit 2 in math this week for both grades and taking our unit 2 assessment. Third grade has been working on a various number of skills but most importantly, building fluency with their multiplication and division facts. Second grade has been working with money and adding three to four two-digit numbers. I split our groups apart even farther to ensure that I am meeting each student where they are. This will continue throughout unit 3. If your student would like to practice their skills at home, please refer to the IXL sign on sheet I sent home or email me for a replacement. Their “arena” is a perfect place to practice skills that they haven’t mastered yet.

Reach out with any questions or concerns. Continue to pack warm items for students as temperatures are gradually becoming lower and we love our outside play time!



218-663-0170 ext. 3

samantha.forsterbgcs@gmail.com

From Ms. Stacy Coronis

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

In the 4/5 classroom the theme this week has been responsibility. We have spent time practicing how to keep our supplies organized and in the correct places so that we can find them when needed. Please help at home by making sure that your child brings the following items back and forth each day from home to school; take-home folder, pencil pouch and book bag. All students should be reading at home for 30 minutes, preferably reading the chapter book they bring home each night in their book bag. Most students should spend 5 minutes each night practicing their math facts. (Students who have mastered all of their basic math facts will not have this as homework.) We are also practicing the skill of staying focused to complete work in a timely and responsible way. One last item that falls under the theme of responsibility is bringing a jacket, hat and mittens/gloves to school each day now that the weather is getting cooler. This week of responsibility has proved to be a challenging, but necessary part of learning this week and the class is working hard to be more responsible. Thank you so much for making sure that your child leaves home ready for a day of learning.

In math both grade levels have begun new units of study. 4th graders are working on multi-digit multiplication and 5th graders have started a unit on decimals. In reading both grade levels are working on identifying story elements in fictional text. We have started a new schedule for our specialist and on most Wednesdays we will have an art lesson and on Thursdays we will have music class. In social studies we are wrapping up our mapping unit with a thematic project called Pirate Island and we will have a PIRATE DAY on Monday! The projects will come home next week and they look amazing!!

218-663-0170 ext. 4

stacy.coronisbgcs@gmail.com

