

Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

October 15, 2025

Thursday & Friday, October 16 & 17 ~ No School for MEA
Tuesday, October 21 Annual School Board Meeting @ 4:00 Regular Meeting to Follow
Sunday, October 26 ~ Annual PTO Halloween Carnival from 2-4pm
Monday, November 3 ~ No School/PD for Staff
Tuesday-Friday, November 4-7 ~ K-5 Parent/Teacher Conferences
Wednesday-Friday, November 26-28 ~ Thanksgiving Break

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*

This week is short and sweet with no school tomorrow or Friday due to MEA! It is hoped that both staff and students enjoy some time off and come back to Birch Grove happy, rested, and ready to roll on Monday, October 20 to continue learning and growing!

Please continue to have your child read over the break and/or access some of the online school platforms. Your support from home is greatly appreciated!

A quick look ahead: K-5 always look forward to wearing costumes for the carnival and here at Birch Grove school- they are already checking in with staff to see if their costume of choice is allowable. Please note that K-5 can wear whatever they/or you choose for the Annual PTO Halloween Carnival, a community event. However, when at school and wearing costumes (we



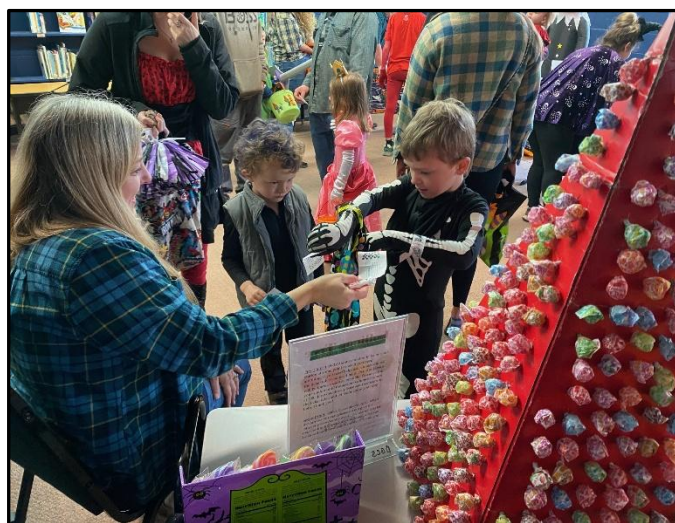
will have a special afternoon on Friday, October 31), Seedlings, Saplings and K-5 are only allowed to wear costumes that are *school appropriate*. This means no costumes that are bloody/gory or that come with any type of weapon – please save those costumes for the carnival. Should a K-5 student arrive at school with a costume that is deemed inappropriate for school, they will not be allowed to wear it. So please, plan ahead to avoid this situation – we appreciate it!

All K-5 students will have an **opportunity to earn** a \$5 carnival ticket to the Annual PTO Halloween Carnival on Sunday, October 26 from 2:00-4:00. The opportunity will be linked to academic work, either math, reading, or both. Please ask your child what they are doing in the classroom to earn this.

Autumn brings our Annual PTO Halloween Carnival, a staple in this community for nearly half a century. We continue the tradition and strive to improve this annual event. Please see the website page that has now been dedicated to the carnival at: <https://www.birchgroveschool.com/Annual-PTO-Halloween-Carnival>



Lots of volunteers are needed to pull this annual event off. For those BGCS families that are planning on attending and enjoying the carnival with their child(ren), perhaps consider bringing two adults to the carnival so that one can enjoy the carnival with your child(ren) while the other volunteers to work, then change places halfway through the carnival! It's a win-win for everyone! Also, be sure to let grandparents, neighbors and friends know. The volunteer activities are easy to do, and consider the joy you will be bringing to many children! You can find the link on the website page or click on the link below: Volunteers must be 16+



<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C45AAA92AA2FF2-59419157-halloween#/>



Birch Buddies after school programming has a new coordinator – Gayle Grinnell! Please be on the lookout for upcoming opportunities for after school specials. The popular Birch Buddies ~ HIKE! fall session has come to a close, but the spring session will be scheduled again this year. Dodgeball, art, skate, and new programming will be coming soon. As always, each day session will be \$6 and will include a snack. Payment is prepaid through the Brightwheel system. Some programming will have a cap, so always turn in registration forms as soon as possible.



