Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Weekly Newsletter

November 12, 2026

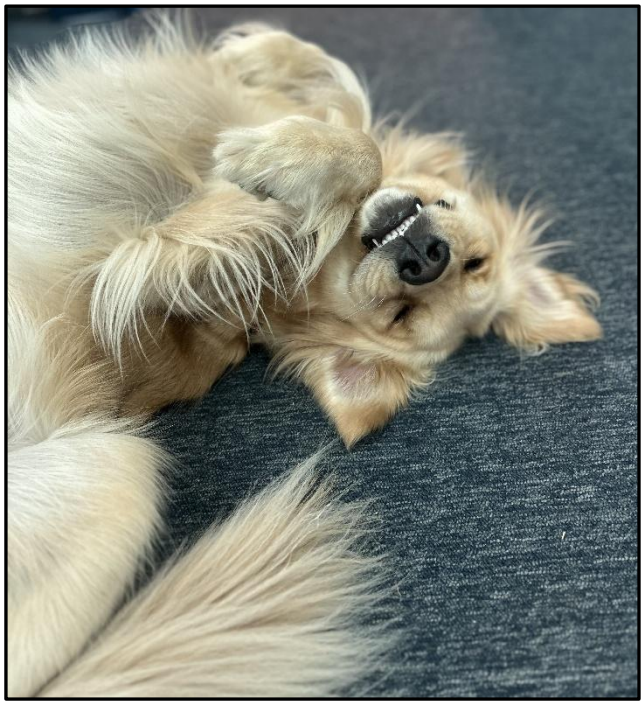
Monday, November 9 - Friday, November 13 ~ Parent-Teacher Conferences
Tuesday, November 17 ~ School Board Meeting at 4pm
Thursday, November 19 ~ Give To The Max Day!
Wednesday – Friday, November 25-27 ~ Thanksgiving Break
Tuesday, December 15 ~ Incredible Reindeer Musical Shows at 1pm and 6pm
Monday, December 21–January 3 ~ Winter Break – No School

Mission Statement:

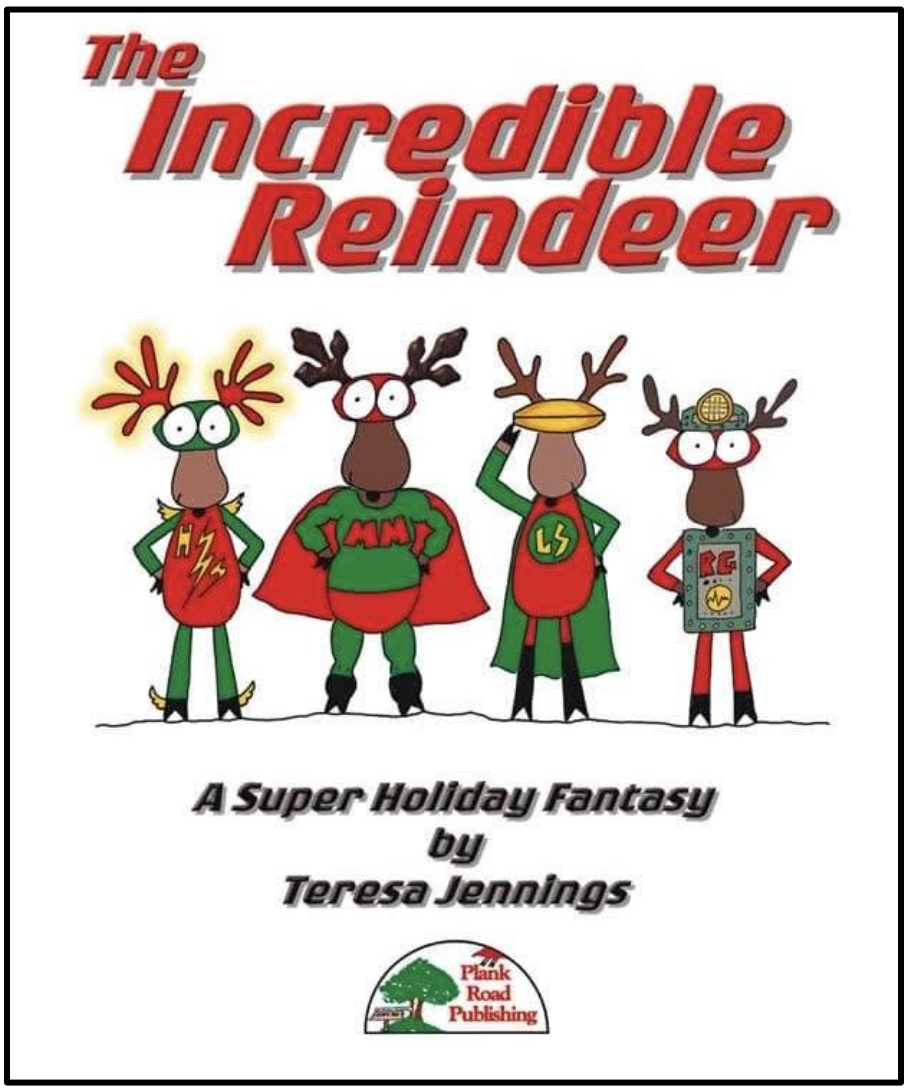
Birch Grove Community School will promote academic excellence utilizing our unique natural setting to prepare students to become socially and environmentally responsible, self-directed, life-long learners.

