



# Birch Grove Community School & Community Service Newsletter

**September 5, 2019**

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, September 10 First Community Lunch of the Year 12:00  
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Sept. 17, 18, 19 MAPS Testing  
Friday, October 4 NO SCHOOL- Teacher PDD/Workshop Day

**Mission Statement:**

*Birch Grove Community School will promote academic excellence utilizing our unique natural setting allowing students to reach their potential, preparing them to become socially and environmentally responsible, self-directed, lifelong learners.*

From Ms. Diane Blanchette:

*Director, Birch Grove Community School*

*Lead Coordinator, Birch Grove Community Service*

This has been a great start to a new school year! It has been exciting seeing both new and familiar students and Saplings starting a brand new year here at Birch Grove Community School. I look forward to seeing the accomplishments of both our students and staff. I anticipate that this is going to be a year full of growth!

The staff at Birch Grove Community School are fabulous! Here is a list of the K-5 school staff:

Returning – Sara Knottski: K/1 Teacher

Returning – Sara Silence: 2/3 Teacher

New – Heidi Milner: 4/5 Teacher

Returning – Michelle Blanck: Special Education Teacher

Returning – Jessica Klemmer: Office assistant, Tech Para, Para Sub

New – Cathy Penning: Special Ed and General Ed Paraprofessional

New – Mark Penning: Special Ed and General Ed Paraprofessional

Returning – Julie Aldinger, School Cook

The staff at Birch Grove Community Service are also fabulous! Here is a list of the staff:

Returning – Sheryl Martinson: Lead Saplings Teacher

Returning – Jessica Klemmer: Community Service Coordinator, Saplings Teacher, Saplings billing

We will strive to give every child what they need to make significant growth throughout the year, but we will need your help to do it. Please communicate with your child's teacher, encourage and support your child with homework, use time at home to promote learning, and see to it that your child is read to, or reads independently at home. These are just a few things that you can do to promote growth. The staff will have other ideas and resources for you throughout the year. Please never hesitate to contact us if you have questions, concerns or ideas!

Enrollment forms were sent home in Take Home Folders this week. If you have not yet returned the paperwork, please do so next week.

Newsletters will be sent out each week, usually on Thursdays. **Newsletters will be emailed to the address that you indicated on enrollment forms.** If you would like to add an email address to the newsletter group, please let us know. Newsletters are also posted on our school website at [www.birchgroveschool.com](http://www.birchgroveschool.com)

Be sure to check out our website at [www.birchgroveschool.com](http://www.birchgroveschool.com). You can find the school year calendar, newsletters, hot lunch calendars, school board minutes, pictures, upcoming events, resources, and all kinds of other information. I hope that you will be a regular visitor to our site. Have your children check it out too, as it has links to educational sites that are changed frequently.

Facebook:

Be sure to "like" and "follow" Birch Grove Community School and Community Service's Facebook page and be sure to share with others! We post regularly – it can help to keep you up to date with events and activities!

Each student has been given a Take Home Folder. Please check this folder daily! Use this folder to communicate with your child's teacher, return forms and paperwork, send lunch/money, send bus passes, etc. **Take Home Folders are checked every day – backpacks are not!**

Bus passes – you must send a bus pass if you want your child to be dropped off at a stop that is not their normal stop or if your child should not ride the bus home and someone will be picking them up. Please include your child's name, the date, and where you want your child to be dropped off (or that they should not ride the bus and who will be picking them up) and put it in your child's folder. **Folders are checked every day, backpacks are not!**

Transportation – thank you for your patience as we refine our bus routes. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Please be at stops a little early for the first and second week! Please remind your child(ren) of what the bus rules are so that they can choose where they want to sit and not have assigned seats. We appreciate you reviewing these rules at home. Bus rules:

