

## Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

May 29, 2026

Monday, June 1 ~ Lake Superior Day! for K-5

Tuesday, June 2 ~ Northwoods Day! for K-5

Saturday, June 6 ~ Gala for the Grove!

Monday, June 8 ~ First Day of Campsite Kids, Summer Seedlings & Saplings

### 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 is the final newsletter of the school year. Thank you everyone for the great year! Thank you to staff, families and students! The support that our BGCS families give to our school and students is incredible. We hope that you all have a wonderful summer – everyone deserves it! Please keep your child reading over the summer – this is SO important! You will also find log-in and password information included in report cards for all of our classroom on-line platforms. Students can get on and brush up on the skills that they have learned this year. Keep that summer slide away! 😊

K-5 year end packets, including report cards, will be mailed to families in mid to late June. Should you have any questions about report cards or about anything in year-end packets, please reach out – we are always available to our families! We hope you have a great summer!



4th & 5th graders spent some time at Joy & Company in Grand Marais with a watercolor instructor last week. They truly enjoyed this experience - oh, how they love to learn and create! Thank you so much, Joy & Company!



More pictures can be found on the school Facebook page.

[Facebook](#)

Last week, 4/5 enjoyed a three-day field trip to North House Folk School to learn about the logging history process and created their very own boat models! The class LOVED the woodworking and construction process, and they all learned so much from teacher, Tom McGee. We loved our time at North House Folk School ~ thank you so much!



More pictures can be found on the school Facebook page.

[Facebook](#)

K-5 went on an adventure this week to Putt-N-Pets where they enjoyed mini golf, gemstone mining, seeing farm animals, and eating ice cream. Students then spent the rest of the glorious day beaching!



The Annual COLOR! Day was a blast! SO MUCH COLOR!



More pictures can be found on the school Facebook page.

[Facebook](#)



Please remember that there are 2 more days of school after the year end celebration: **Monday and Tuesday, June 1 & 2.** This is due to the snow days we had. These days are planned for pure FUN!



Monday, June 1: Lake Superior Day in Tofte

Angie will be packing a cold lunch of: Ham & Cheese Wraps, Chips, Fruit and a treat. Please pack a cold lunch if this menu is not to your child's liking. Dress in layers, as we will be outside all day.



Tuesday, June 2: Northwoods/Campsite Day at Birch Grove.

Lunch will be at the Campsite from the grill. If your child does not like hotdogs or hamburgers, please pack a cold lunch. Dress in layers, as we will be outside all day.

Second year in a row for this lucky lady benefitting from the annual "Pie in the Face" event! The Tickets To Treasure final drawing ended with this tasty treat for Ms. Coronis! Whipped cream mixed with the color on her face (from COLOR! Day) just added to the flavor! Ms. Coronis is always a great sport!

We hope she gets picked every year! 😊



Please be sure to keep your child reading over the summer! Help your child to avoid the "summer slide" and keep them brushing up on their reading skills while school is out of session. It makes a big difference when fall assessments come around and it is often apparent if a child has been reading over the summer or not. Should you need books at home, please let us know as we would welcome your child to come weekly and check out books from the Birch Grove school library.

# 25-26 Year End Celebration!



More pictures can be found on the school Facebook page.

[Facebook](#)



# Gala for the Grove Sponsors for 2026

## A ROUND OF APPLAUSE!

Sponsorships are still coming in, but these are the generous folks that have sponsored so far!  
Please be sure to thank them if you see them!

### \$1,000

- County Plumbing & Heating
- Deonn Cicak & Lloyd Chase
- Grand Marais State Bank – Tofte Branch
- LaBoda Grading Inc.
- Lisa Hemp
- Rodney Young

### \$500

- Judy & Spenser Motschenbacher
- Kenneth Netland
- Lamb's Resort
- McKeever Well Drilling Inc.
- North Shore Federal Credit Union
- Tofte Circle K

### \$250

- Amy & Nathaniel Brugge
- Arrowhead Cooperative
- Mark & Sisa Buckman
- Roger & Jeanne Kegler
- Hans & Morgan Krengel
- Cooters Auto Repair
- Duclos Construction



Please make sure that your child's school hot lunch account gets paid in full at the end of the school year. Please also remember that our hot lunch program is in-house and is paid for by lunch fees, donations, grants and by Birch Grove Community School. Help us by paying your invoice so that we can continue to offer an amazing program for our students and daycare children. Thank you!



