## Birch Grove Community School

Charter School District #4145

### School Annual and Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report

2024-2025



"Where Roots Grow Deep and Branches Reach High!"

Charter #4145
Post Office Box 2383
9 Goodneighbor Hill Road
Tofte, MN 55615
Phone: (218) 663-0170

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Birch Grove Community School will promote academic excellence utilizing our unique natural setting to prepare students to become socially and environmentally responsible, self-directed, life-long learners.

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#### **Introduction**

Annual Report Purpose complying with Minnesota State Statues, section 124E.16 subd. 2

Annual Public Reports. (a) A charter school must publish an annual report approved by the board of directors. The annual report must at least include information on school enrollment, student attrition, governance and management, staffing, finances, academic performance, innovative practices and implementation, and future plans. A charter school may combine this report with the reporting required under section 120B.11 governing the world's best workforce. A charter school must post the annual report on the school's official Web site. A charter school also must distribute the annual report by publication, mail, or electronic means to its authorizer, school employees, and parents and legal guardians of students enrolled in the charter school. The reports are public data under chapter 13.

#### Birch Grove Community School's Mission Statement:

Birch Grove Community School will promote academic excellence utilizing our unique natural setting to prepare students to become socially and environmentally responsible, self-directed, life-long learners.

Birch Grove Community School (BGCS) has been a tuition-free public charter school since 2005. The school is located in a small, rural community and was created by the local community. BGCS has multi-grade classrooms with an emphasis on outdoor learning and experience. We enroll students from both Lake and Cook County.

#### SCHOOL STATUTORY PURPOSES:

- □ **PRIMARY PURPOSE** (M.S. 124E.01): The primary purpose of the charter school is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement.

  MEASURE: MCA exams PERFORMANCE STANDARDS / EXPECTATIONS: Academic Performance Standards below.
  - REPORTING: Progress meeting these expectations is a required element of the Annual Report and "World's Best Workforce" Plan.
- □ **STATUTORY PURPOSE II** (MS 124E.01): Increase learning opportunities for all pupils. PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION: The school will integrate outdoor experiential learning and service learning into the school program to further enrich classroom instruction.
  - REPORTING: Progress meeting these expectations is a required element of the Annual Report and "World's Best Workforce" Plan.
- □ **ADDITIONAL PURPOSE** (M.S. 120B.11): The school is to meet the outcomes adopted by the Commissioner for all public school students under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11 ("World's Best Workforce"), applicable to elementary and high schools.

Specifically, that 1) all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed; 2) all children are ready for school, 3) all third-graders can read at grade level. GOALS: locally determined, board approved annually for each of the outcomes. REPORTING: Element of the Annual Report and "World's Best Workforce" Plan.

#### **Authorizer**

School Authorizer Name: Volunteers of America - Minnesota

AUTHORIZER LIAISON: Volunteers of America of Minnesota designates the following employee as the official authorizer liaison to the school:



VOAMN Charter School Authorizing Program Main Contact: Stephanie Olsen, Manager

9220 Bass Lake Rd Ste 255

New Hope, MN 55428 Phone: 612-345-8271 Email: solsen@voamn.org

As a leading authorizer, Volunteers of America–Minnesota builds its portfolio of high-performing charter schools by only selecting proposals with a strong potential for success. It then ensures that such potential is realized through a unique system of accountability that begins even before a school opens its doors. VOA-MN is committed to fulfilling its role as a charter school authorizer by holding its schools accountable for a range of results. The accountability system presented in this document ensures that VOA-MN will uphold its legal obligation to make sure the schools it authorizes are reaching (or making adequate progress toward) the goals and benchmarks outlined in its charter contract and Minnesota statute.

VOA-MN uses a standard charter contract with unique school-specific terms that capture different approaches to achieving student success. The individuality of each school will be preserved in the "Academic Program Description" addendum of the charter contract.

## Three essential questions guide our VOA-MN authorizer oversight and charter school accountability plan.

- ACADEMIC PROGRAM PERFORMANCE Is the school's Learning Program a Success?
- FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY Does the School Exhibit Strong Financial Health?
- SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS Is the organization effective and well run?

#### Volunteers of America of Minnesota Accountability Plan

According to Minnesota Statute 124E.01, subd.1, *The primary purpose of charter schools is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement*. VOA-MN holds the schools it authorizes accountable in five major areas: academic performance, fiscal management, board governance, management and operations, and legal compliance. Each area may

have multiple indicators of success and the charter school's performance on each indicator will be rated.

## Weighting of Performance Measures used during the contract renewal process is as follows:

50% weighting: Academic Program (statutory purposes, including primary purpose)

20% weighting: Financial Sustainability

30% weighting: Organization

15% governance

15% management & compliance

#### **Combining Data Over the Contract Term**

Annual school performance results will be combined each successive year of the contract term wherever possible so that fluctuation due to small group size will be minimized and overall performance is accurately reflected. Each school receives an annual "Scorecard" from authorizer that evaluates the school's performance on the authorizer standards for Academic, Finance, Board Governance, and Management and Operations.

#### **Contract Renewal Eligibility**

VOA-MN schools must achieve at least a Satisfactory Rating (70% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area (Academic, Financial, Organizational Performance) to be eligible for a three-year contract renewal and at least and an Exemplary Rating (80% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area to be eligible for a five-year contract renewal. All contract renewals will be for either three or five years. Fewer than three years does not provide enough information on which to make a renewal decision. If a school is performing below standard to receive a three-year renewal contract but has agreed to the authorizer terms and conditions set forth in the School Improvement Plan to correct areas of deficiency, VOA-MN may agree to extend a school's contract (not to exceed five years) to provide additional time for a school to improve performance as an alternative to termination. If sufficient school improvement is not being made by the end of the 1st year of the extension, termination proceedings will commence.

#### **Intervention and Corrective Action**

VOA-MN schools that, prior to their year of contract renewal, fall below a Satisfactory Rating in the Performance Framework overall and/or in any performance area (Academic, Finance, Governance, Management/Operations) must enter into a School Improvement Plan that addresses the specific standards in the Performance Framework where the school performance is below Satisfactory.

#### **Ongoing Authorizer School Monitoring**

One of the most important ways VOA-MN gathers information about the schools it authorizes is through on-site visits. Site visits allow the authorizer to observe the school and engage in discussions with school management. VOA-MN conducts two different types of site visits: Formal and Informal. Another important component of VOA-MN authorizer oversight is board meeting observations conducted at least twice per year and more often for schools within their first two years after initial charter approval. Authorizer VOA-MN uses the Board Meeting Observation Rubric and provides timely feedback to the school boards. VOA-MN also closely monitors the monthly board meeting minutes and financials of each authorized school and provides feedback to the school as needed.

In addition to the Formal Site Visit Report that each school is provided, VOA-MN will also annually publish three VOA-MN Charter School Network Reports: Academic Performance, Board Governance, and Financial Management. The cumulative purpose of these reports is to assess the ongoing performance of VOA-MN authorized schools regarding academic success, financial sustainability, and organizational effectiveness. The combination of school performance based on the three VOA-MN Annual School Performance Reports, annual Formal Site Visit Reports, informal site visit observations, authorizer observations of board meetings, and ongoing monitoring of school reporting and compliance provides an accountable oversight mechanism for the authorizer, schools, and other organizations. This collective body of evidence will also form the basis for contract renewal decisions.

Birch Grove Community School received a 5-year contract that was executed on July 1, 2021 and expires on June 30, 2026.

#### **School Enrollment**

#### Average Daily Membership (ADM)

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total #	Enrollment ADM
22-23	11.04	12	7	6.47	5.60	1	43.11	22.5%
23-24	11	10.64	12	8	6	3	50.64	17.47%
24-25	3.24	12.51	8	8.03	7.61	4	43.39	-14.32%
25-26 Estimate	2	3	12	8.3	7	7	39.3	-9.43%

#### Admissions Policies and Procedures

Birch Grove Community School welcomes all students. No child will be refused admission to the school on the basis of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, and intellectual ability, measures of achievement of aptitude, or athletic ability. All students must make application for admission. Priority for admission will be given to students currently enrolled at Birch Grove Community School and siblings of students currently enrolled at Birch Grove Community School.

Birch Grove Community School board will provide for a lottery when program, class, grade level or building that is compliant with Minnesota Statute 124D.1

#### 509 ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

#### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth admission and enrollment procedures that Birch Grove Community School utilizes.

