



## Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

**November 1, 2023**

### Dates to Remember:

Thursday, November 2 ~ No School - Teacher Workshop  
Friday, November 3 ~ No School - Teacher Workshop & End of Qtr. 1  
Monday, November 6 - Friday, November 10 ~ Parent-Teacher Conferences  
Tuesday, November 21 ~ School Board Meeting at 5:30  
Wednesday, November 22 - Friday, November 24 ~ No School

### **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:**

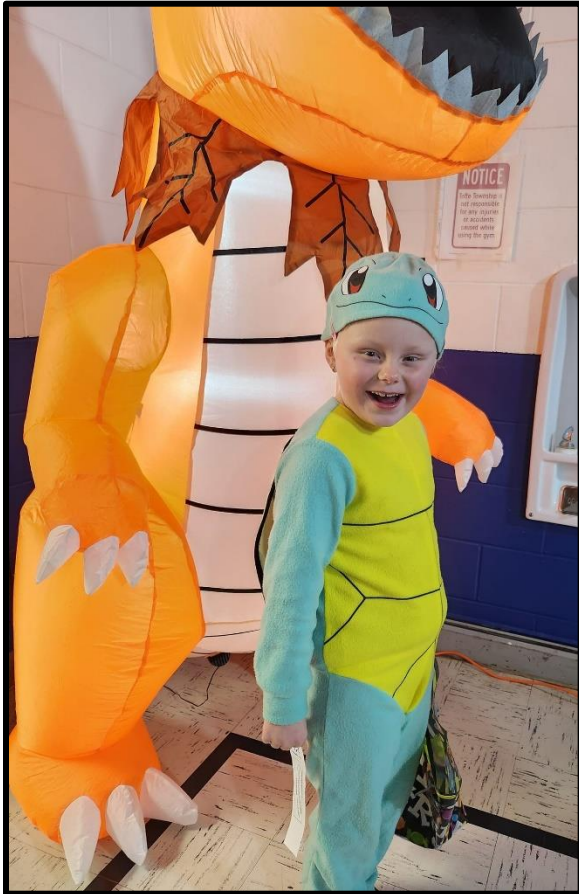
*Director, Birch Grove Community School  
Lead Coordinator, Birch Grove Community Service*

It has been another short but busy week here at Birch Grove! The annual Halloween Carnival was on Sunday with the majority of staff volunteering their time and with many Birch Grove students and Saplings enjoying this special event. This set the tone for the three-day week with energy, excitement and anticipation for Halloween and all of the fun that can come with this day and night. We hope that your child enjoyed the short week!

We will be ending this week today, with no school on Thursday or Friday, as teachers will be preparing report cards and getting ready for parent-teacher conferences that will be held next week. As always, it is a school goal to have 100% participation from parents/guardians at school conferences. Please make every effort to participate, even if it means a



phone call instead of meeting in person or on-line. Communication with parents/guardians is essential in our partnership!



Thank you to all the attended the annual Halloween Carnival at Birch Grove! Please read through this list to see who helped to make this event happen!

Thank you for donations from: Cook County Home Center, Johnson's Foods, Caribou Highlands, Moguls Grille & Tap, Tofte Holiday, Tofte General Store, Crosby Bakery, Frito Lay, and the Grand Marais State Bank-Tofte!

Thank you to volunteers: Angie Fernlund, Gretta Hall, Becky Fernlund, Dan Dietzmann, Laurie Roberts, Dan Roberts, Gary Hansen, Jon Hanno, Gayle Grinnell, Gabby Grinnell, Sarena Crowley, Sam Crowley, Judy Motschenbacher, Jenny Buckman, Sara Silence, Sara Knottski, Melissa Knottski, Sue Lizakowski, Ada Schlienz-Hall, Samantha McQuatters-Spangle, Lonna Lahti, Neveah Lahti, Andrea Tofte, Bjorn Tofte, Rose Thorson, Erin O'Brien, Nathan Fueston, Silvia Duclos, Alisha Buckman, Patrick Scully, Anne Deneen, Heather Belmore, Tracy Skully, Rista Sharma-Connor, Emily VanDoren and Pete Knudsen for cleanup after everyone left! Couldn't have done it without all these businesses and folks.

Thank you so much to the Tofte Forest Service (our next-door neighbor) for hosting another special Halloween trick or treat event for our students! The children loved walking through the building and showing off their costumes and, of course, they loved getting treats! For more pictures go to the school Facebook page: [Birch Grove Community School and Community Services #4145 | Facebook](#)







Lantern Lunch starts next week and will continue every Wednesday until spring. This is a fun way to make up for not eating outside on Wednesdays. We know that a lot of children are looking forward to this and we hope that they will look back on these days with fond memories! And to think it all started with a power outage... 😊

The weather is turning! Please remember that we go outside every day in all but the most extreme weather. K-5 and Saplings should be coming to school with outside wear that matches the weather. Right now, children do not need to wear snowpants or snow boots, but as soon as we start seeing the white stuff, please send them in full gear. Because we go outside often and sometimes multiple times a day, please send gloves that are waterproof. It is no fun if you have to put on gloves that are wet from going outside earlier in the day. If you need outside gear for your child, please let us know!