From Ms. Diane Blanchette:
School Director, Birch Grove Community School
Lead Coordinator, Birch Grove Community Service

Many thanks for attending conferences this week. We just have a few more to go! Never hesitate to contact us about your child – we are available at times other than just during conferences. Also, please feel free to reach out to school emails or leave a voice message on school lines, but refrain from contacting staff via their personal cell phone, *especially after school hours.* We want to protect staff off the clock, personal/family time. A healthy work/life balance is important for all. Thank you!



It's Give To The Max Day next week on Thursday, November 19. Please share this information with others that might like to support what we do here at Birch Grove. Forward the email that was sent out to families, forward this newsletter, or share the school Facebook post. We would greatly appreciate the sharing of this information, especially from our Birch Grove families. Many thanks!

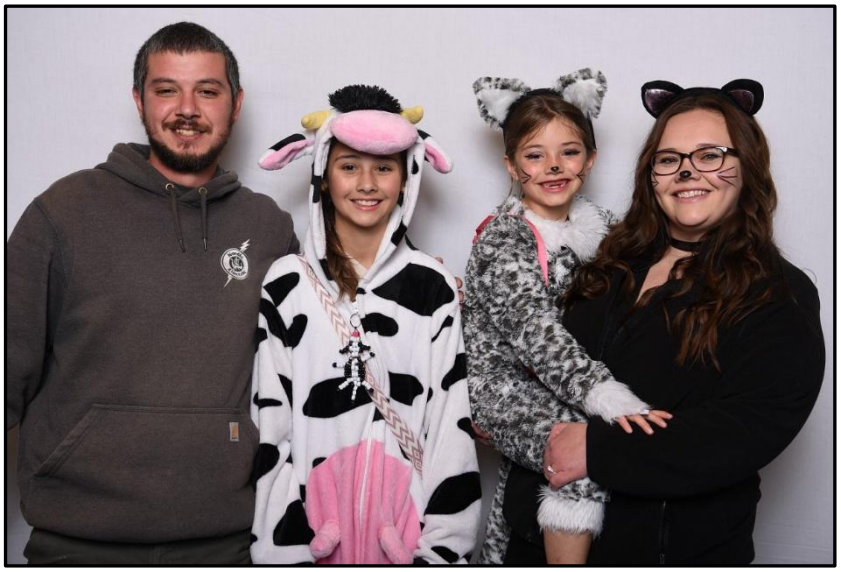


Mark your calendar for this year's K-5 musical *The Incredible Reindeer*!
2 Shows!
Tuesday, December 15
1:00pm & 6:00pm