- **Be on time!** If there is a delay at your stop, it means a delay at every stop afterward
- Saplings parents need to board the bus and buckle their child in (K-5 should be able to buckle themselves) – please say goodbyes prior to getting on the bus so that the bus stays on time
- **Find a seat, sit down, and get buckled**
- **Stay buckled** – children may not switch seats
- Hands to self
- Use inside voices and speak to those around you (not several seats away)
- Keep the noise level down – we want the driver to concentrate on driving
- Children may take out a simple activity – coloring, reading, etc., but items need to be put away well before their bus stop
- Children may also use personal headphones for music, audio/ebooks, etc. These types of items, however, are not sharable
- Parents! Please introduce yourself to the bus driver if they do not already know you

Hot lunch is served on Mondays and Tuesdays. Cold lunch days are Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays - families send a lunch from home on cold lunch days. Hot lunch tickets are \$1.00 - \$3.00 per lunch – depending on your family’s income. Lunch and milk tickets can be paid on-line through Brightwheel – if you are not already registered, look for an email soon from Brightwheel! Students are expected to have white milk or water during lunch. You can send milk or water from home, but both are available here on site each day (milk is .50). NO POP, PLEASE OR CANDY! ☺ (Little treats that you find in a Lunchable is okay, or an occasional other little treat, but as a rule, please do not send candy as a part of your child’s lunch or snack.) Microwaves are available for heating up food at lunch time – microwaves **are not for cooking food**, only heating prepared food. Please remember to pack utensils, although we do have utensils if you forget to pack them. Also, please send a back-up lunch to be kept at school for the inevitable day that one is forgotten at home or on the bus. A back-up lunches will be kept in student lockers. Non-perishables foods should be used for back-up lunches.

Lunches can be paid on Brightwheel (preferred), but we can also accept checks. **PLEASE do not pay in cash.** Paying through Brightwheel or by check/money order are the only acceptable forms of payment. If you have any questions, you can contact Jessica by calling 663-0170 or email her at [jessica.klemmerbgcs@gmail.com](mailto:jessica.klemmerbgcs@gmail.com)

Community Lunch is held on the second Tuesday of every month at 12:00! Grandparents, siblings, family friends, and the whole community are all invited to attend. This is a great opportunity for you to have lunch with your child and your child’s friends! Community lunch tickets for adults are \$5.00

and \$3.00 for visiting children. The first Community Lunch is Tuesday, September 10 at 12:00! We hope to see you here!

Please see that your child has appropriate clothing to go outside. We have a daily 30 minute recess everyday – we also go outside for other occasions. This year, we will be starting a new program that will be held outside in the woods behind the building (more information on this later), so we will be going outside even more than we have in the past. If you need help getting outside clothing/shoes, please let us know, as we may be able to help with that.

As a reminder, we can't accept cash! Brightwheel, checks and money orders are the only form of currency we can accept. Thank you!

Building code: All parents will need a building code to enter the building as the doors to the building are locked. The old code will be changing soon! You will receive a NEW building code in the next few weeks of school. Remember to only share this code with people that are picking up or dropping off your child. When in the building, please do not open the door for anyone that rings the buzzer-school staff will answer the door.

Thank you for choosing Birch Grove Community School! We are looking forward to a great year!

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

[birchgrove@boreal.org](mailto:birchgrove@boreal.org) ~ Birch Grove Community School Email

[bgcommunityservice@boreal.org](mailto:bgcommunityservice@boreal.org) ~ Community Service Email

218-663-0170 ~ School Phone

218-663-0170 ext. 26 Community Service Phone

Website

[www.birchgroveschool.com](http://www.birchgroveschool.com)



Look for:

Birch Grove Community School and Community Service

Some pictures of the first day were posted on Facebook! Find them!

~~~~~  
**From Ms. Sheryl Martinson**

*Saplings Teacher, Birch Grove Community Service*

The Saplings Room

What a whirlwind week! We have 16 children enrolled in Saplings, about half returning from last year and half new friends. It is a great group of children. I am excited about the year to come!

As usual we spent this past week and will continue to spend a good chunk of time learning and re-learning procedures, expectations and routines. Even for the returning children, things are a little different with new friends and a few changes around the classroom and school.

I think I say this every year - It is so fun to see the last years younger children step up into the "big kid" role. They grew and changed over the summer. They walk into the classroom confident and ready to roll. It just makes me smile to see them change, grow and develop.

This week and next we are using the theme of friends. What is a friend? How to be a friend. Friends are similar in many ways, but are different in some ways too. Again, they are a great group. I think they will all be good friends!

218-663-0170 ext. 21

[sara.silencebgcs@gmail.com](mailto:sara.silencebgcs@gmail.com)

