



## Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Newsletter

**November 11, 2021**

### Dates to Remember:

Monday-Friday, November 8-12 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Monday, November 15 School Board Meeting at 5:30

Friday, November 19 School Picture Day

Wednesday, November 24 Teacher Workshop – No School/Saplings

Thursday, November 25 Thanksgiving Break – No School/Saplings

Friday, November 26 Thanksgiving Break – No School/Saplings

Monday, November 29 Dental Screenings for Saplings – 5<sup>th</sup>

Wednesday, December 15 *The Incredible Reindeer* Musical 6:00 PM

### 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*

Please note that there have been 17 cases of COVID in Cook County since last week, with 1/3 of the cases identified as youth. Some other schools in Cook County have had to quarantine groups/classes of students this week as well. Please continue to monitor your children at home for symptoms and do not send them on the bus or to school/Saplings if they are ill. Many of you have been cautious about sending your child(ren) to school if there has been some type of exposure in the household – THANK YOU! Yes, please keep your children home if you are unsure of what to do – keep them home until you have answers from your healthcare provider. We want to stay in school. 😊

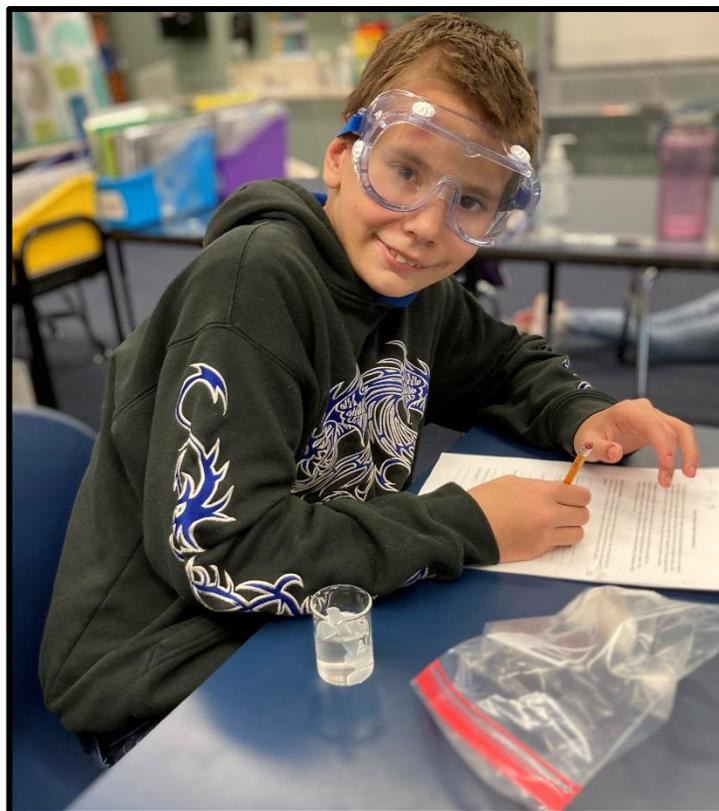
School Picture Day is Friday, November 19. Bruce Johnson Photos from Grand Marais will be our photographer this year. Picture envelopes will be coming out prior to picture day, but know that a picture will be taken of every student on this day, even if you do not turn an envelope in. Please note that you will not be able to view the picture before purchase, and that you will be contacting Bruce Johnson with questions about all pictures and picture orders. His information will be on the envelopes that will be sent home for each child. Many thanks to Bruce Johnson for making this happen for Birch Grove Community School!

The Scholastic Book Fair is open until Sunday, November 21. All books should be delivered in time for Christmas. Please use this link to access the fair: <https://www.scholastic.com/bf/birchgrove> Please share this link with others as our school gets 25% of all sales back in Scholastic Dollars that we can spend on our school library. Thank you!

We hope to have all of the parent teacher conferences completed by the end of the week. Thank you for scheduling time with your child's teacher, and helping to reach our school goal of 100% participation. It is important that you communicate with your child's teacher not just at conferences, but throughout the year. Please contact them or me if you have any questions, comments or concerns. Thank you!

We have a variety of winter jackets, snow pants, boots, etc. here at school. We borrow these out in the event that a child forgets theirs at home, but we have quite a bit of winter gear accumulated. If you would like to take some gear home for your child to have, please let us know. We can either fit a child here and send home (or let you know that we don't have the correct size) or you can come and look and take what you would like. We want to make sure that everyone has great winter gear as we go outside every day in all but the most extreme weather.

### Picture of the Week!





Please give to Birch Grove Community School on November 18  
on Give To The Max Day!

<https://www.givemn.org/donate/Birch-Grove-Community-School>

One of the joys of living up North -  
Every Friday is "Flannel Friday" at Birch Grove! Join us!



