



Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Newsletter

May 13, 2021

Dates to Remember:

Monday, May 17 School Board Meeting at 5:30

Monday, May 17 5th Grade to Grand Marais

Friday, May 21 Last Distance Learning Day

Thursday, May 27 Pizza Lunch Outside & Tickets To Treasures

Friday, May 28 Last Day of School On Site – Graduation Ceremony at 10:30 and
Early 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

Whew! The end of the year is fast approaching. It has been very busy here and will continue to be so until year end. Please see that your child is getting enough sleep so that they are able to better manage the special events, activities, and excitement that comes with the end of the year. Tired kids can turn into poor behavior choices and emotional meltdowns – this is good advice for all of the adults here too! 😊

Bus behavior: the end of the year can sometimes create a loud and boisterous atmosphere on buses. Please remind your child to keep the noise level down, keep their hands and items to themselves, and stay buckled in until they leave the bus. Also, they should be speaking kindly to each other or remain silent. I know that this can be hard, especially at the end of the year, but students should be following

all of the bus rules, please. It does help if adults from the household remind their children of the rules and that parents/guardians expect the rules to be followed. Thank you!

On Thursday, May 27, Saplings-5th grade will have a pizza lunch provided by the school. Pizza from the Schroeder Baking Company, veggies and fruit are on the menu, so if your child does not like pizza, please pack a cold lunch. A few lucky K-5th graders will also get a malt/shake of their choice from the Bakery (winners from Bingo Black Out).

Friday, May 21 is the last day of distance learning and the last day of Tier 1. Wahooo!

Another reminder: school is **on-site** the last day on Friday, May 28. School gets out early this day with buses leaving Birch Grove at 12:00. If you pick your children up, please be here at noon to do so.

Friday, May 28 Last Day of School ~ Small Ceremony at 10:30 and Early Release at 12:00

We will have a small graduation ceremony on the last day of school starting at 10:30. The ceremony will be outside on the grounds by the playground. Please pack a cold lunch for this day that does not need to be heated – children will eat lunch before the end of the day at 12:00. Families of students may attend – we are asking that guests be limited to immediate family (no general public will be invited). Masks are not mandatory as long as everyone is social distancing. In the event of rain, the ceremony will be held inside with students only, so pay close attention to the weather, please. Should it look like rain, we will notify families as soon as possible that we will be moving inside with a ceremony for students only. There is also an early release this day at noon. More details on this as it gets a bit closer.

Please return all school library books! Don't forget to look under beds! 😊 We would like for all of the book to come back so that children can enjoy them for years to come.



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! Please refer this program to others – thank you!

Gala for the Grove ~ Unfortunately, we will not be able to have our traditional Gala for the Grove fundraising event in person this year. However, we be having an on-line auction! The on-line auction is June 5th-12th. You can find the auction at:

<https://www.charityauctionstoday.com/auctions/Gala-for-the-Grove-2021-23180>

Follow us on Facebook for event updates and highlights of the auction items. Thank you in advance for your support of Birch Grove Community School!

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

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**From Ms. Sheryl Martinson**

*Saplings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

Another week has flown by in the Sapling classroom. I love this time of year! The children are cruising along. We have covered most of the objectives for the year. The weather is starting to get nice (finally). There is a lot of fun with a minimum of stress. It has been a great year in spite of the Covid changes that we had to make. I do regret not being able to take the children out and about the community. But I doubt that they feel like they missed anything. Every day is a new adventure and our classroom is filled with smiles, laughter, and the sound of accomplishment.

This week our theme was caterpillars. We discussed their appearance, the changes that take place, and their life cycle. We read Eric Carle's book "The Hungry Caterpillar" and a quite a few other fun caterpillar stories. We have two cups of real caterpillars in our classroom, we are watching and waiting for them form a chrysalis.

This week I introduced vowels to the children. We continue to work on and reinforce beginning letter sounds, letter formation, and a many other concepts from this school year.

Because of a sizeable grant from Parent Aware, I was able to order some new playground structures and toys for our backyard. I'm very excited to get them in place and see the children enjoy them!

