

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Newsletter

December 10, 2020

Dates to Remember:

Sunday, December 13 On-line Scholastic Book Fair Ends

Monday, December 21 School Board Meeting at 5:30

Monday, December 21 Distance Learning Drop off/Pick Up

Wednesday, December 23 – January 1 No School – Winter Break

Tuesday, January 19 – Target Date to Return to Hybrid Learning Model

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 know that distance learning can be challenging for some students and families and overall, everyone is doing a great job! It is important that your child make the teacher meetings. This is how we track attendance – this, and homework completed. If your child does not make the teacher meetings, they are missing out on important instruction and can potentially fall behind. Please contact your child's teacher if your child will be absent. Homework completed should be assigned by the classroom teacher – it is great if you give your child additional work, but make sure that they complete teacher assignments first.

Be sure that you know how homework is turned in for your child, as it varies for each classroom. Attending teacher meetings and turning in homework means that your child will be “present” for the school day. If your child misses meetings and/or does not turn in any teacher assigned homework means that they will be marked absent. Work with your child's teacher with any distance learning

issues or challenges that you are facing – we are willing to work with all families, but we do need to report attendance to the state regardless of which model of learning we are in.

We will be doing another delivery on Monday, December 21. If you are returning materials this way, be sure it is ready to be picked up – please put the items in a container of some sort – we can take it out and leave the container at your home. It may also be helpful to make a sign or note for pickup so that it is obvious to us to bring it back to Birch Grove.



The on-line fair ends on Sunday, December 13! All orders are delivered to your home, and if you order \$25 or more, shipping is free. Orders placed on the last day of the fair will be delivered before Christmas. Books make fantastic gifts for children! BGCS receives Scholastic Dollars for 25% of the fair total – we use these Scholastic Dollars to put books on our library shelves and we also give gift books to Saplings-5th graders right before the winter break. You can find the book fair link on our Facebook page, or use the link below. Thank you!

Bookfair Link: <https://www.scholastic.com/bf/bgcs>

During this distance learning period, we will miss 3 days of school to planning, and 24 days of distance learning will occur until the projected return date of **Tuesday, January 19**. Why a return date of **January 19**? The thinking behind this is that it is 14 days after New Year's Eve (another holiday), essentially enough time for COVID to be detected before children returning to school.

Upon return, we will continue with the hybrid model and the safety measures that accompany it:

- 50% capacity on buses (or less, in our case)
- Taking temperatures and administering hand sanitizer upon entry
- Keeping classrooms separate
- 50% maximum occupancy in classrooms with additional spaces to break down into groups throughout the day
- Maintaining social distance
- Regular disinfecting of surfaces
- Mask wearing for all
- Windows open in all rooms
- Regular handwashing
- Spending more time outside (the ice rink should be ready!)
- Continuing with distance learning on Fridays
- All should stay home if they show the following symptoms:
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - A new cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - A new sore throat

- New muscle aches
- New headache
- New loss of smell or taste

Winter break starts on Wednesday, December 23 until Monday, January 4. Distance learning will resume on Tuesday, January 5.

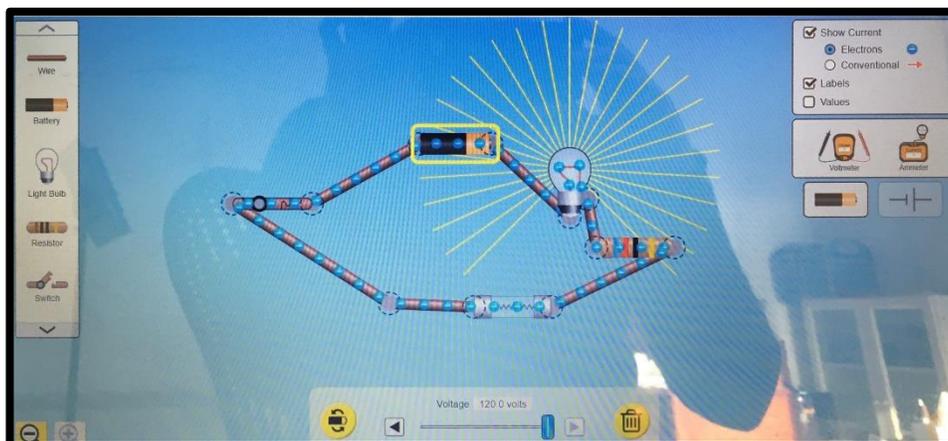
The North Shore Federal Credit Union sponsored a \$5 book per child from the on-line Scholastic Holiday Book Fair. Thank you! Saplings - 5th graders will receive their books right before the winter break. Thank you NSFCU!

Thank you, teachers, paraprofessionals, families, and students, for all of the hard work that you have been doing. Keep up the good work!

Be sure to check the school's Facebook page for updates and great pics! Like and share our posts!

