Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

October 29, 2026

Friday, October 30 ~ Afternoon Halloween Party and Trick-or-Treating Parade!
Monday, November 9 - Friday, November 13 ~ Parent-Teacher Conferences
Tuesday, November 17 ~ School Board Meeting at 4pm
Wednesday – Friday, November 25-27 ~ 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

Thank you to all that attended, volunteered and donated to the annual Halloween Carnival on Sunday! Your support helps us to continue this long-standing tradition at Birch Grove and we appreciate it very much! Our children deserve to have some magic in their lives and you came through! Thank you! It takes a village!



Tomorrow, Friday, is another special day! After working hard in the classrooms, the afternoon will be costumes, a trick-or treating parade to the AmericInn-Tofte, Circle K, the Grand Marais State Bank and the Tofte Forest Service and some special Halloween activities back at the school. Many thanks to the local businesses that will be treating our K-5 and Sapling children to some more Halloween magic! Please thank these businesses when you stop in and let them know how much we appreciate their support. We hope that all have a great Halloween this year!



Parent-Teacher conferences: Monday, November 9 – Friday, November 13. Each classroom teacher will reach out with a sign up link and each teacher schedule will be different. Please sign up and keep your appointment. Please bring your knowledge of your child to share with teachers, as you know them best. We strive to work with parents cooperatively to ensure academic, social and emotional growth throughout the school year. We look forward to meeting with you all!

Bird-feeders were installed by pully systems at the Campsite this October! The woods are now full of bird sounds, chickadee spotting, and some chipmunks and squirrels coming to clean up the spills. K-1 is responsible for filling these feeders as well as those outside of every school window around the building. Happy children, happy birds!







A reminder to fall back an hour this Sunday!



🎃🎃 Thanks to all that attended, donated and volunteered at the Birch Grove Halloween Carnival! It was a great time ~ we couldn't have done it without you! We hope everyone has a great Halloween!







More pictures can be found on the school Facebook page.

Facebook





🎃🎃 Double Pumpkin fun in the Saplings room! 🧪

Saplings turned into mini-chefs and scientists all in one morning. First, they practiced their scooping and stirring skills to bake some delicious, warm pumpkin muffins! Then, they took their pumpkin learning to the next level with a messy, fizzy pumpkin volcano experiment! 🧪✨

The Saplings loved watching the "lava" bubble up and boil over the top. It was a hands-on day full of sensory exploration, fine motor practice, and lots of giggles.

Check out our busy bakers and scientists in action!





More pictures can be found on the school Facebook page.

Facebook











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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!

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www.birchgroveschool.com
School Spirit Store Link: https://birchgrove.logosoftwear.com/ You can use GRAB15 for 15% off
Face Book: Birch Grove Community School and Community Services #4145 | Facebook

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From Ms. Emily VanDoren
Seedling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service



Monsters, ghosts, and spiders, oh my! Our theme of the week was Halloween! We read several books this week that showed fun things to do on Halloween, like dressing up in costumes and going trick-or-treating. We danced to fun Halloween music and did a movement activity by pretending to be monsters and stomping around the room.

Our sensory table was filled with spider webs and spiders for the Seedlings to work their fine motor skills on. They were able to use tweezers or their fingers to pinch and pull the spiders from their webs. There were also magnifying glasses at the table for the Seedlings to get a close up look of the spiders.

Sensory bags filled with hair gel and cotton balls also worked their fine motor muscles as they pushed the cotton balls around to fill a ghost outline. The Seedlings also created their own ghosts by pulling apart cotton balls and placing the pieces onto packaging tape that covered a cost cutout on cardstock. This activity worked on their pincer grasp, hand and finger muscles, spatial awareness, and their focus on a task. They also worked on their pencil grasp as they colored a Halloween picture of their choosing with crayons.

On Thursday we played a few of the games that were in the Seedling room for the Halloween carnival. We played Ghost Bowling by rolling and throwing balls at a stack of white plastic cups that had been decorated to look like ghosts. We also played Monster Eye Toss and
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worked on throwing skills by trying to throw ping pong balls into plastic cups with both an underhand throw and an overhand throw.

I hope you have a wonderful and safe Halloween if you choose to celebrate! And don't forget to turn the clocks back on Sunday!