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

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Website: [www.birchgroveschool.com](http://www.birchgroveschool.com)



Birch Grove Community School and Community Service #4145



**From Ms. Alayna Carrier and Ms. Mari Maldonado**

*Sapling Teachers, Birch Grove Community Service*

This week our theme was Pete the Cat. We read lots of Pete books, and had some fun crafts to go along with them. One day we had a scavenger hunt to help Pete find his favorite shoes! We then sorted them all out by color- red, yellow, and blue, then counted them. We also made a handprint craft of Pete the Cat and made a Pete the Cat headband!

Our letter this week was "Pp". Our color this week was gray. We introduced the letter by making it with wooden sticks, tracing it and reading a small book about words that start with "Pp", and sounding the letter out. We worked on a sheet where the Saplings found the letter "Pp" and colored it gray. We also took some time to review all the letters we know so far.

In our art center we worked on mixing the colors black and white to make gray. In ABC center the Saplings played a game where they find the letter "Pp" and mark it with a gray dot. We also have them stamp the letter "Pp", with different colors of ink on paper. In our science and sensory center, we have gray rocks in water that they can feel and explore with. In our math center we have a Pete the Cat follow the dotted line with a dry erase marker laminate, as well as some Pete the Cat puzzles. Have a great weekend, and remember, if you want to be cool, just be you! (Wise words from Pete the Cat).

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

*K & 1 Grade Elementary Teacher*

It has been a busy week! Thank you to all the parents for meeting during conferences. It was great getting to share what I see in the classroom and to hear what you see at home. I get a lot of good insight about every student by talking to you!

In language arts, we are focusing on reading strategies. We always look at the words and try to sound out words we do not know. We use pictures for clues and to understand a story better. Students should be practicing reading every day at home! In math, first graders are learning about subtraction strategies. Kindergarteners are learning about numbers up to 10, shapes, and 5-groups.

Winter is approaching! Please make sure all outdoor gear is waterproof and your student has a hat, mittens, snow pants, and a proper winter coat every day! Practice putting on winter gear at home so that they are more independent at school!

Have a great weekend

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**From Ms. Sara Silence**

*2nd & 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher*

This week our spelling rule (meaning it applies to spelling and not how the words sound when reading them) is -ck. We found out that -ck goes at the end of a word that has 1 short vowel and 1 syllable. Since this class has been so responsible and continues to be on track after I give them special events, I gave out "lick sticks" during one of our lessons. A couple students quickly guessed that the "lick sticks" I had for them were actually suckers. We also changed the words to "Hickory Dickory Dock" to include many more -ck words. Maybe some of them will remember it for you! Not to be forgotten in one of our favorite songs "Black Socks." Be prepared for another weekend filled with this ridiculously charming song.

In math we tackled two step word problems, creating equations from story problems, and took our first fluency quiz! We were a busy bunch of kids! This week I also started showing videos from Generation Genius. We use their videos for science and they show some pretty cool stuff. The kids were excited to see their math skills in a production type setting and I love that the videos reteach previous skills in a new way. After a video we also then put pencil to paper to show that we have mastered this skill.

In science and social studies, we are taking a close look at the weather. We just scratched the surface of the unit this week, next week we will start recording the weather, reporting the weather, and start a weather journal! Thursday or Friday we have plans to make clouds in a jar to see real weather happening on our desks!

Thank you for setting time aside for conferences. I enjoyed talking with each of you. As always if you have questions or need something from me, please reach out!

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**From Ms. Heidi Helgesen**

*4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher*

4/5th grade did an amazing job this week in math! In fourth grade, we spent time learning and practicing the shortcut method for multiplying. First, we compared the different methods we have been using to multiply to the shortcut method and realized that a lot of the steps were similar, just a bit faster. Students did a great job practicing this skill and keeping all of the steps in order. In fifth grade, we worked on long division. Students had great recall from last year, and just needed a few reminders and some practice to dust off this important math skill. Fourth and fifth grade worked very hard this week in math!

In reading, fourth grade read the tall tale "Stormalong" about a giant sailor who struggles to fit in because of his large size. We analyzed the character traits of the main character, Stormy, using specific parts of the story to support our work. In fifth grade, we read about mazes and labyrinths. We used main idea and details to help us understand the different sections of the reading and dig for

information. Students did spectacular work using graphic organizers this week and specific details from the text to support their understanding.

In science, we conducted an experiment about what changes the rate of a substance dissolving in water. We worked to control our experiment and only change one variable at a time. First, we explored what different rates of stirring does to salt as it dissolves in water. Then, we looked at the type of salt, comparing fine and coarse salt crystals as they dissolve. Finally, we explored how the temperature of the water can change the speed a substance dissolves. Students had a lot of fun exploring this lab and working to produce accurate results.

This week we were also able to start looking at our winter musical! We read the script, listened to the music, and parts were assigned to students in 4/5th grade. Soon, students will come home with a script, so please help your child to read their lines every night to be sure they are memorized by our performance. We are so excited to renew this Birch Grove tradition!

Thank you so much to parents for your quick responses to the parent teacher conferences sign up and for the wonderful and productive meetings. It was great to check in with all of you this week. Please, feel free to reach out at any time if you have questions or concerns.

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