Campsite Kids starts on Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup>. If you have questions about the program, please go to the school website under Community Services/Campsite Kids and read the Campsite Kids Handbook, or click on the links below. We look forward to a great summer!

<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/campsite-kids/Campsite-Kids-Handbook.pdf>



Summer Saplings and Summer Seedlings starts on Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup>. These programs run the same as they do during the school year, except that Summer Saplings is only open M-TH.

We look forward to a great summer!

<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/summer-saplings>  
<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/seedlings-program>

During their Jurassic journey of dinosaurs, Saplings discovered one of the hypotheses why dinosaurs no longer exist is due to massive volcanic eruptions. A classic STEM experiment followed.

- 🚩 They constructed a playdough volcano and surrounded it with dinosaurs to represent their perception of the dinosaurs' habitat.
- 🚩 Saplings learned about cause-and-effect, made predictions about what would happen when the liquids mixed, and learned new science words like magma, lava, and eruption.
- 🚩 Saplings volcano illustrated the effect of pressure on chemical eruptions. The combination of vinegar and a baking soda yielded a fizzing and foaming reaction.

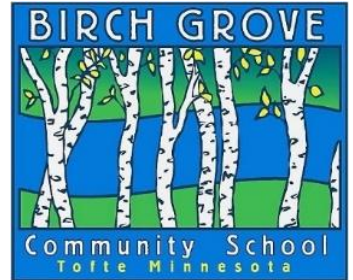
<https://www.birchgroveschool.com/saplings-program>



# "DRESS TO PLAY" OPEN HOUSE!

Birch Grove Community School, Tofte

Tuesday, August 11 ~ 5:00pm-7:00pm



- \* Meet and Talk with Staff!
- \* Tour the Classrooms and School!
- \* 2 Bouncy Houses! SO FUN!
- \* Art Projects for Kids!
- \* FREE Grilled Food and S'mores!
- \* Tour the Grounds and Facilities!
- \* Meet other Families!
- \* Enrollment Forms for K-5, Seedlings & Saplings!

## Information Available on K-5 After School Programs

Birch Buddies ~ HIKE!  
Birch Buddies ~ SKATE!  
Birch Buddies ~ ART!  
Birch Buddies ~ DODGEBALL!  
And NEW Opportunities for 26-27!



## Winter Ware Swap!

Do you have used snowpants/winter jackets/snow boots that don't fit your child but are still in good condition? Bring, take, or swap gear at this event! Bring what you can, and take what you want!

Look for the Swap Table!

Meet the  
Seedlings & Saplings  
staff too!



## BGCS



Unveiling of the new  
"Castle Library"!



WOOF!



Meet Walter,  
our school  
therapy dog!

A FOCUS ON:  
READING,  
WRITING & MATH

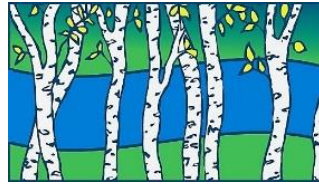
OUTDOOR LEARNING  
& EXPERIENCE!



LICENSED, QUALIFIED  
& CARING STAFF:

WE HAVE THE BEST  
TEAM!

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](mailto:birchgrove@boreal.org)  
[www.birchgroveschool.com](http://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*

For our final week of Seedlings this school year, we spent our time enjoying some of our favorite activities. We sang our favorite songs including "Wheels on the Bus", "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes", "Old MacDonald", and many more. The Seedlings enjoyed playing with play dough as well as with bubbles.

We have been extending the time we spend outside on our walks. The Seedlings love getting out of the stroller and stretching their legs on the bike path. We have been walking to a clearing on the path that has been named "Rocky Hill" by the K-5 students and exploring the forts that they have built there. It is wonderful to see their imaginations and their relationships grow!

