

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

November 21, 2024

Dates to Remember:

Wednesday, November 27 ~ No School – Staff PD Day

Thursday, November 28 & Friday, November 29 ~ No School-Thanksgiving Break

Monday, December 9 ~ Scholastic Book Fair Opens

Wednesday, December 11 ~ Winter Musical 1:00pm & 6:00pm

Tuesday, December 17 ~ School Board Meeting at 4:00

Monday, December 23 – Wednesday, January 1 ~ No School-Winter Break

Thursday, January 2 ~ School Resumes

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*

It has been another busy week here at Birch Grove and the time is just flying by! There will be no newsletter next week as we only have school on Monday and Tuesday. Teachers have a scheduled professional development day on Wednesday and Thanksgiving break is on Thursday and Friday. We hope that everyone has a safe and happy holiday!

Please remember to keep you child reading over the break – it makes a positive difference!

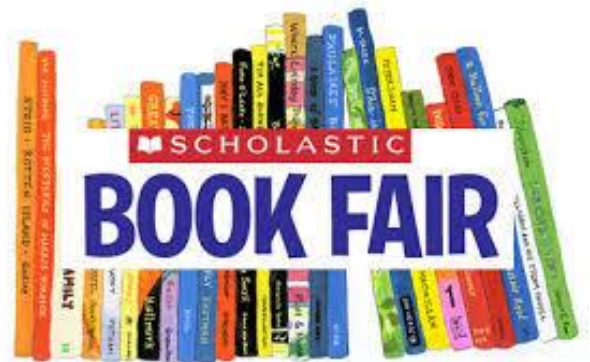


Incredible!

The Tofte General Store does it again - donating fresh fruits and vegetables to the school lunch program for the entire school year! Wow! Thank you so much for your generosity and your support of BGCS! Please show Jana and the Tofte General Store some love when you visit next!

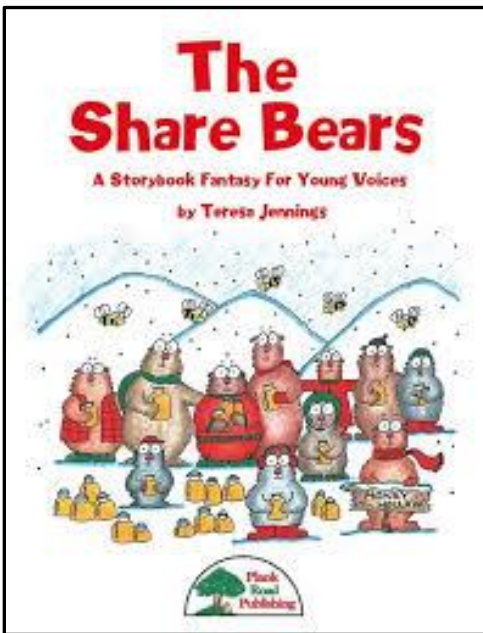


The annual Scholastic Holiday Bookfair will be open on Monday, December 9 during school hours 8:00- 3:30ish until the winter musical. You can shop during school hours without your child(ren) seeing you, just enter the fair through the front office - I can keep a secret! The fair will also be open the evening of the musical after the performance on Wednesday, December 11. Books make great holiday gifts! BGCS receives a % of sales in Scholastic Dollars that are used to buy school library books.



It's not too late to give! You can still give tonight! Just click on this link to support Birch Grove Community School! <https://www.givemn.org/.../Birch-Grove-Community-School...>





Please save the date: Wednesday, December 11th with two performances at 1:00pm and 6:00pm. K-5 students will be performing "The Share Bears" by Teresa Jennings. We look forward to another great musical and hope that you will all come to see it! Bring family, friends and neighbors to see a great show! Don't forget to shop at the annual Scholastic Holiday Book Fair after each of the performances or during the school day from December 5-11.

Please have your child read (or be read to) 20-30 minutes per day/night (or more!). 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 | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Birch-Grove-Community-School-and-Community-Services-4145/)



From Ms. Emily VanDoren

Seedlings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

Gobble, gobble! This week was focused on Thanksgiving and being thankful. We read a few books to introduce the meaning of Thanksgiving, how the holiday began, and why we celebrate each year. The older Seedlings shared with me a few things they were thankful for such as houses, presents, and blocks.

We practiced counting by adding feathers to felt turkeys, worked on our pre-writing skills by tracing a path for turkeys to find their nests, and practiced number recognition with a



turkey puzzle by putting the pieces in number order. We painted handprint turkeys to decorate the hallway that will be sent home next week. We also practiced our fine motor skills by dot painting paper plates to create turkey feathers.

With the rain and winds this week, we have spent more time in the gym to get our wiggles out. We have been playing "Red Light, Green Light", "Simon Says" and also practicing different skills with kickballs. Hopefully, the weather cooperates next week and we will be able to go outside to play and for walks. Please be sure to send your child with the necessary winter clothing (hats, boots, gloves). We do have a few spare items for your child to use if an item is forgotten.

Have a great break!