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From Ms. Sara Knottski

K & 1 Grade Elementary Teacher

This week kindergarten worked on our blending skills. We are working on being more fluent when reading 3 letter words and we are learning more sight words. 1st grade learned about how to decode long words. In math, we all worked on money, time, graphs, and reading and writing numbers. We can tell time to the 5-minute, count change with pennies, nickels, and dimes, and decode a graph!

The weather is getting nicer outside and we are spending more time in the woods doing science and art projects. This week we worked on our engineering skills by building tiny houses for our tiny animals. Each house needed to protect its animal from predators and weather. They also needed to be close to food and water!

Make sure to keep working on reading, writing, and math skills at home!

Have a great weekend!

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**From Ms. Sara Silence**

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

This week I am feeling bittersweet as I prepare for the end of the year and kids moving on to fourth grade. This year we really hit a hard work stride in January when we returned from break so I am sad to lose that to summer. But who would I be if I wasn't excited for my kids to enjoy our few months of warm sunny weather?

This week we checked in on all our targets, or standard goals we had to meet this year. There are over 300 learning targets for second and third grade. This year we have mastered nearly all them. This week was an exciting week as we finally reached our class goal with our math facts. This has been a long term goal that we have worked on since October. We will be celebrating with scattered events until school lets out. We are doing our own version of a "Yes Day." Students were asked what one item they would ask for if we had a "Yes Day" (like a boon). The requests were very manageable, with the exception of "bring our pets to school" which would be a little tricky. So, I will be working all 15 requests into our days. Some can be looped together like dodgeball and extra time in the gym. Others I planned on doing anyway, like ice cream and time in the woods. I'm looking forward to granting all these little wishes to celebrate all their hard math work this year!

Please check at home for library books and remember to continue to record your reading minutes. Our paint by number gallery will be Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, so all paintings need to be finished and at school by Tuesday.

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From Ms. Heidi Milner

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

Another busy week comes to a close in 4/5th grade. We have been working on a lot of projects as the school year comes to an end. We are continuing to work on finishing up our novel study projects, creating a vacation or birthday party for the main character, making a comic book, writing a diary, or adding ourselves to a part of the story. Students are doing well making creative choices supported by specific evidence from the books they have been reading.

Our class also started our final reading project: small group reader's theaters presentations. Students were able to choose from two scripts, Riddles in the Dark from the Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien or Cinderella Bigfoot. Each student was given a role and are now working to practice fluency and reading with expression. Next week, students will make puppets to help analyze the characters they play and to better tell the story in our class performance during distance learning next Friday.

We have also spent some time working on our final writing project, a cause and effect essay about how erosion changes landforms. We read about three national parks where erosion created unique land formations. Then, we worked to identify the specific types of erosion that created Arches National Park, Yosemite National Park, and the Grand Canyon. Next week, we will put together our ideas in a detailed informational paragraph. This assignment is helping us to summarize what we have learned in writing this school year.

Our writing assignment connects to what we have been working on in science. This week, we continued to learn about how landscapes can change, more specifically how animals and plants can make those changes. Students learned about how plants help to prevent erosion. We then connected this learning to the historical context of the Dust Bowl, talking through how over-farming and subsequent erosion caused major issues across the United States in the 1930's.

4/5th grade finished up their watercolor painting series this week. This year, the Art Colony in Grand Marais provided 4/5th grade students with a series of lessons to learn about different watercolor techniques. Previously, we learned about wet-on-wet and wet-on-dry painting techniques and wax resistance painting. This week, we learned about creating texture with salt. Students had fun creating their winter series of paintings, which include a northern lights scene, mitten and snowflake picture, and birch trees in the snow painting. A huge thank you to the Art Colony for these awesome projects!

As the school year comes to a close, please be sure to search the house for any missing library books. Students were provided a list of missing books a few weeks ago, but some books still are missing. We want to be sure that future students also have the opportunity to read and learn from these books. Please take some time and search for any books labeled with the school's name. Thank you!

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