As a reminder, we will be closed the first week of June and our summer Seedlings program will open on Monday June 8th. If you would like your child to use either sunscreen or bug spray during the summer months, please send in a labeled bottle to be kept at school. Sun hats and light jackets that can be kept at school are helpful as well since our weather can be unpredictable at times. Please send in 2-3 spare outfits that can be kept at school for those messy days that are sure to happen.



Here's to a wonderful summer!

218-663-0170 ext. 7

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**From Ms. Pam Holm**

*Sapling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

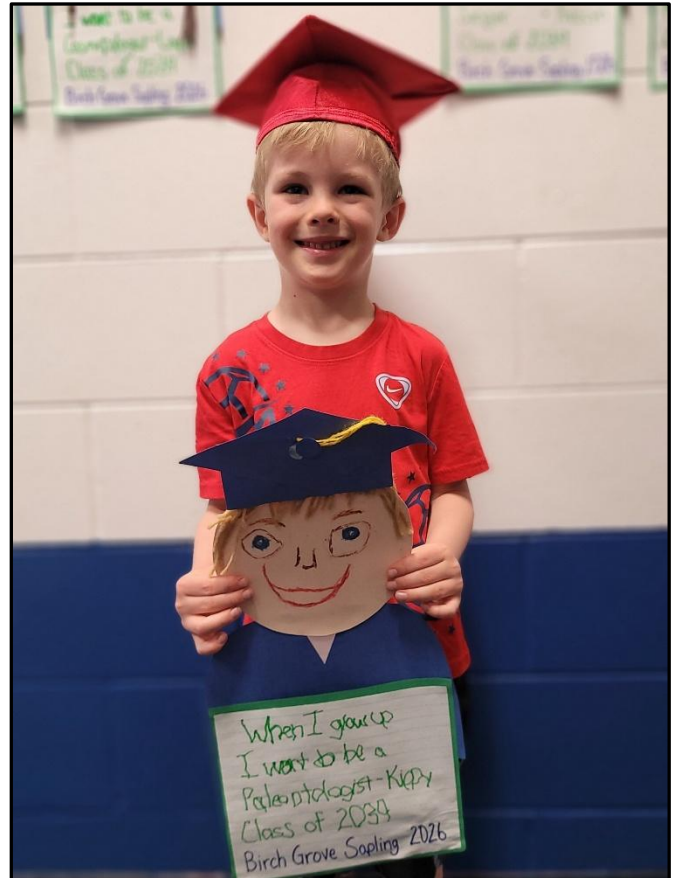
The Big Wheels Construction theme proved highly successful with the Saplings. A discussion ensued regarding the roles and responsibilities of construction workers, highlighting their collaborative teamwork. Various construction vehicles were compared, including bulldozers, cement mixers, excavators, dump trucks, and cranes. The functions and capabilities of each vehicle were examined, including the materials they work with (The bulldozer pushes soil and the crane lifts heavy bricks).

Sensory play activities incorporated numerical concepts through counting and loading rocks and blocks into a dump truck. Construction-themed vocabulary was explored through phonetic awareness and syllable counting. Additionally, hammering golf tees into cardboard alphabet letters and building names with rocks enhanced literacy skills while developing fine motor dexterity and hand-eye coordination.

This week, Saplings built three construction vehicles for art, a dump truck, a cement mixer and a steam shovel after reading *Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel* by Virginia Lee Burton. These projects facilitated the development of their concentration and perseverance skills as they encountered difficulties in placing the pieces exactly where desired. They had to cut out the pieces and assemble the trucks.

Engaging in scissor practice is an excellent way to promote fine motor skills and enhance hand-eye coordination. As they carefully maneuver scissors to cut along lines, they develop control over their hand movements and make precise cuts, an essential skill for future tasks such as writing. Furthermore, scissor practice contributes to strengthening hand muscles and improving dexterity.

