



Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Newsletter

December 17, 2020

Dates to Remember:

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

Monday, January 4 Resume Distance Learning

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 will be doing another delivery/pick up on Monday, December 21. If you are returning materials this way, be sure they are 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.

Next week, Tuesday, is the last day of school with the winter break starting on Wednesday, December 23. Distance learning will resume on Monday, January 4.

All of us here at Birch Grove hope that you have a wonderful and safe break! Have the merriest of holidays!

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

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**From Ms. Sheryl Martinson**

*Saplings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

The days in the Sapling classroom continue to fly right by! I'm not a big fan of the quiet building. We hardly even know the few Tier 1 kids are here. But, on the upside, I don't feel bad when we get loud! We got out the bells to go with our "Jingle Bells" song. I told the children if they wanted to use the bells, their voices had to be louder than the bells. Oh my. Okay, it might not be the most harmonious the children have ever sounded, but it was enthusiastic!

The children have enjoyed wrapping pretend gifts for friends. I have a shelf with a bin of small toys, boxes, wrapping paper, tape, tags and bows. There is also a list of the children in class that day. While in the dramatic play center, the children can choose to pick and wrap a gift for a friend (to be returned to the bin after opening). At our end of day circle, we pass out the presents and enjoy opening them. The children view all this as a chance to play with tape and just something fun to do. I view it as fine motor refinement, scissor skill reinforcement, and writing practice. There are also the social skills of thinking of someone else, saying thank you and being grateful. No activity is wasted!

Our focus this week was the letter C. We also worked a quite a bit on patterning. Patterns help children make predictions as they begin to understand what comes next. They also help children learn how to make logical connections and use reasoning skills. Today we made patterns with ornaments, with body actions, with sound and with boys/girls. As the older children become adept at AB patterns, we will progress to AABB and ABC.

The children will be bringing home some wrapped gifts that they created. I am encouraging them to put the presents under the tree and wait until Christmas to gift them. That is a tough thing. They are excited to share their surprise. Either way, I know you will share their delight in being the giver and giving joy to someone else!

Happy holidays! I hope you all enjoy a peaceful and safe holiday!

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From Ms. Sara Knottski

K & 1 Grade Elementary Teacher

K/1 had another great week in full distance learning!! Kindergarten learned about the letter p and practiced counting and writing teen numbers. 1st grade is learning about digraphs and relating subtraction to addition equations.

In Seesaw this week we are working on writing and discussing things about our family. A perfect activity to do while at home with your family celebrating various things! Be sure to turn in assignments every day in Seesaw and check for any additional assignments. Also, use our Bitmoji Classroom!! It has a ton of great resources and videos of the week!

Next week we will be doing things a bit differently! Be on the lookout for a little treat in the next drop off along with changes in schedules in the weekly email. I'm excited to celebrate before winter break distantly!

Have a great weekend!

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**From Ms. Sara Silence**

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

The second full week of distance learning has found most of us in a routine. Students are having less technical problems and are able to find, finish, and turn in assignments on Google Classroom. We all started a new math unit. We are focusing on the details of the first few lessons so that we work accurately as the unit progresses in difficulty. Second graders are beginning a unit on measuring in centimeters or inches, while third graders begin a unit on place value and multi-digit addition and subtraction.

Last week students began to look at forming an opinion and sharing an opinion with supporting reasons. This week we will take that one step farther and draft a final version of an opinion paragraph. Our first draft was our opinion on what makes us a good friend. We look forward to sharing our thoughts with families as we try our hand at sharing our ideas through technology.

At my distance learning "office" I am busy responding to the letters students sent me last week along with building our collaborative art project. There are still several pieces missing! If your student has yet to send their letter and pieces, please send them along! I am also laminating the bookmarks the students made and sent to me. I will be putting them in their gift books that will be delivered December 21st along with a few other fun things from the school and myself.

Have a wonderful break!

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From Ms. Heidi Milner

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

4/5th grade has had a busy week! We have been learning about word problems in math for both grade levels, focusing on interpreting the information using pictures to help solidify our understanding. We have also been working on long division in 4th grade and the order of operations in 5th grade.

Our reading stories continue to provide us with interesting information in both science and social studies. 4th grade learned about ants in the story "The Life and Times of an Ant." While 5th grade learned about James Forten, an African American man who fought in the Revolutionary War and advocated for freedom for all slaves. Both stories were read with attention to detail, not just to understand the story structure, but also to learn new information.

This week we celebrated our hard work with a Virtual Holiday Party! We wore pajamas, played games, and had fun together as a class. Students are doing a great job with distance learning! Keep up the awesome work, 4/5!

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