

Bozeman Summit School

Excellence in Montessori Education

PARENT HANDBOOK 2023 – 2024 School Year



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About the School

History

Bozeman Summit School is a nonprofit, private school serving children three years old through grade six. The school began as an early childhood program in 1980. In 1997 the elementary program (The Learning Circle Montessori Elementary School) moved into its current classroom building and gymnasium at 3001 West Villard. At that time the two schools became separate entities. The Learning Circle Montessori Elementary School changed its name to Bozeman Summit School (for clarification purposes) in the fall of 2011. In February 2013, the school added an early childhood classroom (ages 3-6).

Structure

BSS is a non-profit school governed by a Board of Trustees. The Head of School & Business Manager work with the Board to ensure the overall success and wellbeing of the school.

Bozeman Summit School is a Full Member School of the American Montessori Society, www.amshq.org, and the teachers are certified AMS Montessori teachers. However, within the framework of this philosophy, other materials and the latest research have been utilized to benefit the individual. Through regular consultation our comprehensive curriculum is reviewed against the Montana State Learning Standards.

Mission

Bozeman Summit School's mission is to encourage life-long learning by providing a challenging, well-rounded and individualized education that nurtures the developmental needs of all students based on Montessori principles.

BSS offers three multi-age classrooms: Early Childhood (3 years old through kindergarten), Lower Elementary (Grade 1-3), and Upper Elementary (Grade 4-6). We assist each child in reaching their highest potential and strike their imagination through activity and instruction. BSS offers a carefully designed environment that promotes the development of social, emotional, and physical skills as well as cognitive understanding and growth. The BSS curriculum encourages children to work in groups as well as individually to promote self-confidence, self-discipline, respect, cooperation, and a true excitement for learning. The school's peaceful and non-competitive atmosphere promotes strong moral character and human values.

Children are supported and nurtured by the teachers through a thorough understanding of child development. Positive discipline is used in the classrooms as teachers set firm, yet kind boundaries. BSS fosters the growth of inner discipline and independence thereby facilitating each child to form a healthy, confident self. The teacher is not the nucleus of the classroom; she is a supporter, confidante, guide, helper and resource to the child.

Notice of Nondiscrimination Policy

Bozeman Summit School accepts students of any gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, race, color, nationality, religion, and ethnic origin. All students will have equal opportunities in educational policies, admission policies, and any other school-administered programs

The Montessori Approach

Montessori Education is based on the work of Italian physician, Dr. Maria Montessori, whose scientific observation in the first half of the twentieth century gave birth to an innovative educational system that has grown worldwide. Dr. Montessori developed a philosophy based on the natural development of the child and his intrinsic desire to explore, discover, and learn from the world around him. The fundamental tenet of the Montessori Method is that a child flourishes in a warm, nurturing environment which supports each child's unique development.

Dr. Montessori's ideas were forerunners of contemporary ideas we now know as "individualized learning" and the "open-classroom structure." Among Montessori's original contributions are:

- The identification of early childhood as a distinct period of learning with certain specific needs and characteristics of its own
- The idea of "sensitive periods" of development during which a child is highly Receptive to certain concepts and instruction
- The development of child-sized furniture and equipment
- An emphasis on concrete materials for the teaching of concepts
- Recognition of the importance of repetitive behavior associated with emerging mental abilities
- The basic design for an educational environment which fosters the development of autonomy in the individual and recognizes the interdependence of freedom and discipline

Montessori schools have long been established in many other countries including Italy, Holland, and India. A new wave of American interest began in 1958, when Nancy McCormick Rambusch opened the Whitby School in Greenwich, Connecticut. Currently there are around 4,500 private Montessori schools in the United States and 570 public Montessori school programs.

BSS School Affiliation and Teacher Training and Education

There are many organizations that train teachers and certify Montessori schools as members. Bozeman Summit School is an affiliate of the American Montessori Society (AMS). AMS was founded in 1960 by Nancy Rambusch in response to the overwhelming public demand for more information regarding Montessori education. Today, the American Montessori Society is a national, non-profit educational society whose purpose is to help children develop their potential through the educational principles of Dr. Maria Montessori. The organization is dedicated to promoting better education for all children by developing Montessori programs, accrediting schools, granting credentials, encouraging research, organizing seminars and symposia, offering consulting services and promoting all other areas which relate to the dissemination of the Montessori Philosophy.