Contrary to the common misconception, the Saplings summer program is not solely for leisure, but will continue to offer educational lessons throughout the summer. By integrating structured activities, both indoors and outdoors, including circle time, reading, and art projects, the Saplings will be given opportunities for targeted learning and development. Additionally, outdoor exploration



will be valued as a means of promoting critical thinking, problem-solving skills, social-emotional skills, and physical abilities. By incorporating both structured activities and outdoor nature exploration, the Saplings program aims to provide a well-rounded educational experience that will prepare your child for academic success. The year-round curriculum is required to meet specific goals and objectives in the following domains: Approaches to Learning, The Arts, Cognitive, Language, Literacy and Communications, Physical and Movement and Social and Emotional.

The summer themes for Saplings are as follows: Interesting Insects, Bikes and Bubbles, Let's Go Camping, Red, White and Blue, At the Ocean, At the Zoo, At the Circus, At the Beach, A Pirate's Adventure, Down on the Farm and Feeling Minnesota.

Have a great vacation break and see you on the 8th!

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

The last week of school is always a fast one! The kids enjoyed all of the end-of-the-year activities. We had a blast getting colored, did year-end cleaning, a field trip to Grand Marais, tickets to treasure, teacher swaps, and played lots of games! That isn't even everything. The end of the year is always a blast!

As we close out the year, I wanted to say thank you to all the parents for all the support throughout the school year. Together, we ensured that each child learned and grew! This year has been fabulous and full of great memories. It has been a pleasure to teach each kid in the K/1 classroom. I am excited to see the Kindergarteners return to the K/1 classroom next year as 1<sup>st</sup> graders! I have seen great growth throughout this year, and I am excited to continue to see them grow next year! I am also excited to see the 1<sup>st</sup> graders continue to grow next year. They are off to new adventures in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and in a new classroom. I know they will succeed in their new classroom!

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**From Ms. Sara Knottski (Subbing for Ms. Forster during her maternity leave)**

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

This week has been a big one! We celebrated our accomplishments this year with lots of fun things! The kids enjoyed all of the end-of-the-year activities. We had a blast getting colored, doing year-end cleaning, going on a field trip to Grand Marais, getting tickets to treasure, teacher swaps, and playing lots of games! That isn't even everything. The end of the year is always a blast!

Congratulations to our second and third graders for a successful year of growth, friendships, and learning! They worked hard this year, and it shows! They grew in math and reading leaps and bounds! Lots of memories were made, challenges conquered, and learning accomplished. A special acknowledgement goes out to Ms. Forster! Her hard work, classroom culture, and teaching style made all the growth possible for these 2/3 students! Great work 2/3 and Ms. Forster!

Have a great summer!!

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**From Ms. Stacy Coronis**

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

Wow! It seems like this year has just flown by so quickly! I know that the past few weeks certainly have! Our 4/5 class has had another week of special events. First of all, the class was able to enjoy Ms. Knottski as their teacher during teacher swap time. Students learned more advanced coding using the Finch robots and had fun jousting and competing against other teams in the classroom.

Secondly, we started setting up the gaga ball pit to enjoy the last week of school. Our class wrote letters to the BGCS School Board last fall and applied for a grant to build the gaga ball pit. After our geometry unit and study of angles, we created cardboard models of an octagonal gaga ball pit. Two dads created the 8 panels used in the design and next week the 4/5 class will apply a poly stain to keep it protected from the elements. Many thanks to Bryan VanDoren and Sam Crowley for their help on this project!



Our class enjoyed our field trip to Putt-n-Pets and the beach on Wednesday. We loved to golf, pet the goats, pan for rocks and minerals, enjoy some ice cream, picnic and play at the beach. It was a great day to celebrate a wonderful year of learning! We wrapped up our week with the Tickets to Treasure, Color! Day, classroom cleanup and our end of the year celebration!

I would like to express my sincere thank you to all 4/5 families for a wonderful year of working together. I am so proud of how the students in our class grew as learners this year and how they supported each other, created new friendships and worked through problems in a respectful way. During many of the field trips over the past weeks, many people that worked with our Birch Grove kids commented on how kind, respectful and supportive they were and what a pleasure it was to work with them and I couldn't agree more! What an amazing year together! Best of luck to our 5th graders as they leave Birch Grove..... where roots grow deep and branches reach high! You will be missed, but I know that you are prepared and ready for the next adventure in your lives!

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