#### II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Birch Grove Community School believes that parents have the responsibility to select the most appropriate educational programs for their children and that parental commitment to the educational program is a significant and positive choice. BGCS also recognizes that choice in the selection of a public school provides parents and learners an opportunity to seek a school that best fits their needs and interests. This policy addresses the terms and conditions of student applications and enrollment into Birch Grove Community School.

#### III. ADMISSION LIMITATIONS

- A. Birch Grove Community School, established under Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.06, subdivision 3, paragraph (b), may limit admission to:
  - 1. pupils within an age group or grade level;
  - 2. pupils who are eligible to participate in the graduation incentives program under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.68; or
  - 3. residents of a specific geographic area in which the school is located when the majority of students served by the school are members of underserved populations.
- B. BGCS shall comply with the Minnesota Human Rights Act, which prohibits educational institutions from discriminating against students based on a protected class including race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation or disability.
- C. BGCS must disseminate information about the school's offerings and enrollment procedures to families that reflect the diversity of Minnesota's population and targeted groups. Targeted groups include low-income families and communities, students of color, students at risk of academic failure, and students underrepresented in the school's student body relative to Minnesota's population. The school must document its dissemination activities in the school's annual report. The school's dissemination activities must be a component of the authorizer's performance review of the school.

#### IV. ENROLLMENT

- A. Birch Grove Community School, under Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.06, subdivision 3, paragraph (b), shall enroll an eligible pupil who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. In this case, pupils must be accepted by lot. The charter school must develop and publish, including on its website, a lottery policy and process that it must use when accepting pupils by lot.
- B. Admission to a charter school must be free to any eligible pupil who resides within the state. A charter school must give enrollment preference to a Minnesota resident pupil over pupils that do not reside in Minnesota. A charter school must require a pupil who does not reside in Minnesota to annually apply to enroll in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.11, paragraphs (a) to (f).
- C. BGCS must give enrollment preference to a sibling of an enrolled pupil and to a foster child of that pupil's parents and may give preference for enrolling children of the school's staff before accepting other pupils by lot. A staff member eligible for an enrollment preference for their child, including a foster child, must be an individual employed at the school whose employment is stipulated in advance to total at least 480 hours in a school calendar year.
- D. A person may not be admitted to the charter school (1) as a kindergarten pupil, unless the pupil is at least five years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences; or (2) as a first grade student, unless the pupil is at least six years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences or has completed kindergarten; except that a charter school may establish and publish on its website a policy for admission of selected pupils at an earlier age, consistent with the enrollment process in paragraphs A and B.
- E. Except as permitted in paragraphs D and I, BGCS, established under Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.06, subdivision 3, paragraph (b), may not limit admission to pupils on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability and may not establish any criteria or requirements for admission that are inconsistent with this section.
- F. BGCS or any agent of the school must not distribute any services or goods, payments, or other incentives of value to students, parents, or guardians as an inducement, term, or condition of enrolling a student in a charter school.
- G. Once a student who resides in Minnesota is enrolled in the school in kindergarten through grade 12, under Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.06, subdivision 3, paragraph (b), the student is considered enrolled in the school until the student formally withdraws, the school receives a request for the transfer of educational records from another school, the school receives a written election by the parent or legal guardian of the student withdrawing the student, or the student is expelled under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act in Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.40 to 121A.56.

- H. A charter school with at least 90 percent of enrolled students who are eligible for special education services and have a primary disability of deaf or hard-of-hearing may enroll prekindergarten pupils with a disability under Minnesota Statutes, section 126C.05, subdivision 1, paragraph (a), and must comply with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act under 34 Code of Federal Regulations, section 300.324, subsection (2), clause (iv).
- I. A charter school serving at least 90 percent of enrolled students who are eligible for special education services and have a primary disability of deaf, deafblind, or hard-of-hearing may give enrollment preference to students who are eligible for special education services and have a primary disability of deaf, deafblind, or hard-of-hearing. The charter school may not limit admission based on the student's eligibility for additional special education services.

#### V. LOTTERY PROCESS

- A. Interested families will submit applications up until 4 p.m. on the 1st of July. If July 1 falls on a Saturday or a Sunday, then the deadline for applications will be the first Monday following July 1. The board of directors may change the deadline for applications for the next school year by resolution without changing this policy.
- B. BGCS will accept applications for admission to grades K-5. Up to 30 students will be accepted for each grade K-5. The board of directors may increase one or more grades' capacity by resolution without changing this policy prior to the date on which applications close.
- C. Formal recruitment of incoming students is ongoing. The school will encourage families to meet with the faculty, staff and/or board members to discuss the value of BGCS, and its expectations of students and their families.
- D. Once the application period is closed, if there are more applicants than spots available, all timely applicants will be placed on one of two lists by grade: (a) a preference list of students given preference by state law or this policy, and (b) all other applicants. Both lists will be shuffled and offers of enrollment will be made to students in the order in which they are listed for each grade until classes are full, first exhausting the preference list, and then proceeding to the non-preference applicants.
  - 1. This lottery will be held no later than the first Monday after the student application deadline.
  - 2. Notice of the lottery will be made public via the school website.
- E. A "sibling" is defined as a student applicant who is related to an enrolled student with the same father and/or mother either (1) genetically, or (2) through legal process, i.e., adoption, guardianship, or foster parent. Sibling preference does not apply until one of the siblings is actually enrolled.

- F. Siblings of currently enrolled students will be given first priority. If there are more sibling applicants than spots for a particular grade, the sibling applicants will be shuffled by lot each year and then offers of enrollment will be made in the order drawn.
- G. Second priority will be given to children of school staff. If a staff member's employment is ended for any reason, the child moves to the end of the non-preferential waiting list.
- H. Once all sibling applicants and children of school staff have been placed, other applicants will be offered enrollment in their order on the non-preferential applicant waiting list determined by lottery.
- I. If any student, whether enrolled or on the waiting list, cancels their application or withdraws from BGCS, they shall lose their place. If they later re-apply, they shall be treated as a new applicant.
- J. All applicants still on a waiting list at the beginning of the next enrollment period must submit a new application for enrollment and will be subject to the enrollment process described above. The waiting lists do not carry over from year to year.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)

Minn. Stat. § 124E.11 (Admission Requirements and Enrollment)

Minn. Stat. § 124E.17 (Charter School Information) Minn. Stat. § 363A.13 (Educational Institution)

Cross References: None





### Birch Grove Community School Student Application Form

Date:			
Student Legal Name:			
First:	Middle:	Last:	
Grade Entering:			
Physical Address:		City:	Zip:
Mailing Address:			
Email Address:			
Home Phone #:			
Parent/Guardian Name	1:		
Parent/Guardian Name			
I verify that the information grade applying for.	ı contained on this for	m is correct and my ch	ild is eligible for the
Parent/Guardian Signati	ıre:		

### Demographics Based on October 1, 2024 Enrollment

2024-2025 School Year	Number	Percentage
American Indian	0	0%
Asian	0	0%
Black or African American	0	0%
Hispanic or Latino	5	11.1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0%
Other Indigenous Peoples	0	0%
White	36	80.0%
Two or More Races	4	8.9%
English Learner	0	0%
Special Education	9	20.0%
Free & Reduced-Price Meals	23	51.1%
Homeless	0	0%

School Year	Student Retention
2021-2022	80%
2022-2023	78%
2023-2024	88%
2024-2025	74%
2025-2026	70%

School Year	Total # of students Enrolled on October 1	Total # of students Enrolled at the end of the year	Attrition Rate
2022-2023	42	41	97.6%
2023-2024	51	50	98.0%
2024-2025	45	41	91.1%

#### Governance

School Board Composition:

#### Judy Motschenbacher - Founder, Community Member

**Board President** 

Re-elected: October 17, 2022

Seat A - Election date: October, 2025

motsch@boreal.org 532 Caribou Trail Lutsen, MN 55612 218-663-0017

Attendance Rate: 100%

<u>Initial Training:</u> Completed school board training in Governance, Financial Management and Employee Matters as required by the Minnesota Department of Education. Renewed: June 18 & 19, 2010, *School Business Solutions, Inc.* 

#### **Ongoing Training:**

Safeguard Personnel Data and Respond to Data Request: MN Charter Board Training and Development – September 17, 2024

*VOA-MN Governance Standards Video*: VOA-MN – November 19, 2024

BGCS School Audit Presentation by Miller McDonald, LLC on January 21, 2025

VOA-MN Financial Award video: VOA-MN on February 18, 2025



How to Win the VOA Academic Award video: VOA-MN on March 18, 2025

Conduct Open Meetings: MN Charter Board Training and Development June 17, 2025

The 2025 Annual Minnesota Charter School Leadership Conference: VOA-MN on June 10 & 11, 2025