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From Ms. Pam Holm

Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

This week, we delved into Native American studies, commencing with a comprehensive map of North America illustrating diverse Nations. Our discussion encompassed various dwelling types, such as adobe homes of Pueblo people, Navajo mud-covered hogans, spacious wood-framed buildings of Northwest indigenous groups and Eastern indigenous longhouses crafted from tree poles and bark.

We explored Tomie dePaola's *The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush* and *The Legend of the Bluebonnet* to delve into legends. We analyzed the texts for characteristic evidence. What was Little Gopher's emotional response to the Dream Vision's painting command? Following our reading of *The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush*, we produced sunset artworks using wild flowers as paint brushes, emulating Little Gopher's artistic expression inspired by the Dream Vision. Inspired by *The Legend of the Bluebonnet*, we created tipis modeled after those of the Comanche Nation, acknowledging their ease of transportation as they would follow the buffalo herd migrations.

Music this week emphasized on pow wow dancing, a valuable tool for teaching preschoolers about Native American culture. We danced with ribbons as we flew like an eagle, ran like deer, swam like a fish, growled like bear, hopped like a rabbit and howled like a wolf.

Pattern building and bead stringing enabled us to develop our fine motor skills and counting proficiency. We also had the opportunity to practice letter recognition through a candy corn inspired letter matching puzzle.



This Thanksgiving strengthen family bonds by sharing stories. Oral storytelling holds significant cultural value for Native Americans.

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**  
*K & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

We are a thankful bunch of kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> graders! This week we discussed what it means to be grateful for people, animals, and things. K/1 created turkeys and wrote what we are thankful for on the feathers. We shared what we're grateful for and thought about all the different things we have in our lives that make it special.

In kindergarten, we learned the letter about sequence of events in a story. We practiced blending letter sounds and reading sight words. In math, we practiced adding and subtracting. In first grade, we are learning about end blends. We also practiced finding the characters, settings, and plots of stories. In math, we are finishing up a unit about addition and subtraction.

K/1 has library on Thursdays. Ensure that books are returned on Thursday morning so the students can check out new ones. They are learning about finding good-fit books to practice reading at home. Students can practice reading those books at home but also enjoy listening to their choice book and falling in love with stories.

Have a great weekend!

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From Ms. Samantha Forster
2nd & 3rd Grade Elementary Teacher

We have had such a busy week! We have crammed in with reading, writing, and math as well as science lessons, music class, art class, and practicing for the musical. It was so much fun. Students that received a speaking part for the musical got their script this week and have been very busy working on rehearsing and memorizing. But students that didn't have a speaking part still have a large role within this musical! We have been doing dance moves and lots of singing. Our artist we studied this week was a Bolivian artist named Roberto Mamani Mamani. We utilized water colors to create a colorful background and then drew a Bolivian inspired face on top.

In reading, we focused on fact and opinion as well as the main idea. These are skills that students understand but are reinforcing the idea with different genres. We are doing book reviews as an exit ticket to summarize the text at the end. We finished up our paragraph writing this week. I am getting stricter on handwriting, spelling, and grammar and this has been a lesson we learned this week. Practice makes progress and I maintain high expectations for writing. We learned how to add the

inflectional suffixes onto the end of root words to compare two or more items. These all have been a learning curve as we enter into some more challenging concepts.

In math, we started unit 3 in both grades but continued to refresh skills learned in unit 2. Third graders focused on expanded form and place value with numbers in the thousands in preparation for even larger numbers in the unit. Second graders focused on length and shapes all week. We ended each lesson with an old skill to continue to build fluency with mathematical strategies. Students were given a list of skills to practice and will now be given a reward for each skill they become proficient in.

Reading the scripts that students may have received is a great way to practice fluency and memorization. Students would love to show you their learning at home and it counts as an engaging reading task! Also, we learned the dances this week to songs so they can practice those at home! Let me know if you need the link for the music!!

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**From Ms. Stacy Coronis**

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

We started our week with Pirate Day to celebrate all of the hard work we did on our Pirate Island projects. We learned all about mapping skills, landforms, prewriting, writing, editing, revising and listing hints to a treasure using sequential order. The K/1 and 2/3 students came to our room to be our audience so we could share our learning. It was a great day and hopefully a bag of goodies came home after the treasure hunt we had out in the campsite area.



In reading this week the 4th graders worked to identify the story elements of fictional text including characters, settings, themes, conflicts, rising action and the resolution. We also reviewed 1st vs 3rd person point of view. The 5th graders studied cause and effect relationships in a nonfiction piece of text. In math the 4th graders are reviewing how to accurately multiply multi-digit numbers and then check their products using estimation equations. The 5th graders learned how to represent decimals in the tenths, hundredths, and thousandths place. They also learned how to convert them to fractions, read decimals correctly, and how to compare and order decimals. Fridays are "Facts test Fridays" and many of the students who have been practicing at home have mastered their multiplication facts and have moved on to division. Please keep reminding your child to practice for 5 minutes a night and continue to read for 30 minutes if possible. Ideally they should be reading the chapter book that goes home each day in their book bag.

Our winter musical, "The Share Bears" is off to a great start. All students in our room who wanted a speaking part did get one and they have a script in their "take home" folder to practice each night. It will be a GREAT performance and we are excited to share it in December!

As always, thank you for everything you do at home to send your child to school ready to learn.

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