If you know that your child will be absent from either the afternoon or evening show on Tuesday, December 15, please contact Gayle Grinnell, play leader, so that we can assign/reassign a part that will not affect the performance. Otherwise, we expect all students to be present for both shows. Please see that your child attends so as not to negatively affect the show. Thanks in advance.
gayle.grinnellbgcs@gmail.com

🎃 Check these great pictures out! Many thanks to Bruce Johnson Photography for the "spook-tacular" pictures taken at the annual Halloween Carnival at Birch Grove! It was great to see young, old, new, and familiar faces. See you all next year - remember it is always the Sunday before Halloween!







More pictures can be found on the school Facebook page.

Facebook

















Congratulations to Ana Sebold and family!
Welcome, Georgia! We can't wait to meet you!





Honoring those who served
Saplings made poppy flowers as a small way to say a giant THANK YOU to our Veterans!



give to the max

november 19, 2026



Birch Grove Community School is a rural, nonprofit, public charter school providing extraordinary elementary education as well as community services. BGCS offers K-5 elementary education, daycares from birth to age 5 with our Seedlings and Saplings programs, Campsite Kids K-5 summer program, and Birch Buddies, special after school programming. These exceptional offerings help to ensure that families are able to thrive in our North Shore community. Please help us to continue moving ever forward!

Investing in any child is invaluable, not just to that child but to every individual that child's life touches. We understand that you may not have children who directly benefit from Birch Grove, but you can still benefit indirectly by being part of a thriving community that cultivates a healthy environment for young families both now and in the future. And remember, today's children are our future!

Birch Grove is participating in Minnesota's official giving holiday, ***Give to the Max Day!***

Donations made through Give to the Max also open up a variety of additional prizes and monetary awards for Birch Grove thanks to The Bush Foundation's sponsorship of Give to the Max Day.

They include:

- *$500 Early Giving Golden Tickets daily on Nov. 1-18*
- *$500 Golden Ticket prizes every 15 minutes on* ***Nov. 19***
- *$1,000 Hourly Golden Ticket prizes hourly on* ***Nov. 19***
- *$6,000 Power Hour Prizes, shared among the top three organizations based on the amount raised between 10:00–10:59 a.m. and 10:00–10:59 p.m.*
- *The grand prize of Give to the Max Day, a $10,000 Super-Sized Golden Ticket, drawn from all gifts made Nov. 1-19. Additionally, dozens of regional prizes will be awarded to organizations across much of Greater Minnesota, thanks to the support of the Initiative Foundation, Southwest Initiative Foundation, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, Northwest Minnesota Foundation, and West Central Initiative.*

Whether you can give $10, $50, $100, or more, every single dollar stays right here at Birch Grove to invest in our children and programs. Because we are a registered 501(c)(3) public charter school organization, your contribution is tax-deductible.

The donation window is open from November 1-19th!! To make a donation click below:
Birch Grove Community School | GiveMN

Thank you for believing in our K-5 elementary, Saplings and Seedlings program! To see more of what we offer, please go to our website Birch Grove Community School | or go to our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/birchgrovecommunityschool/ Please forward this newsletter to any and all that might be supportive of the amazing things we do at Birch Grove!

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.og
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

~~~~~~

From Ms. Emily VanDoren
Seedling Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service

The Seedlings learned all about squirrels this week. We read both nonfiction and fiction books to learn about what squirrels look like, where they live and what they eat. The Seedlings enjoyed listening to the book *Nuts to You!* by Lois Ehlert that tells the story of a squirrel that gets into a house through a window and *The Busy Little Squirrel* by Nancy Tafuri that tells the story of a squirrel that is too busy to play with the other animals as he is getting ready for winter.



During our morning circle, we played a memory game that included three identical paper acorns with one squirrel picture hidden underneath. The game required the Seedlings to have focused attention as the pictures were shuffled around and they then tried to find the squirrel. We also sang songs and rhymes while playing with large plastic acorns that helped the Seedlings to practice their counting, color identification, and the use of position words (prepositions) such as "in", "under", "behind", and "on".

We got to have a close up look at a squirrel as it sat in our bird feeder and helped itself to lots of seeds as it prepared for winter. The Seedlings loved pointing out the different parts of the squirrel such as its tail, ears, eyes, and toes. Thank you to Mrs. Knottski's K/1 class for making sure the birds and squirrels are well fed!
~~~~~~