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From Ms. Pam Holm
Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service



Halloween and a chill in the air means it's the perfect time to study pumpkins! The Saplings have been busy exploring their Pumpkin Patch dramatic play area, which is packed with fun reading, writing, and math activities. To build their math skills, they used pumpkins for counting and practiced one-to-one correlation with seed manipulatives. Our literacy focus was all about the letter "P," featuring hands-on upper-to-lowercase matching and tracing games. We also kicked off our mornings with playful pumpkin fingerplays! Throughout the week, the Saplings crafted their own pumpkins and jack-o-lanterns, strengthening their fine motor skills through cutting, coloring, painting, and gluing.

Pounding pumpkins with hammers was a hit throughout the week! Our Saplings built arm strength, hand control, and hand-eye coordination with every tap. They then transformed the activity into a 3D pumpkin geoboard using rubber bands. They had a blast stretching bands from peg to peg to form lines, triangles, and squares while sneaking in extra fine motor practice.

It was a sensory-filled Wednesday as the Saplings kicked off a pumpkin investigation! First, they used their five senses to explore the outside of the pumpkin and note its unique traits. After we opened it up, they got a close-up look at the gooey interior. Through hands-on exploration, our little scientists discovered a fun botanical fact: pumpkins are actually fruits because they develop from flowers and hold seeds inside! To wrap up the activity, we created a pumpkin display and started exploring the stages of the pumpkin life cycle.

Thursday was a fantastic day filled with pumpkin-themed activities. After baking a batch of tasty pumpkin muffins, we ended our day with a spectacular Pumpkin-Cano! 🎃 🌋 This erupting pumpkin served as an excellent, real-world example of a chemical reaction in action.
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Get ready for a spooky, pumpkin-filled Friday with the Saplings! We'll be carving a jack-o'-lantern, toasting seeds, playing games, making crafts and finishing with trick-or-treating.

A reminder to fall back an hour this Sunday 🕑.

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embalmed organs! Perfect for Halloween week! We also will be learning about the Aztecs and Mesopotamian civilizations. This is all focused around mapping and geography standards while incorporating reading and writing into the activities as well! Art was another great Halloween themed project. I keep all art projects and make a book for the end of the year. Your student decides and lets me know if there is something that they really want to take with them home otherwise it all goes in the book! Conference links are live. Please read my email message for extra details on the specifics. As always, reach out for any questions or needs for different accommodations. I would love to meet with each of you about your student's progress this year!

Reading had a great theme that focused around animals. We read two different stories. One was about animals building homes and the other was about bats. We looked at text structure and sequence of events. Third graders are becoming so great at graphic organizers that they are able to complete them on their own now! Our phonics lesson was all about final blends. We did a word sort, wrote the words, and read a decodable with this spelling pattern as the main focus. We also looked at the multiple different prefixes and suffixes (pre-, re-, un-, dis-, -ed)

Math was all about place value this week. We focused on numbers up to ten thousands, comparing and rounding the numbers. This included rounding to the nearest ten, hundred, thousand, and ten thousand. This skill is essential as they start manipulating larger numbers.

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From Ms. Stacy Coronis
4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

Our class has had a wonderful week! We have been busy wrapping up a thematic project called "Pirate Island". This project uses all of the mapping skills that we have learned, students create a Pirate's Tale story and create an "ancient" treasure map to find a hidden treasure. While writing the Pirate's Tale we went through the entire writing process of brainstorming ideas, creating a flow map to use as our story outline, learning about the use of transitional phrases, writing a first draft, self editing, peer editing, revising and publishing. We look forward to sharing these projects with the K-3 grade classes next week!



In math the 4th graders are moving on to multidigit multiplication and estimating products. Knowledge of basic multiplication math facts are essential in this unit. If your 4th grader has not mastered their multiplication facts yet, they should be practicing at home each night for 5-10 minutes. Fact Fluency tests happen every Friday. The 5th graders wrapped up their fractions unit and I was so
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impressed at the skills they learned to solve multistep adding and subtracting mixed number problems. Now they are using their fraction knowledge to convert numbers to decimal form.

Just a few tidbits about our classroom…..
A conference sign up invitation was sent out on the email provided to Birch Grove at the start of the year. If you did not receive a sign up invite, please let me know so that you can sign up for a conference. It is YOUR choice as the parent if you would like your 4th/5th grader to attend your conference. Please make sure to send a warm jacket and possibly hat and mittens as the weather begins to cool down. We will be going out for recess every day. Finally, our Halloween Trick-or-Treating afternoon on Friday is a great way to wrap up a wonderful week! Happy Halloween everyone!

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