Great Work, 4/5 Scientists!

4/5th graders are learning about science from a distance with the help of technology. Students are learning about energy and electric currents with a virtual circuit experiment program. You can try out the program for yourself at: <https://phet.colorado.edu/.../circuit-construction-kit-dc...>



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

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Birch Grove Community School and Community Service #4145



From Ms. Sheryl Martinson

Saplings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

The Saplings are gearing up for Christmas. The play area was changed from an “Auto repair shop” to what I am calling “Home for Christmas.” The children can bake and frost pretend cookies in the kitchen, play a quiet game in front to the Christmas tree or wrap a pretend gift for a friend. Lots of fun choices! Our theme this week was the story of “The Gingerbread Man.” We read several different versions of the story, comparing similarities and differences. We sampled gingerbread and did an experiment to see what happens when you put gingerbread in water and why the Gingerbread Man really didn’t want to get wet! The children created gingerbread man glyphs, tried their hand at painting a gingerbread man (with ginger scented paint), and worked on a couple different variations of a gingerbread house. All this in four days, in addition to the “regular stuff.” So, the four days flew by – as usual!

Our focus was the letter M, m and I am still working to finish assessments. The Saplings are chugging along, enjoying their days. The only thing they might wish for, if you happen to have any influence on the weather, is SNOW. Personally, I’m fine with bare ground and clear roads – but the children would love some snow to play in! It will be here soon enough 😊

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From Ms. Sara Knottski

K & 1 Grade Elementary Teacher

K/1 continues to dig into learning even from a distance. Kindergarten learned the letter K this week and practiced body motions for all the letters we know! 1st grade learned about the th sound and learned about proper nouns.

K/1 is working on timelines and expressing ideas about themselves and their families. All of the turned-in assignments in Seesaw were great! The students really were able to express who they are and what makes them unique!!

Great work on the first full week of distance learning!!! Keep up the work at home! I am noticing that the students are coming to the meetings prepared with their materials and they all have a great spot to sit or stand! As a reminder, please check Seesaw every day as there will be assignments that are not outlined in the weekly emails. Also, be mindful of background noises during our meeting times. Sometimes the devices really pick up the noises!

Have a great weekend!

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**From Ms. Sara Silence**

*2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

The Pine Martens are hard at work at distance learning. This year in our classroom we have our yearly standards represented by targets on the wall. We are keeping track of our score for each standard we master through the year. Students are eager to meet each new target, and celebrate when as a class we can increase our score of things mastered. This week as we have been working on an opinion paragraph and peer discussions, we have met six of our reading and writing targets. The kids were very surprised to find that out because we were only working on one project! Students were also very excited this week and during our short week last week to go virtual shopping with me at the book fair. We are all very eager for the books we picked out to arrive! Thursday Pine Martens were also introduced or acquainted with the reading platform EPIC. I expect a lot of reading to be happening in the coming months!

For math we have been working through our second units. Third grade has been finishing up their multiplication and division mastery (although we will work on that all year) along with those tricky two-step word problems. Second grade spent a unit looking into adding with two-digit addition, that ended with lessons on adding three and four addends! I was surprised on how well students have been working on math while I have them. Continue to work on "math myself" as that is when those skills I walk them through will become fast and cemented. We will have a math test coming up shortly, students will be on the meet with me as we complete our tests.

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From Ms. Heidi Milner

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

4/5th grade has successfully completed their first full week of distance learning for the school year. The transition went well, with students quickly getting the hang of learning online for longer periods of time.

Students have continued their reading units, with fourth grade reading about the extreme climate on Antarctica. We read a journal by a writer and artist who visited remote areas of Antarctica and studied the wild life, including the Adelie's penguin. We also read about Palmer Station, a science station on the continent and some of the research they are conducting on the topic of glaciers. In fifth grade, we continued to read stories about the American Revolution. We read about two women who helped the war effort, including the legendary Molly Pitcher, whose bravery in battle awarded her the position of Sargent in the army. We also read about Lydia Darragh, who was an American spy. Our reading classes have extended beyond just reading entertaining stories and we are successfully reading to learn! Great job, 4/5!

In math, both grade levels have been tackling word problems. We have been learning to use math mountains, or simple drawings, to help us understand what to do with information given in a story problem. It's been tricky, but 4/5 is starting to get the hang of it!

Our work in science has been a lot of fun this week. We have started to learn about energy, the types of energy found in the world and how it is created. We were able to start to learn about electricity and circuits, even completing a science experiment online using a digital circuit maker app on the computer. It's been a lot of fun learning about this new topic in science.

Please remember, Ms. Milner is available for homework help from 11:30 to 12:00 (usually later) each day. If your child(ren) have any questions on assignments send them to the class meeting at that time. Students can also log into the meeting at noon to show completed work, or parents can email Ms. Milner pictures of finished work at heidi.milnerbgcs@gmail.com

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