Those interested in membership or publications may visit the AMS website at www.amshq.org.

Bozeman Summit School requires all lead teachers to have their Montessori Degree in addition to their four-year college degree.

The Montessori Classroom

A typical Montessori classroom includes children within a three-year range (e.g. 6 to 9 years old), adults who guide and facilitate rather than direct, and a wide variety of materials and activities which are structured in a sequential manner to facilitate natural development and to communicate concepts basic to a western, technological culture. The uniqueness of the Montessori approach to education is immediately apparent as each child chooses his/her own work, receives a teacher demonstration if needed, uses his/her chosen materials independently, and then returns them to their places on the shelves. Firm yet kind boundaries are in place to ensure each individual's success in a given task. The teachers spend time observing individuals as well as groups to prepare a classroom environment that meets the needs of all students.

It is our firm conviction that all children are unique, intelligent, and talented. We know that all children learn at different rates and in different ways, and that all children have special interest areas. The Montessori classroom is a responsive environment where the needs and spirit of each child can be tended to with care and respect. The curriculum is formulated around the developmental, emotional, and academic interests and needs of each child.

In the early childhood classroom, the children are in what Maria Montessori referred to as the First Plane of Development. These years of life are marked by tremendous physical and psychological growth, exploration, and development. Physically, the body develops from head to toe. Psychologically, the child is a concrete thinker, taking in everything around them. Montessori believed that more learning takes place at this stage of life than during any other stage. The child in this stage of development has many needs. Emotionally, they need love and acceptance, respect and understanding, warmth and protection. The child also has a need for security, order, *as much freedom and independence as they can handle*, and social relationships. Montessori believed that a prepared environment should be provided to allow the child to explore and experience purposeful activities. The three to six age child's need for order is why these classrooms are meticulous and carefully organized with a place for everything. Additionally, carefully established ground rules and routines are paramount. Lastly, the teachers are true professionals who are trained, supportive nurturers of children.

At the elementary level, the children enter the Second Plane of Development where they flourish as individuals and contributing members of society. Our Montessori elementary environment is designed to provide a smooth and rich transition from the early childhood world of absorption of concrete information to the second plane of development that is of reason, relationships, socialization and abstraction. Children at the elementary level no longer learn primarily by absorption but by direct application of the conscious will. They are eager to understand and are more conscious of the world around them. The 6-12 age child is no longer interested primarily in facts (what and when) but questions (why and how). At this age, a child is an incredible social being. They are concerned with constructing a self-image and want and look for feedback from their peers. The elementary program encourages a sense of community and allows for group work through conversation and the sharing of ideas. A Montessori elementary environment fosters concern for others through sharing, compassion, generosity, and helpfulness.

Uninterrupted Work Period

One of the key components of an authentic Montessori classroom is each child's creation of a personal work cycle. Some schools' work cycles go as long as three hours. A work cycle consists of choosing an activity, completing it, achieving internal satisfaction, returning the activity to its original order, followed by the selection of the next activity.

In many traditional schools, students are required to sit for long stretches, whereas a Montessori student has the freedom to take individual breaks as needed.

During the uninterrupted work period, students are self-directed and self-paced, allowing for deeper exploration and promotion of concentration, self-discovery, and internal development. With the Montessori

approach to the uninterrupted work period, a student is developing a greater understanding of life. As adults, we have our work routines, capturing our interest and undivided attention, leading to satisfaction and fulfillment. When we are fully absorbed by our daily activities, we are happy. As students participate in uninterrupted work periods, they are gaining immeasurable independent skills needed to continue through life.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Two school days are set aside twice a year for the teachers to meet with you for carefully planned conference days. Appointments will be arranged two weeks prior to your conference date. Preparing a schedule so we can meet with all families is challenging. We ask that you make every effort to attend at the time for which you are scheduled. If you are unable to attend during your selected time or arrive late for the meeting, you must work with your teacher to reschedule another time.

