

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

October 24, 2024

Dates to Remember:

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

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

Thursday, October 31 ~ Trick or Treating at the Tofta Forest Service 1:00

Friday, November 1 ~ No School - Staff Workshop

Monday, November 4 ~ No School - Staff Workshop

Tuesday, November 5 - Friday, November 8 ~ K-5 Conferences

Wednesday, November 27 ~ No School - Staff PD Day

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

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*

October is moving along, with the annual PTO Halloween Carnival this weekend and Halloween itself next week on Friday. We hope to see you all at the carnival on Sunday from 2:00-4:00! Please note that we have half of the volunteers that are needed to run the event. Please contact friends, family and neighbors and ask if they can volunteer! BGCS students can wear whatever costume they desire to the carnival, or no costume at all. At school on Friday, however, there are some restrictions on what can be worn. Please NO costumes that include weapons of any type - if play weapons are brought to school, they will be stored in lockers all day and sent home in backpacks at the end of the day. Also, please NO bloody or gory costumes - if they are sent to school, students will not be allowed to wear them. Please pack costumes in back packs.



Students will have a quick minute to put costumes on in the afternoon just prior to the trip to the Tofte Forest Service, where students will go Trick-or-Treating down the halls of the forest service building. Following this special treat, students will have a little party in each of their classrooms to end the day.



A reminder that there is no school on Friday, November 1 and Monday, November 4. Teachers will be completing student report cards and preparing for parent-teacher conferences. Dates for conferences are below.



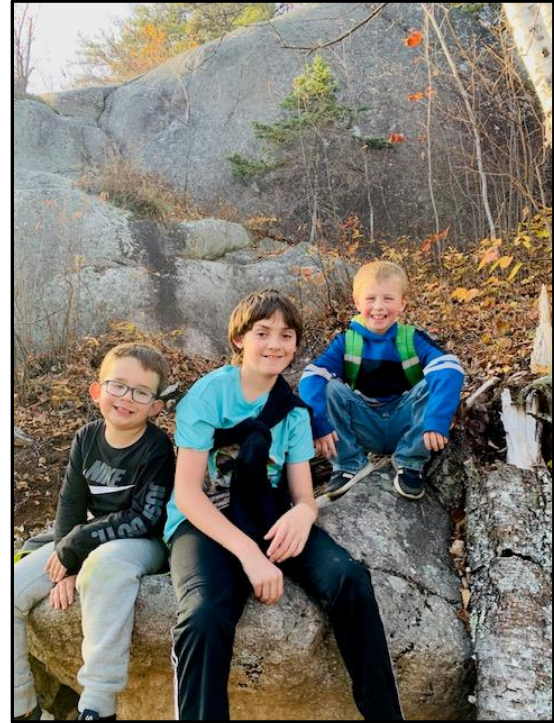
K-5 parent-teacher conferences are coming up November 5-9. Please watch for an email link to sign up for a time to confer with your child's teacher. We look forward to sharing with you!

K-5 teachers engaged in their first classroom observations this week with Laurie Roberts, former BGCS teacher, and new hire to the Q-Comp (Quality Compensation) Program. Each BGCS teacher is observed, and also observe their peers, 3 times annually with follow up sessions of discussion with a written reflection. Ms. Roberts rounds out the team with an "outside" perspective drawing on her 30+ years of teaching. We are so grateful that she is a part of this spectacular team - plus, we have missed her lots!



Many thanks to the Tofte General Store for donating PUMPKINS again! So many PUMPKINS! It makes our hallway look fall festive! The Tofte General Store has donated pumpkins in October for so many years now that the children start asking about it in September! Please stop at the Tofte General Store and say thanks from BGCS!





The last hike of the Birch Buddies ~ *HIKE!* fall session was Carlton Peak! It was great to have a hike that was close to home and ended at Birch Grove. 😊 Thanks to all of the staff and students that participated in this great program. Everyone made connection with each other as well as the beauty that surrounds us on the shore. Stay tuned to the newsletter for information on a winter session of Birch Buddies ~ *HIKE!*



We have 13 of 26 volunteer spots filled!