#### Skip Lamb - Community Member

Treasurer Re-elected: October, 2024 Seat B - Election date: October, 2027

#### lambs@boreal.org

Post Office Box 415 Schroeder, MN 55613 218-663-7922

Attendance Rate: 82%

<u>Initial Training:</u> Completed school board training in Governance, Financial Management and Employee Matters as required by the Minnesota Department of Education. Renewed: June 18 & 19, 2010, *School Business Solutions, Inc.* 

#### **Ongoing Training:**

Safeguard Personnel Data and Respond to Data Request: MN Charter Board Training and Development – September 17, 2024

*VOA-MN Governance Standards Video*: VOA-MN – November 19, 2024

BGCS School Audit Presentation by Miller McDonald, LLC on January 21, 2025

How to Win the VOA Academic Award video: VOA-MN on March 18, 2025

Conduct Open Meetings: MN Charter Board Training and Development June 17, 2025

#### Sara Knottski - BGCS Teacher File#487820

Vice President
Seated September 29, 2015
Seat C – Teacher Seat – Rotating Term
<a href="mailto:sara.knottskibgcs@gmail.com">sara.knottskibgcs@gmail.com</a>
40 Quincy Drive
Silver Bay, 55614
651-214-9762

Attendance Rate: 82% 1 absence due to teacher training

<u>Initial Training:</u> Completed school board training in Governance, Financial Management and Employee Matters as required by the Minnesota Department of Education. October 17, 2015 by *Ship's Wheel Consulting, LLC.* 



#### **Ongoing Training:**

Safeguard Personnel Data and Respond to Data Request: MN Charter Board Training and Development – September 17, 2024

BGCS School Audit Presentation by Miller McDonald, LLC on January 21, 2025

VOA-MN Financial Award video: VOA-MN on February 18, 2025

How to Win the VOA Academic Award video: VOA-MN on March 18, 2025

Conduct Open Meetings: MN Charter Board Training and Development June 17, 2025

#### Sarena Crowley - BGCS Parent

Secretary

Re-elected: October, 2024

Seat B - Election Date: October,

2027

sarenanelson@yahoo.com

6849 W. Hwy. 61 Tofte, MN 55615 218-370-0726

Attendance Rate: 73%

Initial Training: Completed school board training in Governance, Financial Management and Employee Matters as required by



the Minnesota Department of Education. October 17, 2015, Ship's Wheel Consulting, LLC.

#### **Ongoing Training:**

BGCS School Audit Presentation by Miller McDonald, LLC on January 21, 2025

VOA-MN Financial Award video: VOA-MN on February 18, 2025

How to Win the VOA Academic Award video: VOA-MN on March 18, 2025

Conduct Open Meetings: MN Charter Board Training and Development June 17, 2025

#### <u>Mary VanDoren - Community Member</u>

Elected October 17, 2022

Seat A - Election Date: October, 2025

msbb@boreal.org

20 Schroeder Tote Road Schroeder, MN 55613 218-663-7386

Attendance Rate: 64%

Initial Training: Completed school board training in Governance, Financial Management and Employee Matters as required by the Minnesota Department of Education. June 16, 2022 with the Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA).



#### Ongoing Training:

Safeguard Personnel Data and Respond to Data Request: MN Charter Board Training and Development – September 17, 2024

VOA-MN Governance Standards Video: VOA-MN - November 19, 2024

BGCS School Audit Presentation by Miller McDonald, LLC on January 21, 2025

VOA-MN Financial Award video: VOA-MN on February 18, 2025

How to Win the VOA Academic Award video: VOA-MN on March 18, 2025

Conduct Open Meetings: MN Charter Board Training and Development June 17, 2025

No new board members were seated or appointed in 24-25.

The BGCS board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 4:00 at Birch Grove Community School.

The school board calendar and school board meetings are posted at BGCS as well as on the school website at <a href="www.birchgroveschool.com">www.birchgroveschool.com</a> Meeting dates are subject to change. Rescheduled board meetings are posted at Birch Grove Community School, the school website, and in weekly school newsletters that can also be found on the website.

The board consists of no less than 5 members and no more than 7, with the school Director as an advisory, non-voting position on the board. One licensed teacher serves on the board with an optional rotating term.

Board members are required to complete initial training prior to sitting on the board. Elected board member terms start on July 1.

The school board completes a self-evaluation annually and discusses results at a board meeting or retreat. The 24-25 board self-evaluation results were discussed at a board meeting on June 17, 2025. The board reviewed results with discussion on more training on preparing a long-term strategic plan as well as a strategy for onboarding new board members. The board is doing well overall, and received the VOA-MN "Award of Excellence in School Board Governance", as well as the "Award of Excellence in School Academics" at the annual VOA Charter School Leadership Conference in June of 2025.

The school board also has a line item on monthly agendas for reflection: School Board Reflection: *Present, On Time, Progress Made, Open & Honest, End on Time* 

Board elections take place in April at a regular school board meeting, if elections are applicable that year. Board elections are advertised in the weekly newsletters and on the school website. There was no school board election in the 24-25 school year.



The VOA Contract Renewal Calculation below includes a section on governance performance for FY24 as well as for previous years.

#### CONTRACT RENEWAL CALCULATION

VOA-MN schools must achieve at least a Satisfactory Rating (70% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area (Academic, Financial, Organizational Performance) to be eligible for a three-year contract renewal and at least and an Exemplary Rating (80% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area to be eligible for a five-year contract renewal. All contract renewals will be for either three or five years. Fewer than three years does not provide enough information on which to make a renewal decision.

	Meets Standard Points	Partially Meets Standard Points	Does Not Meet Standard Points			
	2	1	0	<b>Total Points</b>	Weight	Percent
Academic	8	1	0	9/10	.50	45%
Finance	18	1	0	19/20	.20	19%
Governance	34	0	0	34/34	.15	15%
Mgmt/Operations	28	. 1	0	29/30	.15	15%

		Renewal YR Rating FY21	YR 2 Rating FY22	YR 3 Rating FY23	YR 4 Rating FY24	YR 5 Rating FY25	Average Rating
ACADEMIC (50%	<b>/</b> 6)	50%	45%	45%	45%	%	46%
FINANCE (20%)		16%	18%	19%	19%	%	18%
ORGANIZATION	N (30%)			7			
	ARD VERNANCE (15%)	15%	15%	15%	15%	%	15%
	NAGEMENT ERATIONS (15%)	15%	15%	15%	15%	%	15%
ТО	ΓAL	96%	93%	94%	94%	%	94%

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Stephanie Olsen, Program Manager Phillip Morris, Academic Performance Analyst Rochel Perna, Financial Analyst Roderick Haenke, Board Governance Analyst / Constituent Services Dawn Maslowski, Program Administrative Assistant solsen@voamn.org phillip.morris@voamn.org rochel.perna@voamn.org roderick.haenke@voamn.org dawn.maslowski@voamn.org Parent surveys are conducted annually.

2024-2025 Parent Survey:

The survey had 29 questions. A selection of survey questions and results can be viewed below:

"My child is progressing academically":

Strongly Agree: 90.91%

Agree: 9.09%

Somewhat Agree: 0%

Neither Agree or Disagree: 0%

Somewhat Disagree: 0% Strongly Disagree: 0%

"I would recommend Birch Grove Community School to other families":

Strongly Agree: 100.00%

Agree: 0%

Somewhat Agree: 0%

Neither Agree or Disagree: 0%

Somewhat Disagree: 0% Strongly Disagree: 0%

"My child is happy at Birch Grove Community School:"

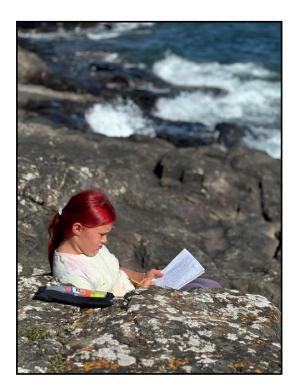
Strongly Agree: 81.82%

Agree: 9.09%

Somewhat Agree: 9.09%

Neither Agree or Disagree: 0%

Somewhat Disagree: 0% Strongly Disagree: 0%





#### **School Management**

Name	Admin License Yes/No	File Folder Number	Position	Years Employed	Returned in 2024-2025
Diane Blanchette	No	N/A	School Director	21	Yes

Diane Blanchette, a founder of the school, has been the school director since the school opened, with the exception of an absence of eight months. Diane worked for the non-profit that created the charter school application, became the school start-up director, and then the school director.