If you feel it is important to communicate with the teachers in between Parent/Teacher Conferences, please contact your child's teacher and they will be happy to schedule a time with you. Please remember classroom time is devoted to the needs of the children. Teachers are not available to visit with you during these times but are happy to talk with you by appointment. If you have an emergency and need to speak with a teacher immediately, please contact the office first.

Student Assessments

BSS expects that each student will develop the habits of a life-long learner: academic competency, a willingness to work hard and meet challenges, recognition of the relationship between efforts and outcome, confidence and security with skills, an ability to acquire the knowledge needed to meet personal objectives, and a sense of responsibility and caring for other and the community.

Our goal is not to 'teach to a test,' but to prepare your child for the wide range of experiences and opportunities that life will offer him/her. Our long-term goals for our children are in line with characteristics essential for success in the workforce. To develop a well-rounded individual, with confidence and respect for others, we have to balance our curriculum to focus on both cognitive and social/emotional outcomes.

That being said, we do complete student assessments. Our student assessment program is designed to provide the student and parent with comprehensive feedback about personal, social, and academic development. As there is no one single type of assessment that can begin to measure the entirety of your child, Bozeman Summit School's student assessment consists of a number of different assessment tools including:

- Observations by teachers and staff of behaviors that indicate the student's personal/social/academic development
- Demonstration through oral and written tools of mastery of knowledge and skills with specific instructional material
- In-class performance of work
- Student work portfolio
- Evidence of work habits at school
- Performance of homework and out of class assignments
- ADAM and DORA testing materials (see below)

Starting in 1st grade Bozeman Summit School students may take diagnostic, criteria-based assessments in reading and math twice a year. The Diagnostic Online Reading Assessment (DORA) and Adaptive Diagnostic Assessment of Mathematics (ADAM) from the company Lets-Go-Learn, provide comprehensive information regarding student's language, reading and mathematics development. We use the DORA and ADAM information to complement our Montessori teaching. We also use the information to ensure we have a thorough understanding of every child's strengths and challenges, and to provide specific guidance, instruction

and support for our students.

Conduct

Respect for oneself, for others, and for the environment is basic to the Montessori philosophy. We encourage all members of our community to treat one another respectfully. Respect is not only in how we communicate with one another, but also in being inclusive, cooperative, and understanding of differences.

Student Conduct

Bozeman Summit School takes pride in providing a safe and inviting learning environment for students. In order for students to take advantage of available learning opportunities and to be productive members of our community, each student is expected to:

- Show respect to all members of the learning community
- Behave respectfully and responsibly
- Attend classes regularly and on time
- Demonstrate courtesy – even when others do not
- Take responsibility for actions and personal belongings
- Respect others property
- Participate in classroom activities and lessons
- Students may not hit, harm, or scream

All students have the right to:

- Learn in a safe and supportive environment
- Be respected by staff and peers
- Express any concerns to teachers or other staff members
- Know what is appropriate behavior and what behaviors may result in disciplinary action

Volunteer Conduct

Volunteers who become involved at the school must treat the children they interact with respectfully. If you are volunteering at the school, please:

- Volunteers must be willing to complete a background check and training before working with children
- Encourage children
- Speak to children in a gentle and respectful tone and manner
- Clarify what the child is saying by asking for feedback
- Be professional and discreet in any discussion with staff regarding a child
- Be confidential regarding your interactions with students, i.e. do not discuss student work with others in the community
- When handling disrespectful behavior, do so in a manner that respects the child's dignity and worth

Parent/Family Conduct

During special events, meetings, and other gatherings, we expect parents to behave respectfully to other adults as well. For example:

- Listen and follow the instructions of the adult in charge or leading an event. This includes not talking while others are talking.
- No cell phone use during drop off, pick up, or at events/gatherings.
- Ask questions in a respectful tone of voice and at appropriate times.
- If you feel that an adult rule or request is unfair, discuss it politely with the teacher or Head of School.

