

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

September 26, 2024

Dates to Remember:

Monday, September 30 ~ No School, PD/Workshop for Staff

Tuesday, October 1 ~ BGCS Hosting the DNR Field Day! 4/5 are Attending!

Thursday, October 10 ~ Fire Prevention Week – Annual Tofte Fire & Rescue Visit!

Tuesday, October 15 ~ Annual Board Meeting, School Board Elections @ 4:00, followed
by the Regular Board Meeting

Thursday, October 17 & Friday, October 18 ~ MEA – No School

Friday, October 25 ~ VOA, School Authorizer, Fall Site Visit

Sunday, October 27 ~ Annual Halloween Carnival 2:00-4:00

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

It was a busy week here at Birch Grove!

The week started out with school pictures. All K-5, Saplings and Seedlings that were present had their picture taken, even if no envelope was turned in. If you still want to order pictures, you can find Bruce Johnson's contact information later in this newsletter.

All classrooms continue to be busy settling into the new school year and getting to work. Should you have any questions at this early point in the year, please feel free to reach out – we are all open to speaking with you!

The National Theater for Children arrived today and put on a performance for K-5 this morning about electricity. The actors were both informative and engaging! Ask your child what they learned today! K-5 was an excellent audience – very attentive and respectful – they did very well.

Please note that there is no school next week on Monday, September 30, as it is a schedule staff professional development day. If there is no school for K-5, there is also no Saplings or Seedlings.

Next week on Tuesday, October 1, Birch Grove Community will be hosting the annual DNR Field Day for 5th graders (both 4th and 5th graders will be participating from BGCS). 5th graders from Sawtooth Mountain and Great Expectations will also be attending. Please be sure to send a cold lunch from home on this day as all participants will be eating lunch outside at the Campsite at noon. We look forward to this eventful day!

Here are a few more pictures of K-5 Painting in the Woods with Mary LaBerge. More pictures can be found on the school Facebook page.





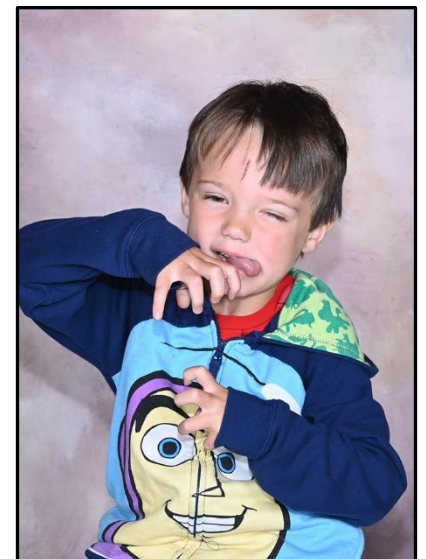
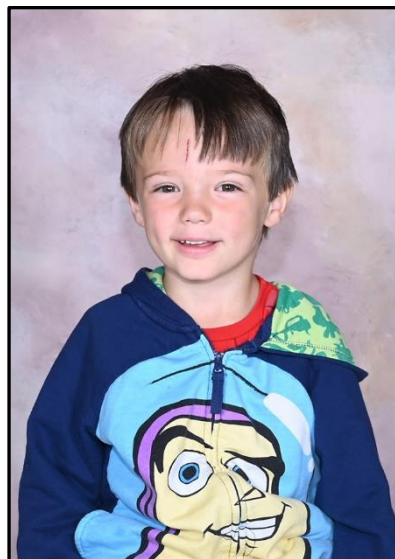
Sponsored by Minnesota Power, the National Theater for Children performed for Birch Grove K-5 students today. The children learned about how we use electricity everyday, how important it is, the different ways electricity is generated, and that electricity is useful, but can be dangerous. They also learned about how to be safe around electricity at school and at home.



Birch Buddies ~ Fall HIKE! #3: Oberg Mountain.
The journey, the view, and the positive bonds forming ~ SPECTACULAR!

3 more hikes remain of the fall session:
October 7 White Sky and Agnus Lake - 6:00 Pick Up
October 14 Temperance - 5:30 Pick Up
October 21 School to Tofte Peak - 6:00 Pick Up

School pictures were taken this week on Monday. All who were present this day had their picture taken, even if an envelope was not turned in. Should you still want to order pictures, please contact Bruce Johnson at: brucejohnsonphoto@gmail.com
Smile!....and....Silly Face!



