



Big Sky School District #72

P.O. Box 161280
Big Sky, MT 59716-1280
(406) 995-4281
(406) 995-2161 fax
www.bssd72.org



Dear Families + Caregivers,

Welcome to Ophir Elementary School! We are proud to be an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program School (IB PYP).

The staff of Ophir Elementary School strive to provide an exemplary learning environment through the use of inquiry-based IB principles and concepts. Student-centered learning and growth is the primary focus of our work with students. Through the PYP Learner Profile, Ophir students first explore and then internalize the qualities of life-long learning as they prepare to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Our staff welcomes your involvement in the education of your children. Please feel free to reach out to myself or your child's teacher if you have questions, comments, or accolades - as open lines of communication are central to our effective learning environment.

Here's to a school year full of wonder and exploration!

Sincerely,

Brittany Shirley
Ophir Elementary School Principal

Big Sky School District Vision and Mission

CULTIVATE

ENGAGE

EMPOWER

each student's potential

in globally minded education and experiential learning in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem

students to lead inspired lives of impact, resilience and authenticity

Meet each child where he/she is currently. Committed to differentiated instructional approaches and practices.

- Utilize student achievement data to improve upon student outcomes
- Commitment to professional development
- Resourceful staff and community

Provide academically challenging and rigorous curriculum and instruction. IB PYP World School.

- Commitment to inquiry-based teaching and learning
- Commitment to skills-based teaching and learning
- Commitment to critical, analytical and insightful thinking

Innovative and entrepreneurial.

- Deliberatively engage local, national, and international resources
- Commitment to technology integration and digital citizenship

Provide access to an exceptional experience. High aspirations in a rural setting.

- Commitment to partnering with community for unique experiences
- Commitment to successfully preparing all students for their next steps

Encourage creativity in our students. **Program emphasizing Arts and Sciences as well as the whole child.**

- Exposure to Art, Music, and Design
- Experiential learning in the sciences
- Holistic approach to student learning
- Outdoor experiential education for all
- Global and local citizenship
- Education in character development
- Offer and support a wide-range of extra-curricular activities

Confidence

- Challenge and support all students
- Balance academics, athletics, and activities
- Support originality in students

Welcome students and families from all backgrounds, experiences and talents.

Inclusive school environment.

- Commitment to non-native English speakers
- Commitment to celebrating diversity

Respect, compassion, accountability

- Program reflective of rigorous assessment
- Education reflective of local and global issues
- Arm student to better the world they are living in
- Selflessness-beyond one's self
- Commitment to service learning

QUICK REFERENCE

Phone	Fax	Address	Website	Hours/Schedule Open 15 minutes prior to arrival and 15 minutes after dismissal
406.995.4281	406.995.2161	60 Windy Pass Trail Gallatin Gateway, MT 59730 Mailing: P.O. Box 161280 Big Sky, MT 59716	www.bssd72.org	M 8:30-3:30PM T 8:30-8:30PM W 8:30-3:30PM Th 8:30-3:30PM F 8:30-2:30PM <u>early release Fridays</u>

REGISTRATION: We are excited to welcome new families into our school community! Registration paperwork also includes birth certificate, immunization records, proof of residency and records from transferring school. The Big Sky School Board will accept non-resident students within the parameters of the law and board policy (#3141). Approval of a non-resident student is required prior to attendance. Parents/Guardians have 30 days to produce immunization records or present an Affidavit of Exemption on Religious Grounds or Medical from Montana School Immunization Law and Rules form (renewed annually).

ARRIVAL: Ophir Elementary School main doors open at 8:20 a.m. Students should be in classrooms ready to learn at 8:30 a.m. Guests should make their way out of the building by 8:30 a.m. unless other arrangements have been made. Please be mindful of our schedule and do your best to keep from disrupting learning.