White Sky Rock/Lake Agnes ~ Birch Buddies HIKE!

Find more pictures on the school Facebook page!

Birch Buddies ~ HIKE! Will return in the spring!

THE ANNUAL BIRCH GROVE HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL!



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26

2:00 - 4:00

AT BIRCH GROVE IN TOFTE



- ~ FUN FOR ALL AGES!
- ~ KIDS GAMES!
- ~ WIN PRIZES!
- ~ CAKE WALK!
- ~ COOKIE DECORATING!
- ~ FABULOUS FOODS!
- ~ BINGO! WITH CASH PRIZES FROM
GRAND MARAIS STATE BANK~TOFTE



**WEAR A COSTUME (OR NOT)
AND BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY!**



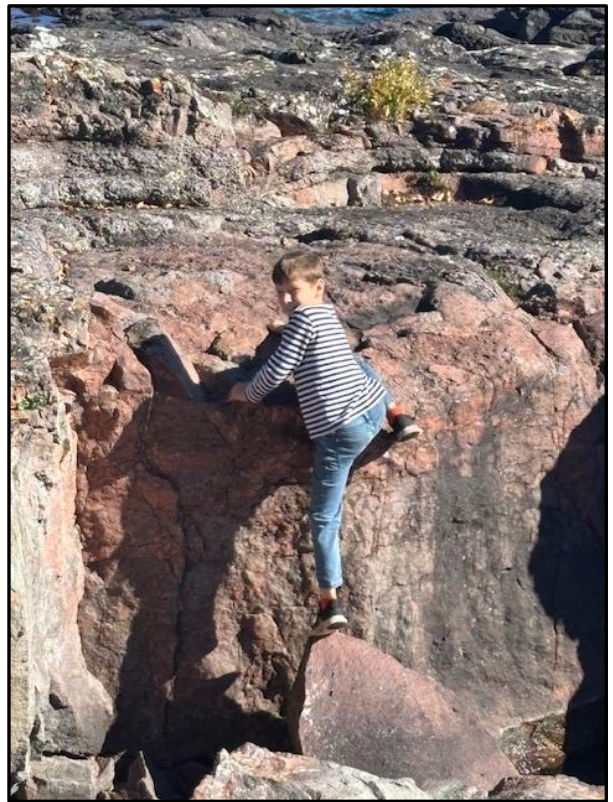
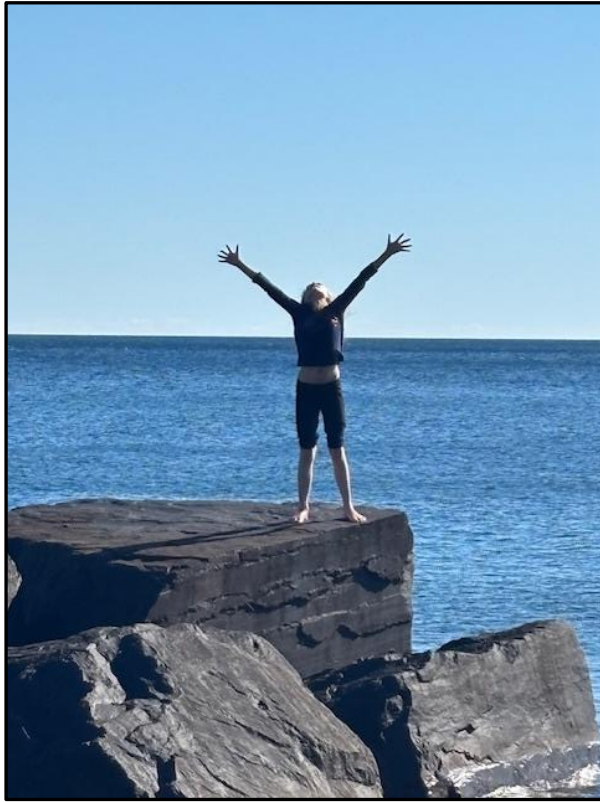
IT WILL BE A SPOOKTACULAR TIME!