Please have your child read (or be read to) a minimum of 20-30 minutes per day/night. 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](mailto:birchgrove@boreal.org) ~ 218-663-0170

Website: [www.birchgroveschool.com](http://www.birchgroveschool.com)

School Spirit Store Coupon Link: <https://www.logosoftwear.com/coupons.php>

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



**From Lead Teacher Ms. Rista Sharma-Connor, Ms. Ari Summerfield, Ms. Jessica Klemmer**  
*Sapling Teachers, Birch Grove Community Service*

It's been a very busy and fun short week. Thank you to all that visited the Saplings room on Sunday for the Halloween Carnival, it was a really good time making potions with the children. The Saplings are still really enjoying hammering tees in a couple of big pumpkins and increasing their hand/eye coordination. So fun!

The focus of the week was "friendship". We talked about what "friendship" means and what some characteristics of a good friend are. We read books "How I Found a Friend", "The Monster Who Lost His Mean" and "That's What Friends Are For" regarding the topic. Most of the time today was spent by the campfire playing and roasting smores with our friends!

We also had a classroom meeting regarding proper ways and the order of getting our snow gear on so that we are safe and warm for the upcoming low temperatures. It has been a pleasure watching them practice these skills and also seeing them help each other out. It will only get better every day!

Have a great weekend!

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

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

Conferences are next week! If you have yet to sign up for a time slot please do so before Friday at 9 pm. I will have some preparations to do and last-minute signups will be hard to get ready for.

The first graders learned about the double letters ss, ff, ll, ck, and zz. In math, they are learning how to count on and count down to add and subtract. The Kindergarteners learned about the letter P. We also practiced some of the letters we had already learned and put them together to sound out words! In math, we are practicing addition and subtraction and learning about teen numbers.

With the weather change this week I wanted to remind you to practice self-help skills at home. Students should be able to put on most of their winter attire independently. It is quite time-consuming to help 22 children bundle up! In addition, please make sure things fit correctly and they do their job of keeping your child warm! Waterproof clothing is helpful!

Have a fantastic long weekend!

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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

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

We have had a fun-filled week at school! We had a Halloween party and two birthdays! I sent out the sign up link for conferences in an email. Please sign up via that link. If you need help, please contact me separately. I would like to talk to each family next week (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.)

In math, third graders finished up our multiplication facts and are continuing to make our “gardens” to find the area. Each day, students are getting better and better at their fact fluency. Second graders started with place value and expanded form. This is a tricky concept so we will be working with it often in the next few weeks.

We continue to work through different language concepts. We have been working through Read Works articles, leveled readers, and different books in our curriculum. I am impressed at each student’s comprehension and their work ethic. I hear “This is hard but I am going to keep trying” often while working with students.

We started a mapping unit this week in class as well. They are learning different map skills and where to find different things on a map. They learned that they can make a map of anything, which makes them all pretty excited. This unit will continue into next week.

Please reach out with any questions and sign up for conferences if you haven’t yet! When reaching out about a student, please also ensure that Ms. Blanchette and I are copied into the email in case one of us is gone.

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**From Ms. Laurie Roberts**

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

Our week started out with the Halloween Carnival, where I got to greet many families at the Cake Walk, some for the first time. The fun continued on Halloween during the afternoon party when we went Trick or Treating on Tuesday at the Forest Service, played games, did an art project, and built catapults to launch candy corn into a target. It has been a week of fun and smiles!

We were also able to work hard in the classroom in between our fun times. In language arts, one of the things both grades are working on at different levels is an important part of grammar - verb tense. Students are learning about the importance of verb tense in their writing. It is one of the things that can really make writing confusing for the reader if it is not correct, and it takes a lot of practice to master. Now that students know more about what it is and how it works, we will continue to work on it during our writing workshops throughout the year.

In math the 4th graders are practicing their multi-digit multiplication, and should be ready for an assessment soon. The 5th graders started a new unit on multiplying fractions. Multiplication in general has been a big part of math in our classroom this year, so I try to use every opportunity to help the students master their multiplication facts. If anyone would like to borrow some multiplication flashcards, just let me know and I will send some home with your child.

Have a nice, long weekend, and I look forward to chatting with families during conferences next week!

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4/5 writing children's books during Writer's Workshop.