School board elections are on Tuesday, October 15. There are 2 seats up for re-election: Skip Lamb and Sarena Crowley. While no one is running against them, we are still required to go through the motions of an election. 1 ballot will be sent home to all K-5 families, K-5 employees, and current school board members. Families will find their ballot in an envelope sent home in Take Home Folders in October. Please fill out your ballot and return in the folder, or you can drop off here at Birch Grove.

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](https://www.facebook.com/Birch-Grove-Community-School-and-Community-Services-4145/)



From Ms. Emily VanDoren

Seedlings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

Our theme of the week was apples! We began the week by learning that apples grow on trees. We looked at pictures of apples growing on trees and then colored our own apple trees. We talked about how the seeds inside of an apple could grow into a tree that would grow more apples. We walked down by the Tofte Community Garden and saw all the apple trees that will one day grow big and produce apples. Then we took a walk to the woods next to the tennis court to see the BIG apple tree with lots of apples growing.



We had a lot of fun with different apple themed crafts this week. We worked our fine motor skills by tearing red construction paper to glue down to an outline of an apple. We picked a few apples from the apple tree and used them as stamps with paint.

We played an apple match game, completed an apple tree puzzle, and learned a new apple song to practice our counting. We saved one of the apples that we picked and did a taste test. Boy, were they sour! Some of the Seedlings enjoyed the apples and others made some silly faces.

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**From Ms. Pam Holm**

*Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

Sapling enjoyed an engaging DAPPLE APPLE themed experience this week, focusing on all things related to apples.

Our Dramatic Play was transformed into an apple orchard, inspiring dialogue on customer service and apple-based goods like pies, cider and butter. Many conversations were had regarding who liked apples, the parts of an apple, colors of apples, if apples float, who eats apples, etc. We discussed how apples came to America by reading Johnny Apple Seed by Steven Kellogg.

Each Sapling peeled an apple with an apple peeler. We then utilized the peels as rulers to measure both individuals and objects around the room. We all tasted red, green and yellow apples and had a vote on which was our favorite. We talked about the way the apples tasted, how they were the same, if they were different, and why they were our favorites. The Yellow Honeycrisp won!

After reading From Seed To Apple Tree by Steven Anderson we worked together to create the circle life cycle of an apple. This project not only addressed the science behind apple parts: stem, skin, flesh and pips (seeds), but addressed positional words and following directions as well.

Saplings sang various apple themed songs and fingerplays. A favorite was the fingerplay "10 Red Apples Growing on a Tree", where they predicted the location of the worm behind one of the apples. This sparked an impromptu art project focusing on apples and worms. Multiple educational manipulatives were offered, such as categorizing apples by size and color, apple and seed counting, sensory apple pie making bin and manipulatives based on Ten Apples up on Top by Theo LeSieg.

The *highlight* of the week was baking apple pie! Young children love doing "grown-up" things...and baking is a prime example. This activity provided a wonderful mixture of learning opportunities, demonstrated by Saplings' personal apple pies creations. They practiced fine motor skills, followed sequential steps, worked on the task through completion, and more...while producing some flavorful apple pie! In addition, paper plate apple pies were crafted this week. They used real apples to stamp the filling and then applied the paper-woven lattice crust on top.



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From Ms. Sara Knottski

K & 1st Grade Elementary Teacher

Fall is in the air and K/1 is excited about the change in seasons! We went on a nature hike this week to collect and press leaves for a later art project. We also used our science skills to classify and sort leaves by shape, size, color, and type. We look forward to more fun science, math, and reading fall activities.