The Annual BG PTO Halloween Carnival – VOLUNTEERS are NEEDED! Please consider volunteering for the carnival that is on Sunday, October 27 from 2:00-4:00. Lots of volunteers are needed to pull this annual event off. For those BGCS families that are planning on attending and enjoying the carnival with their child(ren), perhaps consider bringing two adults to the carnival so that one can enjoy the carnival with your child(ren) while the other volunteers to work, then change places halfway through the carnival! It's a win-win for everyone! Also, be sure to let grandparents, neighbors and friends know. The volunteer activities are easy to do, and consider the joy you will be bringing to many children! Please go to this link to sign up to volunteer! Volunteers must be 16+ <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C45AAA92AA2FF2-52035793-bgcs>



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](#)



THE ANNUAL BIRCH GROVE HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL!



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

2:00 - 4:00

AT BIRCH GROVE IN TOFTE



- ~ FUN FOR ALL AGES!
- ~ KIDS GAMES!
- ~ WIN PRIZES!
- ~ CAKE WALK!
- ~ COOKIE DECORATING!
- ~ FABULOUS FOODS!
- ~ BINGO! WITH CASH PRIZES FROM
GRAND MARAIS STATE BANK~TOFTE



**WEAR A COSTUME (OR NOT) AND
BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY!**



**IT WILL BE A SPOOKTACULAR TIME!
RAIN, SHINE, OR SNOWFLAKE!**



**CARNIVAL TICKETS ARE \$5 EACH - CASH OR CHECK ONLY.
MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES CAN BE ENJOYED FROM ONE TICKET.**



**STACY'S NORTH SHORE TREATS:
CASH, CHECK, CREDIT CARD, VENMO OR PAYPAL ONLY.
CARNIVAL TICKETS NOT APPLICABLE.**

From Ms. Emily VanDoren

Seedlings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

This week's theme was Spooky Spiders. We began our week with a tape resist spider web project. Painters tape was applied to cardboard in the shape of a web and we painted over the tape with Halloween colors. Then once dry, the tape was removed to reveal the web. We also created handprint spiders to decorate the hallway for the Halloween Carnival. We practiced our fine motor skills with spider web tracing and by using clothes pins and cotton balls to paint spiders on to spider webs. Of course, spider week wouldn't be complete without singing "Itsy Bitsy Spider" a few times each day (by request 😊).

We continue to play outside and take walks each day after our morning snack. "Simon Says" continues to be a favorite game that helps build vocabulary, imagination, and helps to practice listening skills. We walked to "Rocky Hill" on the bike path and spent some time exploring the awesome forts that K-5 built last year.



Ms. Pam Holm, the Saplings teacher, and I will be hosting preschool activity room for children 4 and under in the Saplings room for the Halloween Carnival this Sunday. I am looking forward to it and hope to see you there!

218-663-0170 ext. 7

emily.vandorenbgcs@gmail.com

From Ms. Pam Holm

Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

We welcomed two new Saplings to our classroom! We have been engaged in decorating our room with items that are Creepy Crawly. Our week began with the investigation into the night time creatures of screech owls and bats. Artist renditions of screech owls were made by tearing up paper to simulate feathers. Tearing paper is a fun activity that helps develop fine motor skills, concentration, and creativity.

Taking flight as bats 🦇 the Saplings flew around the classroom and down the hall, after



the reading of *Stellaluna* by Janell Cannon. Outside, they experimented with upside-down suspension from tree limbs. Marble rolling artwork provided an opportunity to practice their hand eye coordination and observation skills. I introduced the parachute with flying beanie bats, the parachute is great for building motor strength and control, as well as self-control. It also strengthens the child's ability to listen to and follow directions and to work with others as a group, all great social skills.



Spooktacular spiders, crafted from stapled painted paper plates, dangle from our ceiling, boasting eight googly eyes and legs. 🕷️ This engaging project refined fine motor skills through the gripping and stapling process, which the students completed themselves.

In a fine motor skills development exercise, the Saplings used tweezers to remove different colored spiders from webs. 🕸️ The tweezers help children develop the pincer grasp and fine motor skills needed for daily tasks like buttoning, zipping, and holding a toothbrush. It also incorporates a simple counting exercise to state how many spiders are of each color.

A Bat/Spider Survey was conducted, posing the question 'Which do you prefer?' The responses were tallied and visualized in a graph, revealing a 5 to 3 preference for bats over spiders.

See you at the Halloween Carnival 🎃! The Saplings room will be hosting activities for children ages 4 and under from 2:00-4:00. The Saplings room activities are FREE! Children ages 4 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Emily VanDoren from the Seedlings room will be there too!

218-663-0170 ext. 6
pam.holmbgcs@gmail.com

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

Halloween is next week already! Yikes! K/1 will be having a small party on Halloween in the afternoon. Please plan on sending your child with a costume to change into. They may not bring any fake weapons or bloody type costumes, please. I know the children are really looking forward to the party and trick-or-treating at the Tofte Forest Service!



