



Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

January 18, 2024

Dates to Remember:

Monday, January 22 ~ No School - Staff PD/Workshop
Monday, January 22 ~ BGCS Board Retreat 2:00 Bluefin
Tuesday, February 6 ~ Birch Buddies ~ SKATE!
Friday, February 9 ~ No School - Staff PD/Workshop
Tuesday, February 13 ~ Birch Buddies ~ SKATE!
Monday, February 19 ~ No School - Staff PD/Workshop
Tuesday, February 20 ~ Birch Buddies ~ SKATE!
Tuesday, February 20 ~ BGCS School Board Meeting @ 5:30
Tuesday, February 27 ~ Birch Buddies ~ SKATE!

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.

From Ms. Diane Blanchette:

*School Director, Birch Grove Community School
Lead Coordinator, Birch Grove Community Service*

Can you believe that half of the school year is already over?!
Tomorrow is the end of the second quarter - time is flying by!

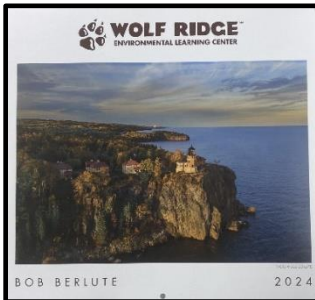
K-5 completed mid-year MAP testing in both reading and math this week. Starting next week, each student's results will be reviewed during our weekly teacher meetings with discussions and plans of action. Thank you for sending them to school this week ready to test and to show off their big brains!

As a reminder, buses are outside of the building from 3:00-3:15 for bus routes home. Saplings are usually the first to board the buses



followed by the 3 elementary classrooms at various times. If you decided that you want to pick your child up instead of have them ride the bus home on any given day, you do not have to contact the school, you just need to show up between 3:00-3:15. Please wait for them to come out. If you arrive closer to 3:15 and your child is already on the bus, no worries, we can get them off the bus. As long as you show up **before 3:15 when the buses leave**, you are good to go, with no need to send a note, email, or call!

The Tickets To Treasures program started next week! In this program, K-5 students **earn** tickets a few different ways: by logging reading that takes place at home, by time spent on on-line platforms at school and at home, and other ways determined by each classroom teacher – if you have not already, you will receive information from your child's teacher in Take Home Folders. Tickets **earned** go into a drawing for prizes of the student's choice. Prizes are displayed in the library and the drawing takes place at the end of the school year.



Wolf Ridge calendar money has been coming in, but there is a way to go! Please remember to put your child's name on the envelope and seal it when sending to school – we appreciate it! If you are sending a check, please write it to BGCS. If you don't want to purchase or sell it, please send it back to BGCS – we will find a buyer. Calendars are only \$15!

Significant snow finally! K/1 and 4/5 went snowshoeing together last week Friday afternoon! They took the bike path and then went up and around to the powerline (which is great for snowshoeing) and then came back down to Birch Grove through The Campsite. Lovin' The Great Outdoors! More pictures can be found on the school Facebook page.





Local children's book illustrator, Kari Vick, read "Monica the Muskie", a book written by Bob Allen and illustrated by Kari herself, to the Saplings. She also read "Walter the Wily Walleye" and "Walter Under the Ice", books meant to encourage kids to view the outdoors as a place to explore, learn and enjoy. Thanks, Kari, for donating your time to read to the Saplings! They loved it!

We have 12 more sleds coming to BGCS soon! It seems like we have to purchase sleds every year as they get used quite often and don't seem to last more than two years. Now we could use more snow and plow piles from Randy Nelson!



Please have your child read (or be read to) a minimum of 20-30 minutes per day/night. If there is one thing that you can do at home that has a huge positive impact on your child's academic growth, this is it! Happy reading!



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

birchgrove@boreal.org ~ 218-663-0170

Website: www.birchgroveschool.com

School Spirit Store Link: <https://birchgrove.logosoftwear.com/> You can use GRAB15 for 15% off and free shipping for orders over \$125