DISMISSAL: Students will be dismissed at 3:30 p.m. M-Th and 2:30 p.m. on Fridays. Parents/Adults picking up students are welcome to park in the lot and wait at the front of the building for students to exit. Please be mindful the end of the day can be particularly busy. Student sign out must happen more than 15 minutes prior to the dismissal bell. Only parents/guardians or individuals identified by them may pick up a child during school hours. Parents may notify the office to indicate “parental permission to pick up at any time” or communicate authorization to the office for an occasional occurrence.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is a priority as classroom instruction and participation in learning experiences are key to academic success. If your child will be absent from school, please notify us as soon as possible, as the District will attempt to contact parents/guardians when an unexcused student does not arrive at school. All absences and tardies are recorded as part of a permanent record. Tardy students will report to the office and be checked in.

- Excused Absence: Parent notified school regarding illness, medical appointment, or family emergency.
- Unexcused Absence: An absence other than described above.
- Unexcused by Verified: Parent notified regarding non-excused absence.
- School Related Activity (Excused): An absence from school related to the purpose as arranged by staff sponsor. Student is responsible for missing work.
- Non-Sanctioned Policy Absence (i.e. Ski Teams): Coaches will provide the school with date(s) and location of students participating in competition in advance.

BUS: Students may ride the bus assigned based on their home address. Written permission from a parent is required for occasional changes and requests are subject to bus capacity. Due to buses running at maximum capacity, the District cannot accommodate transporting students to after school activities, parent workplace, or playdates. Please make personal transportation arrangements in these instances. **Kindergarten students must have adult supervision at the bus stop.**

Students are expected to display the same character attributes and behavior on buses as they do in school. Bus expectations include following the directions of the driver; remaining seated at all times; refraining from eating or drinking; using level 2 or 1 speaking/whispering voices; keeping hands, feet, and other objects to yourself; using school appropriate language. Because student safety is our primary concern, behavior infractions will have consequences which can include but are not limited to (1) an assigned seat, (2) principal notification, (3) parental/guardian notification, (4)

suspension from the bus for a period of time. Students should be knowledgeable about bus rules and are encouraged to advocate for themselves and others. Communication with the bus driver is crucial should challenges or concerns arise.

ADVERSE WEATHER: Buses cannot run in weather -20°F or colder at the school. Drivers will make the determination and contact the Superintendent to initiate communication to parents. School remains in session unless the temperature drops to -40°F or colder at school by 7:00 a.m.

Students will have recess when the temperature is at or above 0°F. Outdoor clothing and boots may be kept in classroom cubbies. Be sure to mark items with your child's name for ease of identification. Lost items will go to the lost and found. Unclaimed items will be periodically donated.

PLAYGROUND CONDUCT: Recess is an important part of our school day. Students should use all equipment as demonstrated and instructed as proper use of the equipment ensures the safety and enjoyment of all students. Some simple reminders include being watchful of the safety of others and yourself, use swings in a forward/back motion, go down the slide in a seated position and exit at the base only, be inclusive of everyone who wants to play, remember to return equipment that you bring out, enjoy the snow but refrain from throwing it.

LUNCH: We take pride in our high quality and nutritious hot lunch program which is part of the National School Lunch Program. Family lunch accounts are set up with each student able to draw on deposits. Payments should be made to BSSD by check, cash (ensure student's name is attached) or by CC through the Infinite Campus Portal (3.49% processing fee applies). In addition to the lunch account, parents have access to the lunch balance and attendance through the portal (contact the school secretary for more information). Free and Reduced lunch is available with approval of state application and participation is confidential. **LUNCH PRICES: K-5 \$3.60, extra entrée \$1.40; 6-12 \$3.90, extra entrée \$1.70; Adults \$4.30, extra entrée \$1.70, Milk \$.70.** Additional fruits and vegetables are free, if available.

Parents/Families/Guardians are encouraged to join us and share in a meal. Just contact the office prior to 9:00 a.m. the day you intend to participate so our staff can ensure the appropriate amount of food. Students should ensure they use their manners, talk quietly, and clean up after themselves.

STUDENT CONDUCT + DISCIPLINE GENERAL PRINCIPLES: Students are expected to treat others and to be treated in a way that exhibits the Learner Profile regardless of circumstances, situation, or location. Above all, we are committed to providing a quality education to all students. If one student affects the education of others, the behavior deserves to be addressed. Issues during the school day will be handled at the classroom level, however other staff can serve as a resource and support including the principal when necessary. We aim to assist each student in self-regulation and developing the ability to judge an appropriate course of action in a given situation. This includes encouragement to act in a positive way as well as progressive consequences that align naturally with the choice. Suspensions are a part of the student's permanent record and students may not attend sports team practice or compete on the same day as a suspension.