#### School Director Review

An administrative review will be conducted by the school board annually.

- A school director evaluation form is emailed to each school board member in June-August
- In June-August of each year, the survey results are presented at a regular school board meeting. The year-end progress on professional goals is discussed and reviewed at this time.
- In June-August of each year, the administration presents a professional development plan for the current year to the board. The plan is to be goal oriented, citing the action and the measurement for success. The plan will be approved by the school board prior to implementation

The school director evaluation took place at the school board meeting on June 17, 2025.



#### Birch Grove Community School Professional Development Plan 2024-2025 School Director, Diane Blanchette

Goal 1: To increase knowledge and skills to better contribute to the success and well being of Birch Grove Community School. The School Director will acquire a minimum of 25 hours of appropriate CEU's.

<u>Action</u>: Attend and pursue professional development opportunities, activities, and interactions that will increase knowledge and skills in various areas of school administration.

<u>Measurement</u>: Documentation of professional development opportunities, activities and interactions that increase knowledge, skills and experience will be compiled and presented for school board review.

August 27, 2024: Bloodborne Pathogens: BGCS – 1 hour

August 28, 2024: Special Education, Child Find, Mandatory Reporting:

Noreen Foster, Indigo Education 2 hours

September 3, 2024: Mandated Reporter Training-MN Child Welfare Training Academy-1.5 Hours

September 17, 2024: Safeguard Personnel Data and Respond to Data

Request: MN Charter Board Training and Development

November 19, 2024: VOA-MN Governance Standards Video: VOA-MN January 21, 2025: BGCS School Audit Presentation by Miller McDonald, LLC

February 18, 2025: VOA-MN Financial Award video: VOA-MN March 18, 2025: How to Win the VOA Academic Award video: VOA-MN June 17, 2025: Conduct Open Meetings: MN Charter Board Training and Development

June 9, 2025: Charter Leader Institute: CEU certificate 10 hours June 10 & 11, 2025: *The 2025 Annual Minnesota Charter School Leadership Conference:* VOA-MN: CEU certificate 16 hours 24-25 Weekly Q-Comp meetings with teachers.

24-25 Student IEP meetings attended.

FastBridge Training

Result: **GOAL MET**. Knowledge and skills were increased due to professional development opportunities, activities, and interactions as documented. A minimum of 25 hours of CEU completed and documented.

#### Goal 2: To increase student academic achievement.

<u>Actions</u>: Attend and pursue professional development opportunities, activities, and interactions that will increase knowledge, skills and experience that relate to academic achievement.

<u>Measurement</u>: Meeting or exceeding the All School 2024-2025 academic Q-Comp goal. (Goal is not specific at this time as a new base line needs to be created because of the new Fastbridge standardized assessment being used in 24-25).

#### Result: GOAL MET.

The percentage of all students enrolled in grades 2-5 at Birch Grove Community School who are in the "low risk" and "above average" categories on the FAST aReading standardized assessment will increase from 46% in fall 2024 to 50% in spring 2025.

The percentage of all students in grades K-1 at Birch Grove Community School who are in the "low risk" and "above average" categories on the FAST Early Reading standardized assessment will increase from 80% in fall 2024 to 86% in spring 2025.

Goal Met: 2-5 goal meet with 53.8%

K/1 goal meet with 86%

The VOA Contract Renewal Calculation below includes a section on management performance for FY24 as well as for previous years.

#### CONTRACT RENEWAL CALCULATION

VOA-MN schools must achieve at least a Satisfactory Rating (70% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area (Academic, Financial, Organizational Performance) to be eligible for a three-year contract renewal and at least and an Exemplary Rating (80% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area to be eligible for a five-year contract renewal. All contract renewals will be for either three or five years. Fewer than three years does not provide enough information on which to make a renewal decision.

	Meets Standard Points	Partially Meets Standard Points	Does Not Meet Standard Points			
	2	1	0	<b>Total Points</b>	Weight	Percen
Academic	8	1	0	9/10	.50	45%

Finance	18	1	0	19/20	.20	19%
Governance	34	0	0	34/34	.15	15%
Mgmt/Operations	28	. 1	0	29/30	.15	15%
Grand Total	88	3	0	91/94	1.00	94%

		Renewal YR Rating FY21	YR 2 Rating FY22	YR 3 Rating FY23	YR 4 Rating FY24	YR 5 Rating FY25	Average Rating
ACADEM	IC (50%)	50%	45%	45%	45%	%	46%
FINANCE (20%)		16%	18%	19%	19%	%	18%
ORGANIZ	ZATION (30%)			7			
	BOARD GOVERNANCE (15%)	15%	15%	15%	15%	%	15%
3	MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS (15%)	15%	15%	15%	15%	%	15%
	TOTAL	96%	93%	94%	94%	%	94%

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Stephanie Olsen, Program Manager Phillip Morris, Academic Performance Analyst Rochel Perna, Financial Analyst Roderick Haenke, Board Governance Analyst / Constituent Services Dawn Maslowski, Program Administrative Assistant

solsen@voamn.org phillip.morris@voamn.org rochel.perna@voamn.org roderick.haenke@voamn.org dawn.maslowski@voamn.org





#### **School Staffing and Employee Retention Rates**

Licensed Staff Information

Name	Position	Area of Licensure	File Folder #	Returned Or not Returned In 24/25
Sara Knottski	K/1 Teacher	B-3	487820	Returned
Samantha Forster	2/3 Teacher	K-6	1026100	Returned
Laurie Robertson	4/5 Teacher	K-6	327596	Did Not Return
Stacy Coronis	4/5 Teacher	K-6	351677	New in 24-25
Sara Silence	Special Education Teacher	B-3 and ABS K-12 (Academic Behavior Strategist)	492349	Returned

In 2008, Birch Grove Community School was the 21st charter school to enter into the Quality Compensation Program (Q Comp). Q- Comp is designed to advance the teaching profession by providing structural professional development and evaluation, as well as an alternative pay schedule that compensates teachers based on performance. The program brings together career advancement, professional development and compensation linked to academic achievement. It includes a locally agreed-upon peer evaluation process for every teacher that is based on skills, responsibilities and student academic growth.

There are three components to the Q-Comp program:

- School-wide academic goal: set in reading or math
- Classroom goals for each teacher: Goals can vary from reading to math and the measurement is different for each. Goals, approved by school administration, must be challenging, specific and measurable
- Teacher observation/evaluation: Teachers are observed in the classroom and evaluated by each other, and a teacher liaison, three times per school year. Observation/evaluations are reviewed with this team along with the school director. A written self-reflection accompanies each observation upon

completion. Teachers must receive a score of proficient or higher on all three observations to consider the goal achieved

Teachers also formally evaluated annually by the school director. This evaluation includes a teacher self-review document that is reviewed with the school director.

## Teacher Professional Development 2024-2025

Staff	Training
Knottski, Sara	Special Education, Child Find, Mandatory Reporting: Noreen Foster, Indigo Education 2 hours
K/1 Teacher	Bloodborne Pathogens: BGCS – 1 hour
reaction	Q-Comp Professional Development - Birch Grove Community School - 30 hours
	3 Q-Comp Observations/Evaluations
	9/3/24: Mandated Reporter Training-MN Child Welfare Training Academy-1.5 Hours
	12/3/24: LETRS Unit 1 Part 1 Virtual Training- Resource Training and Solutions- Mary Spaulding- 3 hours
	12/4/24: LETRS Unit 1 Part 2 Virtual Training- Resource Training and Solutions- Amber L. Marsh- 3 hours
	1/8/2025: LETRS Training module Unit 1 Sessions 1-8- Lexia LETRS- 12 hours
	1/21/25: LETRS Unit 2 Part 1 Virtual Training- Lexia LETRS- 3 hours
	1/30/25: LETRS Unit 2 Part 2 Virtual Training- Lexia LETRS- 3 hours
	3/5/25: LETRS Training module Unit 2 Sessions 1-8- Lexia LETRS- 12 hours
	3/6/25: LETRS Unit 3 Part 1 Virtual Training- Lexia LETRS- 3 hours

