



Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

April 13, 2023

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, April 25 ~ MCA Reading Test for 3-5th Grade

Wednesday, April 26 ~ MCA Math Test for 3-5th Grade

Thursday, April 27 ~ MCA Science Test for 5th Grade

Friday, April 28 ~ ExploraDome! – Traveling Planetarium for Saplings-5th Grade

Friday, May 5 ~ No School – Scheduled Staff Workshop

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

Kindergarten Round Up was on Tuesday this week and was a great time! We were happy to have 10 excited children attend the event. Yee haw! Thank you to the current Kindergarteners for their hospitality and sharing their classroom, teacher, paraprofessionals, skills and knowledge with our visiting Round Up guests. See pictures of this day on the school Facebook page. We hope to see all of the Round Up children here next year as a new Kindergartener at Birch Grove Community School!

Also on Tuesday when Round Up was happening, the rest of the school took part in Step Up Day, where students got to pretend that they were “stepping up” to the next grade level. It was fun to pretend and get a feeling for what it might look like next school year. It was a good morning!

Parents/Guardians of 3rd-5th graders will receive emails and information in Take Home Folders tomorrow about MCA’s (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments) that take place April 25-27. We will ask for your help making sure that students get extra sleep prior to testing days, a breakfast menu of what we will be serving on these days will be listed, and other information will be included. We always plan to make MCA testing days as special as possible! They are days to CELEBRATE!

It is wet in many outside areas here at BGCS. If your child has rubber rain boots, please have your child wear them to school. This will help keep them a bit drier. We anticipate mud and water for a while, but it is great to get outside and experience warmer weather!



Picture of the Week!

For more great pictures go to our Facebook page!

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

One of the joys of living up North -
Every Friday is "Flannel Friday" at Birch Grove!
Join us by having your child wear flannel too!



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:

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218-663-0170 ext. 26 Community Service Phone

Website: 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 Ms. Alayna Carrier and Ms. Ari Summerfield

Sapling Teachers, Birch Grove Community Service

Theme of the week – Barbies! With Barbies being our theme, you might not think there is much to learn about, but we learned a lot from playing with them! I role played with two Barbies showing the Saplings that, while playing with them, you can learn about how families and friends are different. I also demonstrated how we can solve problems by talking to each other about how we feel and asking for what we want. I asked Saplings to practice doing this with the Barbies while playing with them.

We have been working on creating a big Barbie house together out of cardboard and paper (see below). The Saplings really enjoyed this project. Some worked together to make furniture, some made windows, some decorated the walls, and some even made more clothes for the Barbies!

When we picked our theme together, I had each Sapling think about what they wanted to learn about, and the theme with most votes won! Some of the Saplings who voted on a theme, but didn't have very many votes, were not happy about having a Barbie theme. We talked together, compromised, and decided we would add toy snakes to the science center – a good compromise!

Saplings have been getting MUDDY! They are playing in puddles, jumping in puddles, making soups out of puddle water, and many more creative endeavors. Please make sure to pack lots of extra clothes and gear for them! If they have rubber boots, please send them. Thank you!

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

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

In math, K/1 is learning about time and money, adding and subtracting. This is a good time of the year to get refreshers on what we learned at the beginning of the year. We will review number lines, place value, telling time to the 5 minutes, and counting all change.

In language arts, we are practicing our writing. We are really focused on the mechanics of writing such as capitalization, correct letter formation, spacing, spelling, punctuation, etc. I have seen big gains from the beginning of the year!

We have had a major winter meltdown this week! This has led to puddles! Make sure your student is equipped with rain boots, a jacket, gloves, snow pants, and a hat so they can play! A lot of children are going home wet because they are playing hard! Please check their clothes and make sure to send them back dry the next day.

Please continue to work with your child on reading, writing, and math needs that we discussed at conferences! Together we can ensure success!

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From Ms. Sara Silence

2nd & 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher

Spring! Summer! Which one is it this week? The warm temps made us all anxious to be out in the sunshine, a few days with LARGE puddles meant we came home SUPER wet. So before I tell you what we've been up to, here's a friendly reminder: check all backpacks, pockets, and boots. There is wet stuff there, and it will smell by Monday.

In both reading and science, we have been learning about animal migration, hibernation, and adaptations. We are prepared to watch our local birds fly past the school as usual. Thursday we pretended to be birds migrating north and south to find safe food, water, and shelter. We also learned about limited resources as some of the geese *gasp* died. We also put a spin on migration early in the week as we "migrated" to the class we will be in next year. We took the day to study the star of the classroom, Chubs (of course). We discussed and discovered that rabbits prepare for the change in seasons by switching their fur coat. Chubs is shedding---a lot. Curiously, domestic rabbits don't change color, we wondered why and how.

In math we spent the week zeroing in on skills that need attention and reviewing skills from all year. We also focused on math vocabulary since certain programs and assessments use different words to describe and elicit answers. This will be the theme of all the lessons for the rest of the year, building on what we know to prepare for next year, and reviewing what we don't do confidently so we can become comfortable.

Have a great sunny weekend, unthaw, warm-up, collect vitamin D, and find dry gear. Mud season is just starting.

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**From Mr. Jeff Hoffman**

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

In our math lessons this week we have been dealing with improper fractions and mixed numbers. Converting improper fractions to mixed numbers and vice versa, is one of the tougher things we learn during the course of the year, but I feel students are doing well with it so far. We started the book *The Homework Machine* and are working on an accompanying novel study guide. The study guide asks students to make inferences, use context clues to determine meanings of words, and to recall key aspects of the story, all core skills needed for MCAs. In science we are wrapping up our unit on plant growth and reproduction. We also had step up day this week, and I was happy to spend the morning with the future fourth graders of Birch Grove.

Next week we will be putting a significant focus on getting ready for the MCA tests that are coming up soon. I will use the information from the practice assessments we recently completed to provide students with practice focused on their areas of need. We will also take some time to learn about the Bill of Rights and how those amendments impact us. Our spelling lesson next week is focused on list #27.

If you have a completed or near completed Tickets to Treasure log, feel free to send it to school, and I will send home a new log sheet.

Have a wonderful week! Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns.

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