



Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

February 8, 2024

Dates to Remember:

Friday, February 9 ~ No School - Staff PD/Workshop

Wednesday, February 14 ~ Valentine's Day

Thursday, February 15 ~ 100th Day of School!

Monday, February 19 ~ No School - Staff PD/Workshop

Tuesday, February 20 ~ BGCS School Board Meeting @ 4:00

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*

This is a short week with no school tomorrow, Friday, February 9. Please keep your child reading at home for a minimum of 20-30 minutes per day/night, especially on non-school days. Added bonus: students get a ticket for every 20 minutes of reading for Tickets To Treasures, so please use the log sheets that were sent home.

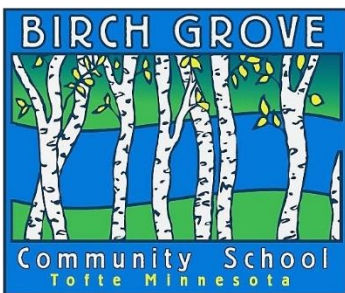
We continue to have students out due to illness - thankfully most of our staff was back this week. Please keep your child home if they are ill so as not to spread illness throughout Birch Grove, or anywhere else. We continue to keep the classroom air purifiers on, windows open, cleaning/sanitizing happens daily, and we encourage proper handwashing.



While summer seems to be a bit out there yet, I have had an unusual number of early inquiries about our summer programming coming from non-Birch Grove families. Please start thinking about if you will be using Campsite Kids (K-5) and/or Summer Saplings (ages 3-5) this summer. Space is limited for both of these programs, but as always, registration forms go out to Birch Grove families first. Please also keep in mind that the Arrowhead routes, both Lake and Cook County, will continue to run during the summer just as they do now during the school year – same stops, same times. However, if you plan to utilize this service during the summer, you will have to pay \$3 per child to and from Birch Grove. Tickets can be purchased in advance from the drivers, or you may pay by cash or check on the spot. Because transportation will be available, slots may fill up even faster than normal. Registration will come out to BGCS families in late March/early April to give BG families enough time to sign up and then to give the general public time to sign up before the first day of programming in June.



Summer 2024
Campsite Kids &
Summer Saplings



Birch Grove Community School is looking to expand our team by adding another K-5 paraprofessional. Do you know someone who would be great in this position? Please refer them to our website to check out this employment opportunity!

<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Employment-Opportunities>

Birch Grove will be celebrating Valentine's Day with a classroom card exchange. Families should have received information last week about the exchange that included a list of student names. Supplies and materials to make cards was offered, so if you still need materials to make cards at home, please let us know and we will send supplies home with your child. **This is a great opportunity for students to practice handwriting!**



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 ~ 218-663-0170

Website: www.birchgroveschool.com

School Spirit Store Link: <https://birchgrove.logosoftware.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](#)



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**From Ms. Rista Sharma-Connor**

*Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

We are learning the letter "Z" for Zen and Saplings sounded it out and practiced writing it. Brainstorming a list of words that starts with the letter Z was tricky, but we still had fun with it. The Saplings favorite word was "Zoo" and least favorite was "Zucchini"!

We have also been having conversations about when and where we are expected to be in Zen/calm mode. It's always good to reiterate these conversations at home as well.

We have opened up a pretend flower shop at the Pretend Center where Saplings are practicing buying and giving flowers for a person they admire and appreciate. They seem to be enjoying this!

In science, we learned the effect of heat as well as the differences between solids, liquids, and gases. After learning about solids, liquids and gases, the Saplings tried to find these different states of matter in our environment. They also created rainbow heart crayons by melting used broken crayons to see the effect of heat first hand. They were so happy with their creations!

Saplings are keeping a close look at the calendar and counting days during circle time as Valentine's Day approaches and they are eager to spread the love. The Saplings will be having a Valentine card exchange on Wednesday, February 14th and they are looking forward to it.

Have a Zen weekend!

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From Ms. Sara Knottski

K & 1st Grade Elementary Teacher

The Kindergarteners learned about the letter sound V this week. We practiced building letters with pipe cleaners! The first graders are learning about long vowels. We practiced identifying sounds for vowel teams. We read a story about a big trip a goat takes. We practiced our inferring skills to understand the story.

In math, 1st graders are learning about data and graphing. We practiced collecting data and representing it in a bar graph. We are learning about how to compare and analyze the data.

Kindergarteners are learning about different ways to make ten, graphing, and numbers up to 100. We played a variety of games to practice our math facts.

We started a new science unit this week. Students learned about the sun and how it affects the weather. We will continue this unit by learning about shadows, the moon, and space!

Reminder: Valentine's Day is next week. K/1 will have a card exchange on Wednesday, February 14th. If your child wants to make cards, I can supply paper and coloring materials!

It will be the 100th day of next Thursday, the 15th. Be on the lookout for the note about our celebration!

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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

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

This week was such a short but productive week. We had a little bit of fun playing in the last bits of the snow. We are finishing up parts of units so it was a good wrap up week.

In math, each grade level finished Unit 5 in the curriculum. Both grades spent the last two days reviewing concepts and doing activities like surveying and collecting data to utilize in a bar graph. Third grade reviewed fractions in word problems. Second Grade reviewed 2 step word problems and multi-digit subtraction.

In reading, we spent time reading and analyzing texts. "The Signmakers's Assistant" was a hit with students and it was a good way that illustrations help enhance the experience of the literature while mentioning how not following all people's directions is a good thing. I have been dividing into smaller groups to read aloud or to touch on skills that students need help with in Lexia.

We spent time exploring MN history, time lines, and water maps this week in social studies. We utilized the National Geographic website to explore water shortages and watched videos on PBS about MN history. We made our own timeline and used the computers to enhance our research abilities. We learned about pointillism in art and created in our own masterpieces. I have created a binder for all the students highlights and I will send it home at the end of the year with all this art and other things!

Remember to be reading with your student and asking those important comprehension questions. Reading is a growth activity and requires mistakes to be made in the process. It is important for the students to mess up along the way to achieving this skill. Your support and encouragement along the way is exactly what they need!

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From Ms. Laurie Roberts

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

The fourth and fifth graders started a new geology unit in science, and focused on rocks and minerals this week. Students have had fun sorting and testing to see if the specimens we have in the classroom are rocks or minerals. They have done a lot of reading and writing on this subject. Next week, they will move on to types of rocks and the rock cycle.

In math, the fourth graders are now successfully adding and subtracting fractions. The fifth graders are learning how to break down story problems so that they can create equations and solve them. They have also been given equations that they need to write a word problem for. Both grades are reviewing and memorizing the multiplication facts. A few students brought home flashcards to practice. Please make sure they work on these and return them to school when finished.

Students are reading every day in school. Students are working through their reading curriculum, working on the online learning platform Lexia, reading books of choice, and also reading in science and social studies. It may seem like a lot of reading, but students can become even better readers if they read for at least 20 minutes a day at home. Research says that we need to know over 10,000 words to be fluent in the English language. That is a lot of words! Most of us need to see them repeatedly to be able to read, write, and speak them. Any extra time spent reading is very helpful. Also, students can earn one Ticket to Treasure for every 20 minutes of reading at home. Be sure to sign the reading log that was sent home in their folders.

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