	3/12/25: LETRS Unit 3 Part 2 Virtual Training- Lexia LETRS- 3 hours
	05/12/15: LETRS Unit 4 Part 1 Virtual Training- Lexia LETRS- 3 hours
	05/22/25: LETRS Unit 4 Part 2 Virtual Training- Lexia LETRS- 3 Hours
	2024-2025 School Year: Inspired Education and Wellbeing: Learnings From Finland- University of Alaska Anchorage- Jens Jacobsen- 30 Hours
Forster,	
Samantha	Special Education, Child Find, Mandatory Reporting: Noreen
2/3	Foster, Indigo Education 2 hours
Teacher	
	Bloodborne Pathogens: BGCS – 1 hour
	Q-Comp Professional Development - Birch Grove Community School - 30 hours
	3 Q-Comp Observations/Evaluations
	9/3/24: Mandated Reporter Training-MN Child Welfare Training Academy-1.5 Hours
	February 9th 2024- Addressing Challenging Behaviors (Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle)- 2.5 PD Hours
	March 1st 2024- First Aid- 6 PD Hours
	March 15th 2024- CSR A Reading Comprehension Strategy- 2 PD Hours
	September 4 2023- PLT- 2 PD Hour
	October 2024 The Stellar Literacy Collective Learning Summit- 3 PD HRS
	November 17th 2024- LETRS Unit 1 Mastery- 12 PD HRS
	December 2nd 2024- LETRS Unit 1 Part 1- 3 PD HRS

	December 3rd 2024- LETRS Unit 1 Part 2- 3 PD HRS
	January 13th 2025- LETRS Unit 2 Part 1- 3 PD HRS
	January 29th 2025- LETRS Unit 2 Part 2- 3 PD HRS
	January 29th 2025- LETRS Unit 2 Mastery- 12 PD HRS
	February 26th 2025- LETRS Unit 3 Part 1- 3 PD HRS
	March 01st 2025- LETRS Unit 3 Part 2- 3 PD HRS
	March 6th 2025- LETRS Unit 3 Mastery - 12 PD HRS
	May 30th 2025- LETRS Unit 4 Mastery- 12 PD HRS
	Wolf Ridge:  • May 14th 2025- Northwoods Mammals- 3 PD HRS  • May 14th 2025- Bears75 PD HRS  • May 14th 2025- Owl Pellets- 1.25 PD HRS  • May 15th 2025- Indoor Rocking Climbing- 3 PD Hrs  • May 15th 2025- Canoeing- 3 PD HRS  • May 15th 2025- Planetarium- 1.25 HRS  • May 15th 2025- Frozen Beans75 PD HRS  • May 15th 2025- Trees and Keys- 3 PD HRS  • May 16th 2025- Trees and Keys- 3 PD Hours  • May 15th 2024- Ojibwe Heritage- 3 PD Hours  • May 15th 2024- Block Printing- 1.25 PD Hours  • May 16th 2024- Ropes Course- 3 PD Hours  • May 16th 2024- Weather- 3 PD Hours  • May 16th 2024- Night Hike- 1.25 PD Hours  • May 17th 2024- Forest Ecology- 3 PD Hours  June 4th- LETRS Unit 4- 6 PD HRS  LETRS Unit 5- 12 PD HRS
Coronis, Stacy	Special Education, Child Find, Mandatory Reporting: Noreen Foster, Indigo Education 2 hours
4/5 Teacher	Bloodborne Pathogens: BGCS – 1 hour
(Leave of Absence from 12.9.24- 4.9.25)	Q-Comp Professional Development - Birch Grove Community School – 15 hours

	1 Q-Comp Observations/Evaluations
	9/3/24: Mandated Reporter Training-MN Child Welfare Training Academy-1.5 Hours
Silence, Sara	8/8-8/9/24 Back to School Conference: INDIGO EDUCATION. 11 hours
Special Education Teacher	Special Education, Child Find, Mandatory Reporting: Noreen Foster, Indigo Education 2 hours
(Served as both 4/5	Bloodborne Pathogens: BGCS – 1 hour
teacher and Special Ed teacher from 12.9.24-	Q-Comp Professional Development - Birch Grove Community School - 30 hours
4.9.25)	3 Q-Comp Observations/Evaluations
	9/3/24: Mandated Reporter Training-MN Child Welfare Training Academy-1.5 Hours
	12/2/24 LETRS Unit 1 Part 1 Session: Resource Training and Solutions. 3 hours
	12/30/24 LETERS Unit 1 Part 2 Session: Resource Training and Solutions. 3 hours
	1/20/25 LETRS Unit 2 Part 1: LEXIA. 3 hours
	1/27/25 LETRS Unit 2 Part 2: LEXIA. 3 hours
	3.24/25 LETRS Unit 1 Course completion. LEXIA. 12 hours
	3/25/25 LETRS Unit 3: LEXIA. 6 hours
	5/16/25 LETRS Unit 2 Course completion. LEXIA 12 hours
	6/9/25 LETRS Unit 4: LEXIA. 6 hours

### Non-Licensed Staff Information 2024-2025

Staff	Position(s)	Returned or Not Returned in 24-25
Jessica Klemmer	Paraprofessional Technology Para	Returned
Jenny Buckman	Paraprofessional	Returned
Emily VanDoren	Paraprofessional	Returned and transferred to Community Services
Gayle Grinnell	Paraprofessional	Returned (Returned later in the year)
Marcy McGleno	Paraprofessional (Transferred to Community Services)	New in 24/25



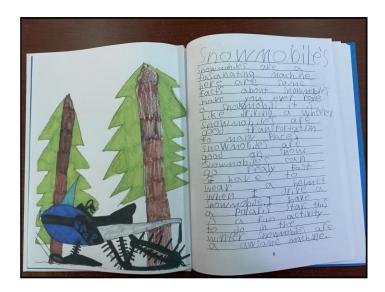
#### **Academic Performance**

BGCS utilized FastBridge as the schools standardized assessment tool for the first time in 24-25, due to the limited new list of approved assessments within the READ Act. It has taken time, effort and training to become accustomed to the FastBridge assessment– the administering of the test, accessing data and reports and interpreting the data. Creating goals with an unfamiliar assessment took time and we anticipate that this will become easier as staff and administration become more familiar with FastBridge.

Local testing is conducted three times yearly, in the fall, mid-year, and in the spring for all students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Testing supplies us with instant and complete data on student growth, which is used to guide instruction and helps to determine appropriate action for the academic growth of each student.

It is important to note that setting academic goals for BGCS can be challenging. Goals that work for other schools, typically using 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade MCA scores, do not always work for a school of Birch Grove's size. Due to data privacy, MCA and FastBridge scores cannot be made public if the cell size is too small to report. Because of the likelihood of having an annual MCA cell size too small to report, the school academic goals are sometimes based on local assessment scores. Goals may sometimes include the entire school, K-5, where most elementary school goals typically only use data from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade (those grades that take the annual MCA's).

It is also important to note that low numbers of students tested can greatly vary scores from year to year, MCA's or FastBridge. BGCS is probably one of the few schools in Minnesota that could potentially score a 0% due to lower student numbers.



The information below concerning academic program performance has been taken directly out of BGCS's charter school contract with VOA-MN:

Three essential questions guide our VOA-MN authorizer oversight and charter school accountability plan.

• Academic Program Performance - Is the school's Learning Program a Success?

Academic Performance- All public schools, including charters, must fully participate in the state assessments - Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. Data from state assessments as well as Title 1 Designation consistent with the state North Star system will be compiled and evaluated in the Annual VOA-MN Authorized Charter Schools Academic Performance Report by the authorizer. Charter schools are required to meet the academic performance standards for which they agree to be held accountable in their charter contract. The extent to which a school is meeting their World's Best Workforce requirements and additional statutory purposes are also measured in the Learning program section.

The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program publishes annually an Academic Performance Report on their network of authorized charter schools. The report serves as a single annual source of academic program and performance information for all of our VOA-MN operational charter schools. The report contains an analysis of annual and cumulative academic program, performance, and professional development data for each school.

Content from the annual Academic Performance Report also serves as the basis for the school academic performance analysis contained in the statutorily required Contract Renewal Evaluation Reports, including evaluation of the extent to which the school has met their primary purpose, "to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement" during the contract term.

The VOA-MN determined academic performance standards contained below are uniform for all VOA-MN charter schools. The standards are contained in VOA-MN Charter Contract Addendum B (School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System) and serve as the basis for both annual authorizer monitoring of school academic performance and contract renewal determinations. The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to reasonably amend these standards /expectations as needed (example: based on cell size being to small). One sample rating scale is imbedded below to provide the reader with context.

VOA-MN's academic performance standards/expectations include the following:

Academic Performance Standard 1 - Students are performing well on state examinations in comparison to students at schools they might otherwise attend (with similar demographics) as evidence of meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement.

