



Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Newsletter

May 6, 2021

Dates to Remember:

Monday, May 17 School Board Meeting at 5:30

Friday, May 21 Last Distance Learning Day

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

Happy Teacher Appreciation Week! Thank you to all of our teachers and staff: many thanks for all of your hard work this challenging year! You are the BEST!

Sara Knottski
Sara Silence
Heidi Milner
Michelle Blanck
Sheryl Martinson
Jessica Klemmer
Rista Sharma
Mari Maldonado
Connie Wees



We completed the majority of MAPS testing this week. Make up testing will happen next week. Please thank your child(ren) for all the hard work that they put into testing, and all of the work that they have done so far this year! 😊

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.

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. Families of students may attend – we are asking that guests be limited to 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 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! 😊



Campsite Kids starts on Monday, June 7. Thanks to the BGCS families that took advantage of the early registration – you got a spot on your chosen days! Campsite Kids has some availability on various Monday's, Tuesday's, and Thursday's, June - August. You will have to contact us to see if your preferred days are available. It's going to be a great summer!



Summer Saplings starts on Monday, June 7. Thanks to the Saplings 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. 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! Please refer this program to others – thank you!

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

The Saplings are trying hard to usher in spring. We spent another week on a gardening theme, this time emphasizing flowers. Thankfully there were daffodils in front of the school for examples. The lilac and rose bushes had some buds for us, but that was about the extent of it. We do have some growing action in the classroom though. The wheat grass, that each child planted last week, has taken off and needed a couple "haircuts." Our bean seeds sprouted so we planted them in soil. We imagined some flowers and made lovely cards for that special day coming up on Sunday! The children also painted with props such as forks, water bottles and cupcake liners to create flowers.

Besides circling back and reviewing previously taught concepts, we are also working on communication skills. Of course, this is an everyday thing throughout the year. However, as we converse now, I am asking the children to look at me, answer questions about themselves and their family while using longer phrases and sentences. I'm also reminding how to be a good listener. It's important to have good verbal skills, but listening is equally important.

Have a great weekend! Keep an eye open for any budding flowers!

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From Ms. Sara Knottski

K & 1 Grade Elementary Teacher

The Kindergarteners and 1st graders finished MAP testing this week. They were all trying their hardest and taking their time! I am excited to share the results with you at the end of the school year. It is always fun to see growth from the beginning of the school year to the end!

This week, K/1 started the last unit in math, which is looking forward to what we will be learning next school year. It is exciting to introduce and continue to build on concepts that will be learned next year. In language arts, we are continuing to practice reading, writing, and spelling! It is time to focus on perfecting grade-level skills!

We are getting very close to mastering our math facts and earning an ice cream party! Keep practicing those math facts at home! We will be doing more ticket drops for tickets to treasure over the next few weeks. Make sure to be logging all reading and math facts practice so your student can receive tickets!

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From Ms. Sara Silence

2nd & 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher

Spirits were up this week as we stretched our academic muscles during our last batch of MAPS testing. Testing always shakes up the schedule a little bit which everyone enjoys.

Our academic focus this week was to write an informational text about two of our zoo animals. Students researched, took notes, and wrote our rough draft. Our job during distance Friday will be to do some small group peer edits and type our final copy.

We will not be bringing home any more books from the school library as we begin collecting borrowed items. Students will come home next week with a list of any books that might be missing

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**From Ms. Heidi Milner**

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

With the start of May, 4/5 has been working to finish up some of our class goals for the school year. This has included taking the final round of MAPS reading and math tests. Students worked hard and took their time on the computer-based tests, which was wonderful to see! In our classroom, we are also working hard to all achieve multiplication fact fluency by each passing a timed multiplication test. Finally, students have worked to finish art projects for the year, including our paint by numbers kits which have been framed and are hanging in our classroom. We are starting to tie up the loose strings of the school year!

We have also been working hard to make more progress on our literature circle novel projects. Students are working to critically think about characters and plot in stories by creating graphic novels of books, planning birthday parties or vacations for main characters, writing a diary for the main character, or putting themselves into the story. All activities have required students to read a chapter book of their choice in a small group, critically analyze the story with the help of graphic organizers, cite text evidence to support their work, and create some sort of artistic project. It's been a lot of work, but projects are starting to come together!

In group reading, we worked to read some new stories. Fourth grade read about tree kangaroos, interesting marsupials that live in Papua New Guinea in the forests and are known for hopping great distances to get from tree to tree. Fifth grade students read a narrative nonfiction story about the Great Chicago Fire. Students worked to analyze cause and effect and critically reflect on the differing effects of the disaster.

In math this week, students continued to practice conversions to do with length, weight, and volume. However, this week, we also started to talk about converting units in the U.S. customary system of measurement. Students are getting the hang of these skills which require a lot of critical thinking.

Thank you so much to parents and loved ones who have supported this adventure of online learning this school year, it hasn't always been easy, but I am so grateful for the support you provide. As we continue through the end of the school year, please be sure to check over Friday work and set aside time to complete the assignments. We will continue to have online lessons and independent work on Friday the 7th, 14th, and 21st. Students are starting to get antsy on Fridays, so they may need a little extra checking in to make sure the work gets completed. I will continue to be available after mandatory group lessons, from 10:30 to 11:30, to help answer questions about independent work. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know either by phone or email

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