~~~~~

**From Ms. Sara Knottski**

*K & 1 Elementary Teacher*

Wow! We are already off to a great start! We spent this week learning the expectations in school. We learned how to walk in the halls, sit on the carpet, and take care of our classmates and the materials in our school. I can tell that we've got a great group of children and we are going to have a wonderful year!

We also spent time writing and drawing about ourselves and learning about our classmates. It was great to see the new first graders stepping up and being role models for the new students in the class. Note: We have a snack twice a day, one mid-morning and one mid-afternoon. If you wish for your child not to have snack during one or both of those times please let me know. Please remember to pack a small healthy snack for this time (**especially on hot lunch days**). The children are not allowed to eat desserts or drink juice during this time.

Each child needs to have a back-up lunch and an extra set of clothes at school. **Please be sure to pack a back-up lunch and an extra set of clothes for your child to keep in their locker for the rest of the year.**

I look forward to a great year with the Kindergarteners, first graders and you!

218-663-0170 ext. 22

[sara.knottskibgcs@gmail.com](mailto:sara.knottskibgcs@gmail.com)

~~~~~

**From Ms. Sara Silence**

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

What a great first week of school! This class has really come in ready to learn and tackle new things. There are a lot of routines to learn during this first week or two along with many new materials and classroom space to get used to.

As part of our day, Pine Martens will have three recess type breaks; snack recess, lunch recess, and gym or nature time (alternate days). At least two of these will be outside. Students should be dressed for the weather, including proper shoes. We will be using the areas around the school including the woods, where it is often muddy right up until it freezes.

Next week, Pine Martens will have Mrs. Penning, one of our new paras as a substitute teacher. She is a retired teacher, and has been a great addition to our room this year. Since we have had Mrs. Penning with us since the first day, I expect things to run very smoothly, and I can't wait to hear how she uses her expertise with the lessons while I am gone. I will be sending a few videos from my trip to Alaska for the kids to watch with her while I am gone. I can't wait to see an iceberg and share it with them!

If you have any questions throughout the year, feel free to email me at [sara.silencebgcs@gmail.com](mailto:sara.silencebgcs@gmail.com).

218-663-0170 ext. 26

[sara.silencebgcs@gmail.com](mailto:sara.silencebgcs@gmail.com)

~~~~~

**From Ms. Heidi Milner**

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

4th/5th grade is off to an amazing start! We have spent a lot of time working on growth mindsets, learning ways to grow our brains and turn mistakes into a positive learning experience. We know that with a positive attitude anything is possible! We are looking forward to the great things to come this school year!

218-663-0170 ext. 23

[heidi.milnerbgcs@gmail.com](mailto:heidi.milnerbgcs@gmail.com)

~~~~~

**From Ms. Blanchette**

*Lead Coordinator, Birch Grove Community Service*

We are pleased to announce that our Saplings program is doing very well and is at capacity almost every day. Sheryl Martinson, Jessica Klemmer, and Sara Silence continue to see that this program receives a 4 of 4 star Parent Aware rating! Thank you to everyone that referred this spectacular

program to others. The word is out that this is a GREAT program for pre-school children – please continue to spread the word.

Please pay Sapling fees through Brightwheel. If you have a Pathway scholarship, it is not necessary to register on Brightwheel, but you may want to pay for hot lunch/milk this way. We can accept checks/money orders, but we can't accept cash. Thank you for your understanding.

If you are not on Brightwheel, and need/want to be, Jessica Klemmer will be sending you an email invitation to sign up. If you do not receive an email invitation by the end of next week, please let us know.

218-663-0170 ext. 26

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

~~~~~