Imbedded WBWF. (Data Source: Evidence / Source: Minnesota Department of Education). Scale:

- 0 = School's average proficiency rate is less than the average performance of students in schools they might otherwise attend.
- 1 = Partially meets standard School's average proficiency rate meets or exceeds the average performance of students in schools they might otherwise attend in one or two subjects (math, reading and science) but not all three.
- 2 = Meets standard School's average proficiency rate exceeds the average performance of students in schools they might otherwise attend.

Academic Performance Standard 2 - Over the term of the contract, the school will maintain an average state-determined minimum achievement level of 70% (Increased + Maintained) as evidence of meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement. (Evidence / Source: North Star Academic Progress) Scale:

- 0 = Does not meet standard School's achievement level of "increased and maintained" is below 50%
- 1 =Partially meets standard School's achievement level of "increased and maintained" is between 70% and 50%
- 2 = Meets standard School's achievement level of "increased and maintained" is 70% or higher

Academic Performance Standard 3 - The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate in the School and any reportable student group proficiency rate will be reduced over the term of the contract in both reading and math using state examination data as evidence of the School meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement. Imbedded WBWF Standard: all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed. (Evidence / Source: Minnesota Department of Education). Scale:

- 0 =The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate and all reportable student group proficiency rates has increased.
- 1 = The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate and at least one student group proficiency rate has been reduced.
- 2 = The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate and all student group proficiency rates has been reduced.

Academic Standard 4: The school has adopted a formal teacher evaluation process and adheres to the requirements set forth in Minnesota Statute 122A.40. (Data/Source: AASC Annual Report) Scale:

- 0 = School has not adopted a teacher evaluation process.
- 1 = Meets some of the criteria, but no evidence that process is followed.
- 2 = Meets all criteria and is adhered to.

Academic Standard 5: All teachers are supported through a school-wide professional development plan that is based on analysis of assessment data and directly linked to improving all pupil learning and all student achievement. (Data / Source: School Annual Report) Scale:

- 0 = The school has not adopted a school-wide professional development plan.
- 1 = The school has a school-wide professional development plan, but the reviewer could not conclude that the plan was tied to data-driven decision-making.
- 2 = The school has adopted and followed a school-wide, data-driven professional development plan.

Academic Standard 6: The school is meeting their additional purposes (MS 124E.01, Subd 1; Charter

Contract Addendum B). (Data Source: School Annual Report) Scale:

- 0 = The school does not have a plan for meeting their additional statutory purposes and measuring progress.
- 1 = The school has a plan for meeting their additional statutory purposes and is partially meeting them.
- 2 = The school has a plan and is meeting their additional statutory purposes.

Academic Standard 7: The school is meeting the World's Best Workforce goals (MS 120B.11; Charter Contract Addendum B). (Data Source: School Annual Report) Scale:

- 0 = The school does not have a plan for meeting their WBWF goals and measuring progress.
- 1 = The school has a plan for meeting their WBWF goals and is partially meeting them.
- 2 = The school has a plan and is meeting their WBWF goals.

### FastBridge Assessment Data 2024-2025

#### Reading

% Of All School, K-5th Grade, Meeting or Exceeding their Growth Goal in READING

FastBridge Reading Scores	% Met or Exceeded Reading Goal
All School K-5 Birch Grove Community School	63%

## % Of All School, K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Meeting or Exceeding Grade Level in READING

FastBridge Reading Scores	% Met or Exceeded Benchmarks in Reading
All School K-5 Birch Grove Community School	56%

### FastBridge Testing Data 2024-2025

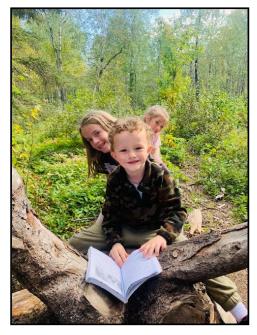
### **Math**

% Of All School, K-5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Meeting or Exceeding Their Growth Goal In MATH

FastBridge Math Scores	% Met or Exceeded Math Goal
All School K-5 Birch Grove Community School	57%

## % Of All School, K-5th Grade, Meeting or Exceeding Grade Level In MATH

FastBridge Math Scores	% Met or Exceeded Benchmarks in Math
All School K-5 Birch Grove Community School	71%



# $\frac{\text{Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) Results}}{2024\text{-}2025}$

18 students in grades 3-5 participated in the MCA Reading test. 28% of testers had a special education IEP.

MCA READING 24-25	% Proficient
BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL	50.0%
State of Minnesota	49.6%
Sawtooth Mountain Elementary, Grand Marais, Resident District #166	38.4%
William Kelly Elementary, Silver Bay #381	28.6%

MCA MATH 24-25	% Proficient
BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL	44.4%
State of Minnesota	45.2%
Sawtooth Mountain Elementary, Grand Marais, Resident District #166	23.5%
William Kelly Elementary, Silver Bay #381	32.3%

#### **HOW MUCH HIGHER** were Birch Grove's MCA scores than

## Sawtooth Mountain Elementary (166),

William Kelly Elementary (381) and

the State of Minnesota in the past 5 years?

	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021
	*BGCS 28% of testers In Special Education	*BGCS 41% of testers In Special Education	*BGCS 50% of testers In Special Education		
BGCS scored higher than Sawtooth Mountain Elementary (166) By what %?	Reading: <b>11.6</b> % Math: <b>20.9</b> %	Reading: <b>14.0</b> % Math: <b>22.4</b> %	Reading: <b>7.9</b> % Math: <b>12.3</b> %	Reading: <b>28.1</b> % Math: <b>28.1</b> %	Reading: <b>.5</b> % Math: <b>22.9</b> %
BGCS scored higher than William Kelly Elementary (381) By what %?	Reading: <b>21.5</b> % Math: <b>12.1</b> %	Reading: <b>9.9</b> % Math: <b>6.7</b> %	Reading: <b>0</b> % Math: <b>13.6</b> %	Reading: 25.2% Math: 22.6%	Reading: <b>-4.5%</b> Math: <b>26.0%</b>
BGCS scored higher than State of Minnesota By what %?	Reading: 0.4% Math: <b>-0.8%</b>	Reading: <b>6.4</b> % Math: <b>1.6</b> %	Reading: <b>6.6</b> % Math: <b>11.1</b> %	Reading: <b>31.6</b> % Math: <b>21.2</b> %	Reading: <b>5.4</b> % Math: <b>24.2</b> %

\*Birch Grove Community School has had an unusually high percentage of test takers in special education for the past few years. As that balances to a more average percentage (more comparable to other schools), higher achievement should rise while we continue to identify and meet the needs of special education students.

The VOA Contract Renewal Calculation below includes a section on academic performance for FY24 as well as for previous years.

# CONTRACT RENEWAL CALCULATION

VOA-MN schools must achieve at least a Satisfactory Rating (70% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area (Academic, Financial, Organizational Performance) to be eligible for a three-year contract renewal and at least and an Exemplary Rating (80% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area to be eligible for a five-year contract renewal. All contract renewals will be for either three or five years. Fewer than three years does not provide enough information on which to make a renewal decision.

	Meets Standard Points	Partially Meets Standard Points	Does Not Meet Standard Points			
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Finance	18	1	0	19/20	.20	19%
Governance	34	0	0	34/34	.15	15%
Mgmt/Operations	28	. 1	0	29/30	.15	15%
Grand Total	88	3	0	91/94	1.00	94%

		Renewal YR Rating FY21	YR 2 Rating FY22	YR 3 Rating FY23	YR 4 Rating FY24	YR 5 Rating FY25	Average Rating
ACADE	MIC (50%)	50%	45%	45%	45%	%	46%
FINANCE (20%)		16%	18%	19%	19%	%	18%
ORGAN	IZATION (30%)			7			
	BOARD GOVERNANCE (15%)	15%	15%	15%	15%	%	15%
9	MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS (15%)	15%	15%	15%	15%	%	15%
	TOTAL	96%	93%	94%	94%	%	94%

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Stephanie Olsen, Program Manager Phillip Morris, Academic Performance Analyst Rochel Perna, Financial Analyst Roderick Haenke, Board Governance Analyst / Constituent Services Dawn Maslowski, Program Administrative Assistant

solsen@voamn.org phillip.morris@voamn.org rochel.perna@voamn.org roderick.haenke@voamn.org dawn.maslowski@voamn.org

# **Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness**

(Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11)

# All racial and economic achievement gaps between students is closed

The percentage of Free/Reduced students meeting or exceeding grade level will surpass the State of Minnesota scores on the MCAs in both reading and math:

by 2% in 2024-2025 by 4% in 2025-2026 by 6% in 2026-2027

by 8% in 2027-2028

Measure: MCA Data

Reporting: School Annual Report (MS. 124d.10)

MCA READING Free and Reduced Proficiency	% Proficient 24-25	%Difference	Goal Met
Birch Grove	50.0%	+17.4%	Yes
State Of Minnesota	32.6%	21.170	1 30

MCA MATH Free and Reduced Proficiency	% Proficient 24-25	%Difference	Goal Met
Birch Grove	50.0%	+23.5%	Yes
State Of Minnesota	26.5%		

# All children are ready for school

BGCS will increase the percent of children who are ready for school each year.