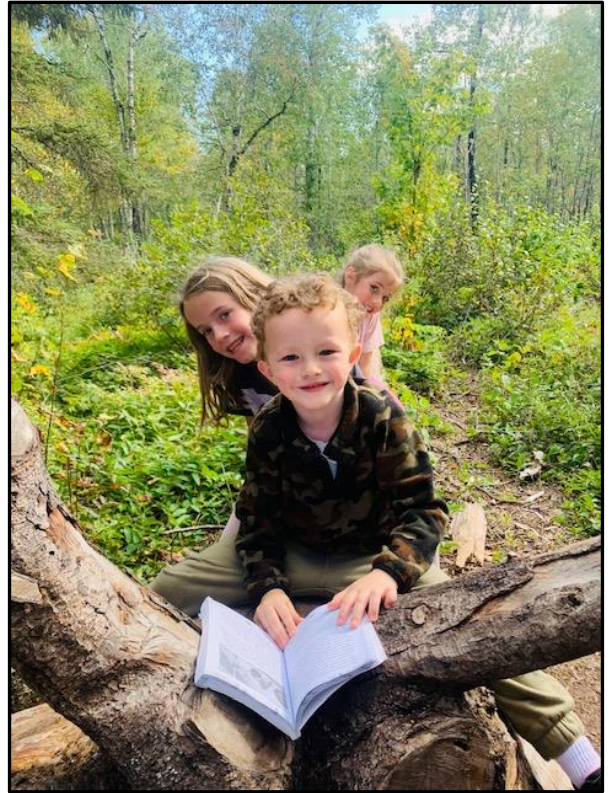
Kindergarten focused on the letter g and numbers up to 10. We are really getting good at learning new letters and numbers. We are focusing and responding well. We also read some books and focused on the main idea of a book. The first graders continue to practice numbers and letters. We are working on blending letters together to read words and reviewing sight words. We read a few stories and focused on understanding a character's actions.

We started library last week. We will have it every Thursday. Please make sure the books are treated kindly and returned on Thursday so the kids can check out new ones!

Students are not allowed to bring toys to school or on the bus. Please remind them of this rule and check their backpack for toys they may try to sneak in. As always feel free to contact me by phone, email, or in person if you have any questions!

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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

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

This week has been the first of the true fall weather and the students have been tracking this with their daily weather check! On Tuesday, we saw that the day was almost exactly 12 hours of daylight so we had multiple discussions on why this is happening and how it is starting to affect the weather. We did an art project inspired by the Yukon artist Ted Harrison. This week is our last week exploring the North American continent then we will be traveling to Europe! In math, in second grade we continued reviewing addition and subtraction strategies while learning how to apply these skills more complex math problems. The third graders reviewed their 2, 5, 10, and 9 multiplication and division facts. They applied this knowledge to word problems and creating math mountains with their facts. This fluency will help them as they advance through upper elementary.

In reading, we have fell into a groove with our literacy rotations. Everyone has started to open up with classroom discussions and this has helped with their comprehension of stories. I introduced the format of a friendly letter and we will continue using expanding on this throughout the fall. Vocabulary remains an important aspect in our classroom and we started adding our own words on the vocab word wall. Vocabulary words are very important when learning to read so encourage your students to explore and get excited about words!

Please send your child in layers as it starts to get cooler. Afternoons are warm but mornings can be chilly still. Please reach out with any concerns or questions. Thank you!

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From Ms. Stacy Coronis

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

Woohoo! We have our new class pet hamster, Lily, in our room! She arrived at our classroom on Thursday and is adjusting very well. The students loved watching her in her habitat as she munched on her treats, climbed her tunnel and ran in her wheel. On Friday she zipped around our classroom in her ball and made everyone laugh! Lily will come out of her cage to play more and more as she gets used to being in our classroom.

This past week the 4th graders have been reviewing rounding and comparing big numbers in math class and in reading they have been discussing the three types of Author's Purpose for writing which include entertaining, informing and/or persuading their readers. We spent time on our biography story about Martin Luther King Jr. in our reading book and decided that the author was informing us about the man he was and the work he did to help others. The 5th graders have been reviewing fractions in math class and learned how to create equivalent fractions using picture models. In reading they spent time reviewing the story structure of fiction stories.



All students are learning map skills which will lead up to a final mapping project called "Pirate Island". We practiced reading maps using the compass rose and the key. Students are already

planning the theme of the island that they will create after we master the mapping skills in our social studies class.

All students are in the middle of their fall math and reading assessments which are called the Fastbridge tests. We will look at the data from these tests at your child's fall conference and set goals for the school year. I have been impressed with the effort and patience the class has shown on the assessments so far.

Finally, you should have received an email letting you know that Birch Grove is pleased to be hosting a DNR Field Event for 5th graders from many schools. **Everyone in our class will be able to participate in this all-day outdoor event. Please send your child to school with a cold lunch from home on Tuesday and Wednesday of next week.**

Thank you so much!

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