CARNIVAL TICKETS ARE \$5 EACH - CASH OR CHECK ONLY.
MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES CAN BE ENJOYED FROM ONE TICKET.



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4/5 went down to the lake last week on Friday and took a break to take in a glorious autumn afternoon. <https://www.birchgroveschool.com/The-Great-Outdoors>



PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST!



AT THE ANNUAL PTO HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL
AT BIRCH GROVE IN TOFTE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26
2:00 – 4:00



CARVE A PUMPKIN AND BRING YOUR JACK-O-LANTERN TO THE
HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL AND ENTER THE CONTEST!

1 \$50 PRIZE WILL BE GIVEN TO THE VICTOR!

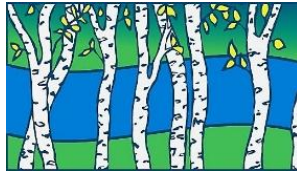


- SCARY, SILLY, BIG OR SMALL, YOUR JACK-O-LANTERN COULD WIN YOU \$50!



- MORE INFORMATION ON THE CONTEST CAN BE FOUND AT
WWW.BIRCHGROVESCHOOL.COM
[HTTPS://WWW.BIRCHGROVESCHOOL.COM/ANNUAL-PTO-HALLOWEEN-CARNIVAL](https://WWW.BIRCHGROVESCHOOL.COM/ANNUAL-PTO-HALLOWEEN-CARNIVAL)

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!



birchgrove@boreal.org

www.birchgroveschool.com

School Spirit Store Link: <https://birchgrove.logosoftwear.com/> You can use GRAB15 for 15% off

Face Book: [Birch Grove Community School and Community Services #4145 | Facebook](#)



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**From Ms. Emily VanDoren**

*Seedling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

Our theme this week was Spooky Spiders. Our sensory table was filled with artificial spider webs and plastic spiders. The older Seedlings worked their fine motor skills as they attempted to remove the spiders from the web using their fingers and plastic tweezers. Once they removed the spiders from the web, they placed them inside jars. They also used magnifying glasses to get a closer look at the spiders that they caught in the jars. We also practiced counting the spiders.

We read the book *The Very Busy Spider* by Eric Carle. The story shows the hard work that a spider puts into their web to be able to catch their food. We also read *Spider on the Floor* which is an adaptation of the song by Raffi. I used a large toy spider to go along with the story as the spider moves to different parts of the body. This was a great way to name our different body parts in a fun and silly way. We also sang "The Itsy Bitsy Spider" and moved our hands to the song. For our art activities, the Seedlings used crayons to color a picture of a spider hanging from their webs. They also used dot markers to create spiders on a web.



Enjoy the long weekend and we will see you on Monday!

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From Ms. Pam Holm

Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

On Monday, the Saplings marked the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus, concurrently acknowledging Indigenous People's Day. We studied maps and globes to recognize the positions of Spain, India, North and South America. We then painted maps of Christopher Columbus' journey across the Atlantic to the New World. Moreover, we fashioned beaded necklaces inspired by those of the Taino Natives, whom Christopher Columbus encountered upon his arrival in the Bahamas.

This week's music activities involved creating percussion music with Lummi sticks, a musical instrument named after the Lummi Native American peoples. The sticks' songs target gross and fine motor skills, as well as bilateral coordination, an important skill that will help children develop skills such as tying shoes, getting dressed, playing toss and even riding a bike.



On Tuesday, our *Monster Mash* theme took center stage, featuring an examination of the color purple, an interactive activity centered on mixing up some purple monster slime, and an educational counting exercise incorporating Monster eyes and purple playdough. Utilizing sponge painting, Saplings created spooky scary monsters and subsequently cut them out with the silly scissors.

Wednesday's lesson integrated the two themes through a reading of Maurice Sendak's *Where The Wild Things Are*, which recounts Max's sailing journey to the land of wild creatures. We discussed the importance of home and the idea that sometimes, no place compares. We investigated the elements that make our homes special. We considered how the wild things, with their formidable roars and physical characteristics, accepted Max into their tribe. Saplings then designed their own Wild Things using yarn for textures. Furthermore, Saplings worked on *Wild Things* patterning cards, sequencing activities, and pattern recognition. They also participated in prewriting activities and beginning sound exploration.