**Measure:** Birch Grove Community School will continue to operate the Saplings Program, a licensed daycare, for children ages 3-5.

# Goal Met

The Saplings program was operational in 2024-2025.

**Reporting:** School Annual Report (MS. 124d.10)

# All third-graders can read at grade level

The percentage of third graders meeting or exceeding reading proficiency will surpass the State of Minnesota's MCA scores:

by 2% in 2024-2025

by 4% in 2025-2026

by 6% in 2026-2027

by 8% in 2027-2028

Measure: MCA's

**Reporting**: School Annual Report (MS. 124d.10)

MCA Reading Grade 3 Proficiency	% Proficient 24-25	%Difference	Goal Met
Birch Grove	43.0%	-3.1%	No
State Of Minnesota	46.1%	2.170	

## All students are ready for career and college

Not applicable to an elementary school

# All students graduate from high school

Not applicable to an elementary school

# **School Annual Plan for Assessments**

# School/Local Assessments 2024-2025

Assessment	Grades	Testing Window
FastBridge  Reading  Math	Kindergarten- 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2024-2025 School Year Fall: September 2024 Winter: January 2025 Spring: April 2025

# State Assessments 2024-2025

Assessment	Grades	Testing Window
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)  • Reading	3-5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2024-2025 School Year April, 2025
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)  • Math	3-5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2024-2025 School Year April, 2025
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) • Science	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2024-2025 School Year April, 2025

# School/Local Assessments 2025-2026

Assessment	Grades	Testing Window
Fastbridge  Reading  Math	Kindergarten- 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2025-2026 School Year Fall: September 2025 Winter: January 2026 Spring: April 2026
Capti Read Basix	4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> grade students who are not reading at or above grade level based off of FastBridge results will be assessed.	2025-2026 School Year Fall: September 2025 Winter: January 2026 Spring: April 2026

# State Assessments 2025-2026

Assessment	Grades	Testing Window
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)  • Reading	3-5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	<u>2025-2026 School Year</u> April, 2026
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)  • Math	3-5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2025-2026 School Year April, 2026
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) • Science	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2025-2026 School Year April, 2026

# **Finances**

School Auditors: Miller McDonald, Inc. 513 Beltrami Avenue NW ~Post Office Box 486 Bemidji, MN 56619 (218) 751-6300 ~ Fax (218) 751-0782

# BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL MINNESOTA CHARTER SCHOOL NO. 4145 TOFTE, MINNESOTA STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES - GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

Revenues	General Fund	Community Service Fund	Other Governmental Fund	Totals
Revenues from Local Sources	\$ 44,485	e 111 (10	0 11 515	0 1/8 010
Revenues from State Sources		\$ 111,619	\$ 11,715	\$ 167,819
Revenues from Federal Sources	739,249	13,996	-	753,245
Sales and Other Conversions of Assets	38,149	(0.00)		38,149
	17,100	(932)	8,443	24,611
Investment Earnings	2,586	-	-	2,586
Total Revenues	841,569	124,683	20,158	986,410
Expenditures Current:				
Administration	73,090			73,090
District Support Services	57,564	-	-	57,564
Regular Instruction	283,033		-	283,033
Special Education Instruction	183,910	-	-	183,910
Community Education and Services	-	121,910	1-0	121,910
Instructional Support Services	11,746		-	11,746
Pupil Support Services	24,659	7 🐷	35,592	60,251
Sites and Buildings	53,035	-	-	53,035
Fiscal and Other Fixed Costs	12,561			12,561
Capital Outlay	2,797	7,123	-	9,920
Total Expenditures	702,395	129,033	35,592	867,020
Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	139,174	(4,350)	(15,434)	119,390
Other Financing Sources (Uses)				
Operating Transfers In	_	5,000	12,000	17,000
Operating Transfers Out	(17,000)		-	(17,000)
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	(17,000)	5,000	12,000	
Net Change in Fund Balances	122,174	650	(3,434)	119,390
Fund Balances, Beginning of Year	150,309	2,329	7,166	159,804
Fund Balances, End of Year	\$ 272,483	\$ 2,979	\$ 3,732	\$ 279,194

# BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL MINNESOTA CHARTER SCHOOL NO. 4145 TOFTE, MINNESOTA BALANCE SHEET - GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS JUNE 30, 2024

	General Fund	S	mmunity ervice Fund	Gov	Other ernmental Fund	Totals
<u>ASSETS</u>				-		
Cash and Investments	\$ 219,614	\$	12,953	\$	3,567	\$ 236,134
Due from Other Governmental Units	104,537		-		-	104,537
Other Accounts Receivable	1,238		3,051		165	4,454
Prepaid Expenditures	11,703		1,615		-	13,318
					,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	
Total Assets	\$ 337,092		17,619	\$	3,732	\$ 358,443
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE Liabilities						
Salaries Payable	\$ 40,987	\$	5,082	\$		\$ 46,069
Accounts Payable	4,496		555		_	5,051
Payroll Deductions and Employer Contributions	19,126		4,452		-	23,578
Unearned Revenue			4,551		_	4,551
Total Liabilities	64,609		14,640			79,249
Fund Balance						
Nonspendable for:						
Prepaid Items	11,703		1,615		-	13,318
Restricted for:						2000
Literacy Incentive Aid	3,710		-		-	3,710
School Library Aid	20,000		-		-	20,000
Safe Schools Levy	937		-		-	937
Food Service	-		-		3,732	3,732
Community Education	-		1,364			1,364
Student Support Personnel	20,000		-		-	20,000
Medical Assistance	37		-		_	37
Unassigned	216,096	-	-		-	216,096
Total Fund Balance	272,483		2,979		3,732	279,194
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 337,092	_\$_	17,619	\$	3,732	\$ 358,443

Birch Grove maintains a balanced budget and strives to maintain an unassigned fund balance of 20-25%. BGCS met this goal at fiscal yearend on June 30, 2024, and will also meet this for FY25 (audit not yet completed). The FY24 audit had no findings, and BGCS is not in statutory operating debt.

School board members receive monthly financials prior to approval at a board meeting: revenue and expenditure reports, cash flow projection, check register, bank statement and current enrollment.

The VOA Contract Renewal Calculation below includes a section on finance performance for FY24 as well as for previous years.

#### CONTRACT RENEWAL CALCULATION

VOA-MN schools must achieve at least a Satisfactory Rating (70% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area (Academic, Financial, Organizational Performance) to be eligible for a three-year contract renewal and at least and an Exemplary Rating (80% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area to be eligible for a five-year contract renewal. All contract renewals will be for either three or five years. Fewer than three years does not provide enough information on which to make a renewal decision.

	Meets Standard Points	Partially Meets Standard Points	Does Not Meet Standard Points			
	2	1	0	<b>Total Points</b>	Weight	Percent
Academic	8	1	0	9/10	.50	45%
Finance	18	1	0	19/20	.20	19%
	-,					
Governance	34	0	0	34/34	.15	15%
Mgmt/Operations	28	.1	0	29/30	.15	15%
Grand Total	88	3	0	91/94	1.00	94%

	Renewal YR Rating FY21	YR 2 Rating FY22	YR 3 Rating FY23	YR 4 Rating FY24	YR 5 Rating FY25	Average Rating
ACADEMIC (50%)	50%	45%	45%	45%	%	46%
FINANCE (20%)	16%	18%	19%	19%	%	18%
ORGANIZATION (30%)			7			
BOARD GOVERNANCE (15%)	15%	15%	15%	15%	%	15%
MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS (15%)	15%	15%	15%	15%	%	15%
TOTAL	96%	93%	94%	94%	%	94%

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Stephanie Olsen, Program Manager Phillip Morris, Academic Performance Analyst Rochel Perna, Financial Analyst Roderick Haenke, Board Governance Analyst / Constituent Services Dawn Maslowski, Program Administrative Assistant solsen@voamn.org phillip.morris@voamn.org rochel.perna@voamn.org roderick.haenke@voamn.org dawn.maslowski@voamn.org

# Service Learning Plan and Outcomes

# BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

#### SERVICE LEARNING PLAN

**I. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Plan is to provide organizational guidance and articulate expectations for service learning.