Conduct by students outside of school hours or away from school grounds is held to the same high standard that applies during school hours. Conduct which directly affects the general safety and welfare of the school and students, including endangering the health, safety, property, or welfare of other students, teachers, administrators, trustees, or employees of the school system or their families, will be subject to corrective action or punishment by the District. This includes maintaining or posting materials to the Internet or any other public venue that causes a substantial disruption in school is a violation of the student code of conduct and is also subject to corrective action. Corrective action may include but isn't limited to immediate, short-term (< 10 days) suspension up to expulsion from school. Due process safeguards will always be included (Policy #3300).

Upper elementary students (grades 3-5) may use cellphones and other electronic devices on campus before and after school. The use of cellphones by visitors, including parents and volunteers, may be regulated. In special circumstances, students may be authorized to use cellphones and other electronic devices during school hours. The possession and use of such equipment is a privilege and not a right. At no time will a cellphone or other electronic device with video or photographic capabilities be used in locker rooms, bathrooms, or other locations where the privacy rights of others would be violated. Unauthorized use may result in confiscation of the device by the District and may result in disciplinary action. Confiscated devices will be returned to parents/guardians.

Per state law and Board Policy (#3311) students may not bring weapons, facsimiles of weapons, BB or pellet guns, paintball guns, toys that look like guns, ammunition, knives, etc., on school grounds. Doing so can result in suspension or expulsion. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the 4th Amendment allows for the search of students without complying with strict “probable cause” standards imposed by law enforcement. Any student may be searched if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated state, federal, or school laws or rules. A student’s person, pockets, handbag, backpack, locker, cars, etc. may be subject to search in the event that there is reasonable suspicion the student may possess anything harmful or illegal.

All other items which are inappropriate for the school setting (e.g. laser pens, skateboards, lighters, matches, noisemakers, toys, large sums of money or other valuables, etc.) should remain at home. If found at school, such items will be confiscated. The District is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Truth in our work is of the utmost importance and supported by our Academic Integrity Policy. Any dishonesty in academic practice will result in consequences as approved by the Board of Trustees.

SCHOOL PROPERTY: Board approved textbooks and educational materials are provided free of charge to all students. Each student is responsible for textbooks, equipment, technology, and library books checked out in their names. All materials should be treated with care and should remain on school property (except library books) unless special arrangements have been made. Any student failing to return materials issued by the school or who returns the materials damaged may be charged a replacement cost. Student grades may be withheld until compensations has been received.

HOMEWORK: Homework is a constructive tool in the teaching and learning process. Purposeful practice not only enhances student understanding and achievement but also helps to develop self-discipline, responsibility, and good work habits. Homework should be completed independently by students.

REPORT CARDS: Quarterly report cards will be provided and parents are encouraged to have open conversations with their child’s teacher about their academic performance throughout the school year. Teachers will communicate with parents regarding Parent/Teacher Conferences at the close of the first quarter. Student grades are a reflection of mastery toward content area standards over time. A five-point scale is used: (0) Not assessed/taught, (1) Difficulty understanding, (2) Initial understanding, (3) Consistent understanding – grade level work, (4) Thorough understanding, (5) Mastery.

DRESS CODE: Student dress can impact performance and all students should dress in a manner that supports learning. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians along with the student to make appropriate choices. Due to safety concerns, distractibility, or inappropriateness, the following are not allowed: flip-flops or any open-toed footwear, t-shirts with inappropriate advertisements or slogans, halter tops or tank tops with straps smaller than 1”, pajamas, swimsuits, slippers, hats inside the building, excessively baggy clothing, or undergarments showing. Also, please ensure that all skirts and shorts exceed an extended arm’s length.