Enjoy your MEA weekend!

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

*K & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Elementary Teacher*

This week was short but sweet. We started a science unit about the sun and weather. We did an experiment to see if the sun would heat up rocks, sand, or water better. We learned about Galileo and his discoveries in the sky and the invention of the thermometer! We will continue to learn about the weather and seasons over the next few weeks.

The first graders learned about parts of a story. We discussed and made a concept map of the characters, setting, and plot. In math, we are learning about how to add by counting on. We can count on from a big digit number now. The students were successful in adding  $87+7$ ! Representing subtraction was introduced this week.

The Kindergarteners learned about the letter i and J! We are practicing decoding three-letter words already! We practice writing letters daily, focusing on the motions of each letter and the size. I focus on learning to write all of the lowercase letters first. In math, we are practicing addition and subtraction. We are learning about how adding is more and subtracting is less. The students also learned about and practiced writing numbers 6-10.

Log-in resources for our online programs were sent home this week, both paper and email! Have a fantastic long weekend and remember to read!

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**From Ms. Samantha Forster**

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

This week was short and sweet! We did many housekeeping things, like cleaning desks and finishing up projects. This was a great way to wrap up many of our things. We did a Picasso painting, which the students thought was hilarious and so much fun. We have had lots of talks about not taking our art so seriously and playing around with our imagination. This has alleviated a lot of pressure the kids were putting on themselves about it being perfect. We also did some activities surrounding habitats and how animals survive within a habitat. This will be a continued unit when we have more time. Students were able to check out more books for the long





weekend and they were beyond excited! This will give them lots of opportunities to spend reading.

In reading, we focused on long I sound and consonant blends. This was paired with plural and singular words. Our books were focused on a biography of Roberto Clemente and a funny realistic fiction book called "Teachers Pet." With these texts, we focused on story elements and cause and effect comprehension strategies.

In math, both grades were focused on place value and using place value to build understanding with addition and subtraction. There was also the first introduction to regrouping numbers. Students approached this with so much excitement. Over the long weekend, students can practice this at home by making up their own problems and having you check them. We will continue to work on these skills over the next several weeks.

Please reach out with any interest in online log in codes. We use IXL and Lexia in the classroom which can be accessed at home through an online platform. I have log in information so if this is something they would like, please reach out!

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From Ms. Stacy Coronis

4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher

Grades 4 and 5 have squeezed a lot of learning into our short 3 day week. We will start a new math unit on multidigit multiplication next week so last week and this week we practiced many number sense skills including multiples, factors, GCF, venn diagrams, factor trees, prime factorization, composite numbers, square numbers and exponents..... Phew! At the end of each week students have a chance to take a math facts test in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and then we celebrate our successes on Monday morning by signing the posters on our "Wall of Fame". Students have made so much progress and many have mastered all four operations. Students who have not mastered these facts yet should continue to study each night as the next multiplication unit will require fact fluency.

During reading all students participated in their reading group by reading differentiated fiction and nonfiction passages. Students worked with passages at their reading level and practiced identifying text evidence to support their inferences. Students also worked on their differentiated Lexia plan and had some extra independent daily reading (IDR) time reading a chapter book at their level. Students will take their chapter book home over the long weekend!



In writing we started the process for writing a persuasive letter. Students started by reading a persuasive essay and then used a graphic organizer to identify the author's opinion, the main reasons for supporting their viewpoint, and the details given to support the reasons given. By breaking down the essay students were able to identify the structure of the persuasive piece. Then we worked backwards by creating a graphic organizer for our own persuasive piece and will use this to publish a letter to the Birch Grove School Board about an idea that we are very excited about! Stay tuned!

In our content area we focused on health and were lucky to have our school nurse, Ms. Gayle, be our guest teacher. Students learned about the stages of development and personal hygiene. As the girls and then the boys met with Ms. Gayle, they had the opportunity to learn about many important changes that occur during puberty and had time to ask questions. All students brought home some personal hygiene items and additional information and activities for optional use at home. Although students had apprehension and nerves prior to the class, they left feeling good about knowing what to expect. Thank you Ms. Gayle!!

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