In math, kindergarteners learn about addition and subtraction facts and teen numbers. 1st-grade is learning about subtraction and how to represent it! In language arts, the kindergarteners learned about the letter H and K and the words and, I, like, see, and the. The first graders are working on learning sight words and how to write complete sentences.

**Reminders:**

Please be reading with your child at home. First graders are capable of reading on their own! Just listen to them and help out as needed. Kindergarteners can follow along with you as you read or try to read on their own.

It is getting cold outside. Please make sure your student has the proper attire. They should have a warm jacket, a hat, and mittens!

Fall conferences will be the week of November 4th-8th. An email with a link to sign up will be sent out. I look forward to discussing the first quarter growth with you!

218-663-0170 ext. 2

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

~~~~~  
From Ms. Samantha Forster

2nd & 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher

We have had a full learning week. It has been very productive. We started paragraph writing on top of our daily sentence writing routine. The work that the students have put in each day with their sentence writing has given them a strong foundation to start building interesting paragraphs. We also wrote cards to my old national guard unit in Kuwait for Veterans Day as part of a community service act. In art, we studied Wassily Kandinsky. He was a European artist that focused on the color wheel and geometric shapes to develop art masterpieces. We will finish up the week with getting the garden prepped for winter!



In math, unit 2 is proving to be an exciting challenge for students. Second graders have started to apply knowledge to expanded form, quick form, standard form, and word form when writing numbers. We have used base ten blocks to help visualize what a hundred looks like and how to spend time using manipulatives to solve problems. Third graders practiced their facts with number puzzles (a huge hit even though it was a challenge), talk about area word problems, and building

fluency with 6's, 7's, and 8's. Math is exciting and concrete so students get very excited with solving problems.

In reading, we followed our regular routine which has helped students feel comfortable around discussions about reading. Each small group is excited to answer questions and build from their prior knowledge. Within these small groups, we are able to focus on fluency as well as becoming comprehension monitors. The graphic organizer skills the groups worked on were text features and sequence of events. They then used those skills to understand the text. Phonics was multiple different things including long I spellings and common final blends. The prefix we learned this week was non- and students came up to build words on the board (classroom favorite).

Keep a lookout in folders and in emails for loads of information this week. Sign up link will go out this Friday for conferences (November 5th through November 8th). There will also be information on online platform logins and the Halloween party. Please reach out with any questions or concerns!

218-663-0170 ext. 3

samantha.forsterbgcs@gmail.com

~~~~~  
**From Ms. Stacy Coronis**

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

This week our class has finished up our Social Studies mapping and landform skills unit. We have completed our mapping learning targets and will now take those skills and create a project to show what we have learned. This project is called Pirate Island and will begin next week. In reading the 5th graders have practiced comparing and contrasting two characters from a story. They created Venn Diagrams to compare and contrast the traits of the two characters. The 4th graders have read two stories together and practiced identifying the theme and then citing evidence from the text to support the identified theme. This was not an easy task and they did a nice job! In math class the 4th graders have been working hard to improve their accuracy on subtraction problems of very large numbers and learned how to check their subtraction using an addition equation. The 5th graders have had a very challenging week learning high level fraction skills. By Friday all students were able to add or subtract mixed numbers and fractions and convert the improper fractions into mixed numbers and some answers even required a final step of simplifying the final answer to simplest form. Yikes, it has been a lot of hard work and even when the 5th graders felt like giving up, they kept on trying!



~~~~~

Our class practiced showing expected behaviors each day in class and keeping our bodies and our words regulated and respectful even when frustration starts to creep in. This is not an easy task and is an important part of growing up and becoming the “big kids” of the school. At the end of each day, we are taking a few minutes in our Closing Circle to do the “Three A’s” which are to acknowledge a classmate, share an Ah-ha for new learning that day or giving a classmate a deserved apology. All students are doing a very nice job!

Please look for an email from me on Friday afternoon that will be sent out for conference sign up. Please choose a time that you and your child can both attend either in person or online. If you sign up for an online conference a link will be sent home to the email that you have provided the school. It is important to me that your child attends their conference since we will be setting goals for the school year. I will set time aside at the end of each conference so that the adults can talk in private. I look forward to connecting with all of the students and families. I will be volunteering at the Halloween Carnival this week so if your family attends please stop by to say hello!

218-663-0170 ext. 4

stacy.coronisbgcs@gmail.com