HAZING, HARRASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, BULLYING, MENACING: We strive to provide a positive and productive learning and working environment. It is important to remember to treat others in the same manner that you would like to be treated. Remember there may be a difference between intent and the impact of behavior. Hazing, harassment, intimidation, menacing, or bullying by students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated (Policy #3226). We are committed to fostering appropriate behavior and to proactive responses. We will investigate all reports of bullying or harassment. If you suspect your child is involved in any of the aforementioned situations, contact the principal.

STUDENT HEALTH, SAFETY + EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: The Board utilizes video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all students, staff and visitors and to safeguard District property (Policy #3235).

We welcome volunteers and visitors who have made arrangements for their visit to our school. Please sign in at the office and check out a visitor badge. To limit disruptions to learning, we discourage unscheduled visits to the classroom.

If a student is injured at school, the District will administer first aid, seek additional medical assistance if necessary, and when necessary contact the parent/guardian. If parental contact cannot be made and the student requires further treatment, the District will seek the necessary treatment from a physician, dentist, or initiate the transfer the student for medical

treatment. All parents/guardians are required to give consent for to emergency treatment and first-aid screening examinations and minor treatment.

Students have varying needs in regard to health. Please clearly communicate your student's health needs to the office staff and their teacher. All student medication (prescribed and over-the-counter) must be in original packaging and accompanied by a Physician's Order for Dispensing Medication form and/or a Montana Authorization to Carry and Self-Administer Medication form prior to administration by school personnel. Medication will be secured in the office with the exception of those that should travel with the student (Albuterol inhaler, Epi-Pen, etc.). Only authorized personnel may administer medication. The superintendent has the authority to limit or revoke the use of some medication (Policy #3416).

Maintaining the health of our students is of utmost concern. Students who have a communicable disease will not be allowed to remain at school and may only return once the transmission period has passed. The District may report the communicable disease to the county Health Department. If a student has an immunization release, the student will be dismissed from school at the outbreak of a communicable disease and will be readmitted once the danger has passed (Policy #3417).

In a District emergency, we employ a Crisis Procedure that is designed to minimize danger. Our main objective is to attend to the health and welfare of students. While it is impossible to foresee all potential emergencies, the District has researched and practiced the most effective way to use our resources should such an instance arise. **In most emergencies, students will remain at school.** In the rare event of an emergency prohibiting access to the school or if evacuation is required, students and staff will be moved to Buck's T-4 (46625 Gallatin Rd. 1 mile north of the school). If removal from campus is necessary, reports of when and where to pick up students will be forthcoming.

Please follow these guidelines should there be rumors of a school emergency:

1. Monitor radio, television, the district website, and email. The media will be accurately informed of any emergency. Channels: NPR (102.1FM) and EAGLE (104.7FM).
2. Please refrain from calling the school. Limited phone lines need to be available to respond to the emergency.
3. Please refrain from coming to the school unless requested to do so. Emergency responders must have easy access to the building.

STUDENT DIRECTORY: The District provides a directory to all parents containing each student's name, phone number, address, date of birth, and siblings as allowed by federal law. **Please let the office know if you do not want any information printed in the school directory.**

International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme

This section has been created to give parents a basic understanding of the PYP.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable,
And caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful
World through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments, and
International organizations to develop challenging programmes of international
Education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become
Active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people,
With their differences, can also be right.

© Making the PYP Happen, 2009

The PYP programme is a concept based, inquiry driven curricular framework. The attributes of what it means for our students to be internationally minded are outlined in the value-laden learner profile.

IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who,
Recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help
To create a better and more peaceful world.

© Making the PYP Happen, 2009

IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers	They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
Knowledgeable	They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.
Thinkers	They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
Communicators	They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.
Principled	They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.
Open-Minded	They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values, and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.
Caring	They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.
Courageous	They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.
Balanced	They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.
Reflective	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

At Ophir Elementary we work as a school community to support one another as we grow in each of these attributes. On a daily basis we recognize and celebrate our students and staff living the learner profile by filling out “Blue Slips”. Anyone on campus can fill out a “Blue Slip” to recognize these highly desired traits in action. We begin every morning by sharing a few examples on morning announcements. We also share the “Blue Slips” at our monthly WOW Assemblies hosted by our 5th grade students.