We closed out our week by painting a picture of a squirrel with brown paint and using cotton balls to paint. This activity worked their fine motor skills and also provided a sensory experience.

Have a great weekend!

218-663-0170 ext. 7
emily.vandorenbgcs@gmail.com

~~~
~~~

Winter preparations are underway for the Saplings, too. Through reading *Froggy Gets Dressed* by Jonathan London, winter readiness was demonstrated on Thursday. To promote independence and fine motor skill mastery in our classroom I have implemented the Zipper List. Once they have mastered putting on and zipping their jacket and snowpants their name will be placed on the Zipper List! Also, if your child doesn't know how to fix their sleeves when inside out, now is a good time to practice.

Friday Saplings will be bundling up with the heartwarming winter tale of *The Snowy Nap* by Jan Brett. As chilly winds sweep across the farm, our favorite hedgehog, Hedgie, prepares for his annual hibernation.

To foster more independence, grant your child ownership of their school backpack. Encourage them to pack and carry their own backpack to school. Assign them the responsibility of placing their water bottle and lunch box into the pack. Upon arrival at school, they should be the ones to remove the folder, lunch box, and water bottle. A checklist by the door outlines the expectations for arrival and dismissal of the Sapling's classroom. When returning home, designate a specific area for the backpack to be emptied by them. Allow them to remove their school projects and present them to you, using this opportunity to inquire about their creative process, lessons learned, or favorite part of the day.

218-663-0170 ext. 6
pam.holmbgcs@gmail.com

~~~
~~~

K/1 learned about sadness this week during our social and emotional lessons. We learned about strategies to help us with our little sad spots, such as finding a supportive friend, asking for help, and breathing strategies. We also learned about boredom and disappointment. We saw that boredom is a good thing because it leads to creativity bubbles. We learned about flexible expectations for when disappointment appears. K/1ers have really enjoyed learning about our different emotion spots. Next week we are focusing on anxiety!

218-663-0170 ext. 2
sara.knottskibgcs@gmail.com

~~~
~~~

feedback is key in helping students master this skill. I have slowly released students to working on multiple things independently as we start to prepare them for upper elementary.

218-663-0170 ext. 2
samantha.forsterbgcs@gmail.com

~~~~~~

From Ms. Stacy Coronis
4th & 5th Grade Elementary Teacher



The big event happening in our classroom this week has focused on getting speaking parts for the upcoming winter musical and learning the songs that the students will sing. Great ideas are being generated for costume ideas and students seem excited to learn their speaking lines! Many thanks to Ms. Gayle for leading the musical this year and all of the effort she is putting into the rehearsals. Our class will still have library and gym, however, part of that time is spent in music practicing the songs and lines.

In math the 5th graders are wrapping up their decimal unit. Students worked with decimals to interpret charts and bar graphs by using data that extended to the tenths and hundredths place. They were also able to create their own bar graphs using data given in decimals. 4th graders continued their work with double digit multiplication using two methods including the area model and the traditional model. Students will be able to use whichever model works best for them moving forward.

In reading we spent time reading a biography about Martin Luther King Jr. and what he did to fight segregation. We discussed the author's purpose for writing the story and created a graphic organizer to support the main idea. Students are doing a wonderful job recording their independent chapter books in their reading log. Just a reminder that the only homework your child has right now is to read at home for 30 minutes. Thank you for your support at home with this as it makes a huge difference in your child's reading growth!

218-663-0170 ext. 4
stacy.coronisbgcs@gmail.com
~~~~~~