Face Book: [Birch Grove Community School and Community Services #4145](https://www.facebook.com/Birch-Grove-Community-School-and-Community-Services-4145/) | Facebook



~~~~~

**From Ms. Rista Sharma-Connor**

*Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

The weather might be cold, but that hasn't stopped the Saplings from enjoying the outdoors and sledding every day this week.

This week we are focusing on the letter "Hh" with the topic of hibernation. The Saplings are learning that the letter H makes the sound of a thirsty puppy and they have really been able to grasp the phonics associated with the letter.

In the dramatic play area, we made a blanket fort imitating a bear den. They are learning about what happens during the hibernation phase and how the process of going into deep sleep begins. The Saplings got a chance to explore various fiction and non-fiction books about the topic which made them realize that bears aren't the only animals that hibernate. They are understanding that slowing down during the winter and taking the time to rest is not a bad idea. The Saplings even got to give themselves a pat on the back for realizing that they are braver than the hibernating bears for facing the cold temperatures!

In order to strengthen their social emotional coping skills, we have been practicing self-calming techniques for whenever we feel the need. Our main focus has been on breathing techniques and acknowledging our feelings instead of acting (negatively) on them. Encouraging them to use their words whenever they are feeling sad, upset or unsettled, helps them be aware of each other's feelings as well as allowing them to make good decisions. Have the Saplings try this at home too!

Stay warm and have a rested weekend.

218-663-0170 ext. 21

[rista.sharmabgcs@gmail.com](mailto:rista.sharmabgcs@gmail.com)

[jessica.klemmerbgcs.com](mailto:jessica.klemmerbgcs.com)

~~~~~  
From Ms. Sara Knottski

K & 1st Grade Elementary Teacher

K/1 finished their winter MAP tests. It is great to see the results and the growth that we have accomplished so far this year! We will continue to work hard for the rest of the year!

This week we talked about Martin Luther King Jr. We discussed why this is a holiday and what he did in his life that was important. The students created some artwork and wrote about what their dreams are.

In reading, Kindergarten practiced all of the letters of the alphabet. We said the sounds, names, and sorted letters together. We are practicing reading more and more. First



grade learned about magic e and practiced reading and writing words with long I and long A. They enjoyed using the magic e chime every time we found a word with one in it.

In math, K/1 learned a variety of different math games. These games practice adding, subtracting, place value, and shapes. This will be added to our ever-changing math work cabinet for morning playtime and math work time.

Have a great weekend!

218-663-0170 ext. 22

sara.knottskibgcs@gmail.com

~~~~~  
**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

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

This week we have been focusing on our MAP tests. The students have been so focused and working hard. Though it was cold, we made some time to play outside with sledding, fort building, and a nature scavenger hunt through the woods.

In math, we have been working on the skills that we learned last week. Third graders have been working with fractions and we have been applying this to time. We have also started to learn about graphs and the various ways to organize data. In second grade, we continue to manipulate three-digit numbers with adding and subtracting. Students have been growing so much with math.

In reading, we focused on independent reading, comprehension checks, and more vocabulary words. This has helped students with their fluency and writing. It has been amazing to watch them grow in the last few months. We practice a lot with reading out loud, which helps with hearing sounds and hearing where they may have made errors.

We have started the Tickets to Treasure program, so if your child reads 20 minutes at home and receives an initial from an adult, they will receive a ticket that they can put towards a prize. I also will have an opportunity to receive a ticket for every additional 20 minutes that they do over 60 minutes.

We will continue to be going outside to play and explore so make sure to send them with extra clothes that are waterproof. Thank you!

218-663-0170 ext. 26

[samantha.forsterbgcs@gmail.com](mailto:samantha.forsterbgcs@gmail.com)

~~~~~  
From Ms. Laurie Roberts

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

This week the fourth and fifth graders have been busy taking their mid-year MAP tests and also doing their regular schoolwork. In language arts the fourth graders have been reading about ecology, and the fifth graders U.S. history. Everyone is writing a five paragraph, persuasive essay about their

favorite season. They will be sharing their opinions with the class during a debate when they are finished with their essays.

In math, the fourth graders are starting a unit on fractions, and the fifth graders are working on long division of large numbers. Everyone had a mini unit on geometry this week, and many students seem very interested in this type of math.

In social studies we learned about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and are continuing our individual research on U.S. states. In science we did some water analysis and a volume activity in the STARBASE Minnesota unit, Mission Destination Mars.

We go outside daily even in cold temperatures, so please make sure your child has appropriate outdoor clothing. Face coverings such as a scarf or face mask help when it is very cold.

Tickets to Treasure started this week, and you can help your child by reminding them to read or do Lexia for 20 minutes each night, and then sign their log that they brought home. Please let me know if you need another one!

218-663-0170 ext. 23

laurie.robertsbgcs@gmail.com