



Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Newsletter

April 15, 2021

Dates to Remember:

Monday, April 19 School Board Meeting at 5:30

Tuesday, April 20 MCA Science Testing 5th Grade

Tuesday, April 27 MAPS Reading Testing K-5th

Wednesday, April 28 MAPS Math Testing K-5

Thursday, April 29 MAPS Make-Up Testing

Friday, April 30 No School

Tuesday, May 4 Kindergarten 21-22 Information & Tours 3:30-6:30

Mission Statement:

Birch Grove Community School will promote academic excellence utilizing our unique natural setting allowing students to reach their potential, preparing them to become socially and environmentally responsible, self-directed, lifelong learners.

From Ms. Diane Blanchette:

Director, Birch Grove Community School

Lead Coordinator, Birch Grove Community Service

We completed the MCA Reading and Math tests this week. 2nd-5th graders worked hard on these state-wide assessment tests. Unfortunately, there were technical issues with the 5th grade science test almost immediately, so this test was not completed. We have rescheduled this test for 5th graders on Tuesday of next week. The students were happy about this as it means they will be getting breakfast and special snacks again next week. Please be sure that your 5th grader gets extra sleep on Monday night as we attempt this test again.

Please continue to be vigilant concerning COVID. It is my understanding that there continues to be cases in Cook and Lake County, with some cases causing quarantining in some schools.

It is Ms. Ranelli's last week with us here at Birch Grove Community School. She will be moving on to her dream job in the science field and we wish her well!

The weather may take another turn towards colder temperatures. Please be sure to continue to send appropriate outdoor clothing as we go out side everyday in all but the most severe weather. Thank you!

Please note that the school calendar says that the last day of school is Friday, May 28. We will have school on-site this day, so it is NOT a distance learning day. There is also an early release at 12:00. Considering this, the last Friday distance learning day is: May 21.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us:

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218-663-0170 ~ School Phone

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Birch Grove Community School and Community Service #4145



From Ms. Sheryl Martinson

Saplings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

Whether or not it felt like spring with snowflakes in the air, the Saplings spent the week exploring spring weather. We started out the week with rain which was quite appropriate. The children held an umbrella under the gushing rainspout, hopped in puddles, and learned a song about rain using tinsel as a prop for raindrops. Next came clouds. After reading Spilt Milk by Charles Shaw, the children made white paint blobs and imagined what their clouds looked like. Many of the children made puffy paint clouds with sparkly raindrops. Then we moved on to wind, with a discussion about the air around us and how it moves. Each child chose an item and predicted whether our small fan would blow the item. We finished up the week with every young child's favorite thing about spring - MUD!

We continue to review and reinforce previously taught concepts. This week we circled back to shapes, comparing the shapes, finding similarities and differences, while naming and drawing them. The big kids began new journals that we will be adding to throughout the rest of the year. This is a great spot to reinforce letters and letter sound knowledge with corresponding entries that interest the children. It is great fun to see their creativity and confidence in their skills blossom.

Enjoy the weekend everyone!

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

*K & 1 Grade Elementary Teacher*

In math, K/1 is learning about time and money, and adding and subtracting. This is a good time of the year to get refreshers of what we learned at the beginning of the year. We will be 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!

Even with all the rain this past few weeks we still managed to go outside for recess and playtime. Make sure your student is equipped with rain boots, jacket, gloves, and a hat so they can play fully! Some children are still wearing their snow pants because they like to go down slides or play on the ground!

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

This week the Pine Martens worked double time and I don't just mean for testing, although they did great work there too! While the third graders were testing, second graders got a double dose of math as we worked towards finishing up unit four focusing on multi-digit addition and subtraction. Also, while we had some smaller group sizes, we focused on the details of reading and creating a graph. This is something we have been working on as a whole class, but it was nice to cement some of those first steps of graph skills.

Another highlight of this week was that we finished publishing nearly all of the "Piggy Versions." This has been an 8 week long writing process for students to compare, plan, write, edit, rewrite, and then digitally produce a story. I plan to share links on our ClassDojo page for parents and will continue to learn the tech on my end for a way to share with everyone.

We also doubled up on the science this week. I told you I had them working hard! We spent the first days learning about a plant life cycle and on Wednesday planted some lima beans. We will observe and record them every other day to track their progress. On Thursday to celebrate our week and Ms.

Ranelli's last day, we had "Orange Cow" or creamsicle floats. We are now set on our understanding of solids, liquid, and gases, as we watched them happening in our cup and in our mouths!

Our classroom paraprofessional Ms. Ranelli was offered her dream job in Duluth. We will miss her greatly in our class but are so happy for her to be working in her outdoor science field every day. Kids spent some time making her cards and we sent her along with some sweet treats!

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**From Ms. Heidi Milner**

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

What a busy week in 4/5th grade. Students have put in a lot of time and effort into their MCA standardized tests. All students tested in math and reading, and fifth graders tested in science as well. Students enjoyed the little extras for testing days, such as breakfast at school, snacks, and extra recess. Students were prepared for the test and tried their best. Way to go 4/5!

When we were not testing, students spent time on a new water color painting, learning about a wax resistance technique using crayons to create areas where the paint would not cover. Students also read articles in Scholastic News about robots and technology, completed logic puzzles that used math skills to solve an unknown, and spent time reading some of their favorite books.

Thanks to parents and loved ones for making sure students got extra sleep this week. Students were well rested and ready to go for this busy week of testing. Thank you for all your support.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please email or call!

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