



Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Newsletter

April 29, 2021

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, May 4 MAPS Reading Testing K-5th

Wednesday, May 5 MAPS Math Testing K-5

Thursday, May 6 MAPS Make-Up Testing

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

Monday, May 17 School Board Meeting at 5:30

Friday, May 28 Last Day of School - **School On Site** - Release at 12:00

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

Emails were sent out to parents notifying the cancellation of K-5 MAPS testing for this week. Testing has been rescheduled to next week with reading on Tuesday May 4, and K-5 testing math on Wednesday, May 5. Please be sure that your child gets extra sleep the night before testing, a good breakfast the morning of, and also see that students get to school on time. Remind students to do their best work and to take their time. Thank you!



Birch Grove Community School received the "2021 Minnesota Department of Education Finance Award" for 2019 financial reporting. BGCS has received this award 13 times. Go Birch Grove!

We have COVID-19 saliva test kits available for all families. Please let us know if you would like one and we can send home in backpacks. Any family may take advantage of this, Saplings or K-5. Deb Allen, new paraprofessional this year, is re-locating and finished at Birch Grove this week. We wish her well on her new adventure!



2021-2022 Kindergarten Information:

Tuesday, May 4 is the Kindergarten Information Meeting and School Tour day from 3:30-6:30. Don't worry if you can't make this date, the Dress To Play Open House is on Tuesday, August 17 or you can make arrangements to come in for a personal meeting and tour. Call 663-0170 to set up a time!

Please continue to send appropriate clothing for outside – we go out every day. Boots are also handy when going to the woods as it is a bit mucky out there right now.

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.



Campsite Kids and Summer Saplings start on Monday, June 7. Thanks to the Saplings and BGCS families that took advantage of the early registration – you got a spot! Summer Saplings is full: we encourage those that want to attend to get on our waiting list in the event that a family drops out – it happens. Campsite Kids has some room on M, T, TH. You will have to contact us to see what specific days are available. It's going to be a great summer!

Enrollment is now open for the 21-22 Saplings program (ages 3-5), Sept-May, according to the BGCS school calendar. 4 of 4 STAR Parent Aware Rating! Click the link for more information/registration paperwork. <https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Saplings-Program> Don't wait to register to be sure that your child gets a spot!

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

birchgrove@boreal.org ~ Birch Grove Community School Email

bgcommunityservice@boreal.org ~ Community Service Email

218-663-0170 ~ School Phone

218-663-0170 ext. 26 Community Service Phone

Website: www.birchgroveschool.com



Birch Grove Community School and Community Service #4145



From Ms. Sheryl Martinson

Saplings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

Hats, shovels, gloves, and boots,
Gloves and boots, gloves and boots,
Hats, shovels, gloves and boots,
Taking care of the garden!

The Saplings have really “dug into” our gardening theme! We began the week with the fun topic of worms. Some nightcrawlers from the Holiday joined us that day. We also discussed seeds that day. A friend brought us all the supplies to plant individual jars of wheat grass. We are told it will grow quickly, we will be able to trim it, and even eat it! We continued through the week with discussions and activities centered around roots, stems, and leaves. The children sampled various roots, stems, and leaves that are good for food. There are multiple experiments going on in our classroom. Besides the wheat grass, we have celery stalks in colored water, a celery stump in a bowl of water, and bean seeds in a wet paper towel.

We continue to review the alphabet as a whole, shapes, and writing names. The children are learning to count by 10's, to count from 1 to 100, and count backwards from ten. The older children have gotten pretty good at clapping words to determine the number of syllables. They are also working more and more with letter sounds and starting to put some words together! They are beginning to look, act, and sound more like kindergarteners and less like Saplings – which makes me both proud and sad at the same time.

We were all very happy to see and feel the sun's warmth at the end of this week. The children were outside as much as possible!

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

*K & 1 Grade Elementary Teacher*

It is great to see the weather start changing! Warmer weather always makes recess and playtime easier! With the last few 30-degree days make sure your child is equipped to go outside. They are required to have a coat, hat, and mittens.

This week Kindergarteners are reviewing letters, reading, and practicing writing. We are spending a lot of time ensure that kindergarten topics are concrete and we are starting to excel in our reading

skills. The first graders reviewed story structure. We read a Frog and Toad story and identified characters, setting, the problem, and the solution in the story.

In math, we are all reviewing various topics. We are working on mastering the concepts of time, money, and measuring. We took time to play multiple whole group math games this week. It was a good review and fun!

Have a great long weekend and remember to read!

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From Ms. Sara Silence

2nd & 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher

This week the Pine Martens focused on our last big project called Our Zoo. Students are working in groups and creating their very own zoo. This week they continued to decide on which animals would be featured in their Zoo along with starting some animal spotlights that includes researching two animals each to find out more about them. Next week we'll be taking our research notes and turning them into a report about that animal.

We also continue to monitor the growth of our lima bean seeds. We have discovered that some are not growing and others are and have observed the changes and differences in between cups. Next week will be diligently recording the weather to see if we can observe and record patterns just like meteorologist and predict the weather.

They're plugging away in math and continuing to work towards our class goal of fluency facts. The greatest finishing up a unit on finding perimeter and area well second grade is working with numbers up to 1000 with addition and subtraction. Please keep practicing fluency at home.

We have started finishing our paint-by-numbers. Some students decided to take them home this weekend to finish or to work on. Please make sure they return to school on Monday as we will work more on them next week. Next weekend they will all go home to be finished if needed and then returned so we can do an art show at school. They are looking amazing!

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**From Ms. Heidi Milner**

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

4/5th grade has officially started their new read aloud book, "Julie of the Wolves" by Jean Craighead George. The Newbery Medal winner story is about a young Eskimo girl, named Miyax who ran away from home and relies on a pack of wolves to survive in the Arctic. It is an interesting story, with lots of scientific details about the land, plants, and animals of the tundra as well as Eskimo culture.

We have also worked on individual stories in the two grade levels this week. Fourth grade read the story "Elisa's Diary", about a young girl who struggles after moving to the United States from Puerto Rico. The book shows how she grows to accept help from a classmate to learn English, and later becomes a teacher to share her skills with others. In fifth grade, we finished the story "The Myers Family", a true story about Walter and Christopher Myers, a father and son who work together to write children's books about African American history and culture.

In math, fourth and fifth graders focused on metric conversion. We talked about estimating amounts and reasonable units of measure, in both the metric system and U.S. customary system of measurement. We also looked at converting between milli-, centi-, deci-, standard units, deka-, hecto-, and kilo- units with grams, liters, and meters. We are starting to get the hang of things, but will keep practicing next week to solidify this new skill.

In science, we started a new unit about geology. Students began talking about how water shapes the land. We looked at how water erosion works and the effects of flooding. We looked at specific examples, such as the chalk cliffs of England and the Grand Canyon to discuss the effects of water erosion.

On Thursday, 4/5 celebrated all their hard work this school year with a pajama and movie party. We watched the movie "Holes", which was our previous read aloud story. After watching the video, we compared and contrasted the book and the movie. Students have been working especially hard lately, so it was great to celebrate all that they have learned.

Please be sure students keep reading at home for 20 minutes every night. This can be documented on a reading log and then turned in for tickets for our end of the school year prize drawing. Please let me know if you need an extra reading log! Please let me know if there is anything else you need, I am available by phone or email.

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