**II. DEFINITION:** Service learning is a method of teaching and learning that combines classroom instruction with meaningful community service. This form of learning emphasizes critical thinking and personal reflection while encouraging a heightened sense of community, civic engagement, and personal responsibility.

#### III. STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:

- A. Birch Grove Community School will engage in service projects throughout each school year
- B. Each classroom will engage in a minimum of one service-learning project annually.
- C. Each faculty member and student will engage in and promote the value of ongoing service to others; within the school, the family, to friends and community.
- D. The school will designate a bulletin board to exhibit examples of service to others.

#### IV. Guiding Principles in Service Learning

- **A. Mission:** Birch Grove Community School will promote academic excellence utilizing our unique natural setting to prepare students to become socially and environmentally responsible, self-directed, life-long learners.
- **B. Vision:** Birch Grove Community School envisions quality curriculum, excellent staff, and committed families and community members.

#### Our vision also includes:

- A K-5 educational program in multi-grade classrooms.
- Low student/teacher ratios.
- · A focus on: reading, writing, and mathematics.
- Preparing students to be active and responsible citizens in their community.
- Encouraging student/parent/community ownership in their community school.

#### Birch Grove Community School will provide a nurturing and safe environment where:

- Parents and community members are actively engaged in student learning.
- High expectations for students and staff are modeled and clearly defined.
- Quality programs are developed, evaluated, and continuously improved.
- · All students' needs are met.
- Student-teacher ratios in the classroom are low.
- Students' lives are further enriched through active partnership with local citizens.

Grades	Service-Learning Projects 24-25
K/1	<ul> <li>Maintained school-wide recycling project</li> <li>Earth Clean Up Day: Center grounds, bike path, Tofte Park</li> <li>Let's Plant Trees (Let's Plant Trees   Free Native Tree Seedlings Minnesota) - Reforestation presentation and planting of trees</li> <li>Tofte Community Garden plot preparation, planting, harvesting vegetables for school lunch program</li> </ul>
2/3	<ul> <li>Maintained school-wide recycling project</li> <li>Earth Clean Up Day: Center grounds, bike path, Tofte Park</li> <li>Let's Plant Trees (Let's Plant Trees   Free Native Tree Seedlings Minnesota) – Reforestation presentation and planting of trees</li> <li>Tofte Community Garden plot preparation, planting, and harvesting vegetables for school lunch program</li> <li>Wrote cards to service members that were deployed for Veterans Day</li> </ul>
4/5	<ul> <li>Kitchen Patrol at Wolf Ridge</li> <li>Earth Clean Up Day: Center grounds, bike path, Tofte Park</li> <li>Let's Plant Trees (Let's Plant Trees   Free Native Tree Seedlings Minnesota) – Reforestation presentation and planting of trees</li> <li>Tofte Community Garden plot preparation, planting, and harvesting vegetables for school lunch program</li> </ul>





# **Innovative Practices and Implementation**

#### School Culture

Birch Grove Community School works hard to ensure a productive academic environment where students feel safe, comfortable, respected, and challenged. The start of each year requires much attention directed to new students who aren't accustomed to Birch Grove. Birch Grove integrates respect and responsibility into everyday life of the school, and we start every morning with the Pledge of Allegiance and set a positive, "let's get to learning" tone.

#### *Multi-Grade Classrooms*

Benefits of multi-grade classes are:

- A. Instructional Flexibility In a multi-grade classroom the teacher has the possibility of allowing a child to read with students in higher grades while, for example, the same child does math with the lower grades. One can more easily gear the work to individual needs.
- B. Social Skills A classroom with children of several ages enables students to gain a perspective on what is happening in the lives and education of children both younger and older. It helps them gain a more accurate sense of the past and future in terms of experiences and interest and stimulates the entire learning environment.
- C. Peer Tutoring In multi-age classrooms, the children generally have more opportunity to help one another than in a single grade classroom. Such peer teaching aids the slower and younger children in ways often beyond the communicative ability of adults, since adults have generally forgotten the problems they had in learning a particular concept or skills in the remote past.

At BGCS, we come to know our students very well. Our student to teacher ratio, multi-grade classrooms (students have the same teacher for at least two consecutive years) and the staff concern and care for our students contributes to a family atmosphere that we are proud of. Because we know our students well, we are better able to gage what their specific abilities and needs are, allowing us to serve our students better.

## The Great Outdoors - Outdoor Learning and Experience

Our school is located in one of the most beautiful natural environments in the state, and we are taking advantage of it! Included in our program is the opportunity to go cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and ice skating. Not only do these activities promote physical activity, but it creates bonds between student, staff and volunteers. We hope that these experiences will be the catalyst for life long appreciation and protection of nature and the many activities that can be enjoyed in it.

The Northwoods is in our backyard. We have nature trails that run throughout the woods behind the building where students can hike and snowshoe, look for scat, tracks, and hear bird song. School activities, such as partner reading, art projects, snow building, and bonfires, happen in the Northwoods. Our school's campsite is also located in the area.

Located over a wooden bridge and up a trail that leads into the woods, you will find The Campsite. This area includes a brick paved bonfire area, picnic tables surrounding another brick paved area, a grill, a large storage shed where we keep camp chairs and outdoor equipment, and lots of space for kids to roam the woods. Many a fort has been built in this area. It is also the site for our K-5 summer program, Campsite Kids.

The students in 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade visit Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center each year for a 3 day/2-night stay. Students engage in a variety of activities and learning experiences that cover Minnesota state standards with the guidance of the Wolf Ridge staff.

## Responsive Classroom

Responsive Classroom helps to build and reinforce a positive approach in managing student behavior.

#### ALIGNMENT TO VOAMN AUTHORIZING PROGRAM HALLMARKS

<u>Providing high quality educational opportunities:</u> BGCS works hard to improve student learning by encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods, requiring measurements of learning outcomes via goal setting, establishing new forms of accountability and creating new professional opportunities for teachers.

Our Focus on underserved communities, as measured by continued enrollment: BGCS has an open enrollment policy, and we have had the opportunity to work with families of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds in the past. We will continue to work hard at providing a high-quality education, strengthening perseverance, facilitating cross-cultural understanding, and doing our part to help close the achievement gap for all students who attend BGCS.

Socio-economic Diversity: BGCS is a tuition free, open enrollment

charter school which does not discriminate regardless of economic status. BGCS participates in a reduced lunch program, and works hard at making sure all students are treated equally.

<u>Encouraging Small School Environments:</u> BGCS promotes multi grade classrooms which enhances peer mentoring, small group instruction, and the use of paraprofessionals in classrooms to allow for more one-on-one time between the teacher and students. Our small school environment allows flexibility to meet the unique needs of all students and encourages parental involvement in making decisions based on those unique needs.

# Service Learning:

BGCS will promote service learning by coordinating a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection with the purpose of enriching the students learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. BGCS will involve students in community service activities combined with facilitated means for applying the experience to their academic and personal development.





# **Future Plans**

As always, Birch Grove Community School will continue to monitor the fund balance carefully, with the intention of increasing it whenever possible. Due to our location and anticipating ups and downs in the limited local youth population, we need to prepare for future potential declining enrollment. The fund balance needs to be strong enough to see the school though a few low enrollment years. As such, a healthy fund balance is necessary for the school's long-term future. Other options for additional funding will continue to be explored.

The majority of teachers will have completed the 2-year LETRS training by the end of the 25-26 school year. This, in combination with refining the school Literacy Plan and following the READ Act is anticipated to increase reading growth across the board in K-5. Progress monitoring in this area will continue.

BGCS intends to continue to work on integrating outdoor learning and experience throughout the curriculum and programming. Integrating outdoor learning will take some time, however, the outdoor experience is built into the programming, with time allotted for outdoor experience such as ice skating and snowshoeing, as well as the newest addition, vegetable gardening. In time, we intend to integrate more of the outdoor learning aspect into the classrooms with each progressing year.





# **Non-Profit Status**

Minnesota Business Name: Birch Grove Community School

Business Type: Non-Profit Corporation (Domestic)

File Number: 1038437-2 Filing Date: 09/14/2004

Renewal Due Date: 12/31/2026

MN Statute: 317A

Home Jurisdiction: Minnesota Status: Active/In Good Standing Annual Meeting: October 15, 2024