Environmental and Building Conduct

We expect parents and students to respect our environment. The following actions demonstrate respect for the environment:

- Take care of one's own personal belongings.
- Clean up after yourself.
- Treat all animals, plants, natural phenomena, and man-made materials in the environment with care.
- Hang up backpacks and coats in the appropriate area.
- Place personal belongings carefully on designated shelves.
- Walk indoors – running feet are for the gym or outdoors.
- Use an “indoor” or talking voice; shouting is reserved for the gym and playground.
- Put your work away when finished.
- Do not stand on furniture.
- Use all work, games, and activities in the manner for which they are designed.
- Report all broken, lost or dangerous materials or supplies to an adult.

Snacks and Lunch

Please provide your student with a healthy well-rounded lunch and snacks for the day. Nutrition is vital to your student's success. Research demonstrates that students who do not have proper nutrition are more likely to have behavioral issues and are less likely to perform well in school.

We request:

- No soda or candy in the lunch
- Avoid artificial ingredients and food dyes when possible
- Send appropriate amounts of food to avoid food waste or hungry children
- Respect classroom requests regarding food allergies when packing lunches
- Try to include one of each of the following in your child's lunch each day:
 - Protein
 - Fruit
 - Vegetable

Please be sure to label all lunch boxes and containers with your family/child's name. We encourage reusable and sustainable lunch boxes and products. If there is a child in the classroom with a potentially life-threatening food allergy, you will receive a letter with specific guidelines that every student in the class must follow.

Birthdays

The teachers welcome and encourage celebrating each child's birthday at school. We will have a birthday ceremony for each student during school. The ceremony helps to understand the passage of time on their birthday. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend the celebration. The teachers will lead, and the child will have the opportunity to share memories of his/her life. Teachers will communicate with you prior to your child's birthday about appropriate snacks and other needs for the celebration. If you are having a birthday party for your student, we ask that you not distribute hard copy invitations at school unless you are inviting the entire class. A birthday list of emails will be collected and distributed each school year.

Dress and Grooming

Students may not wear any item that promotes drug use, weapon use, threats of violence, sexual harassment, bullying, or other intimidation. We recognize and respect that a student's choice of dress and grooming habits are a personal matter. However, concerns about students' dress potentially impacting their health or safety or disrupting the learning environment will be discussed with parents.

We request that children wear appropriate and comfortable clothes. We also request that all children have weather-appropriate clothes to wear year-round. We go outside each day for two recess periods. On days when temperatures are below 10 degrees, we will hold recess in the gym.

Please also keep a change of clothes at school. All clothing should be labeled with the child's name. The child should also have a pair of indoor shoes and gym shoes that are kept at school.

Electronic Devices

We discourage the use of electronic devices at school. If it is necessary for your child to have a cell phone or smart watch at school, please make arrangements with your child's teacher prior to use. If cell phones or smart watches are brought to school, with teacher knowledge, they must remain turned off and in the child's locker during school time. Permission to use them is at the consent of the teacher.

Attendance

Regular attendance is instrumental in a student's educational success. A student who regularly misses school will miss important pieces of curriculum. Research indicates that missing just 2 days per month negatively impacts a student's short and long-term academic achievements.

Students who are consistently part of their school community report stronger relationships with peers and staff members. They will also experience increases in self-esteem, confidence, academic success, and value of learning.

You can help your child have better attendance by establishing regular AM/PM routing. Schedule extended vacations during holiday or summer breaks. If you need help with increasing attendance, please reach out, we are here to help.

We understand that some absences are unavoidable such as sickness and bereavements. If your student will be absent, please notify the school as soon as possible. You can call the main line or email us at info@bozemansummitschool.org. We also recognize the importance of educational trips and value the experiences and growth they can bring to a student. Please discuss upcoming trips with your teachers or the head of school.

Parents of a student who misses 10 unapproved days of school during the academic year will meet with the lead teacher and head of school. They will have to sign and acknowledge the academic impact of their absences. Attendance will also be documented in progress reports which are passed onto future schools.

Arrival and Departure

Regular drop-off time is 8:15–8:45 am. Please respect this timing to ensure your child can participate in the morning recess period and begin their day in the classroom with the rest of the students. A staff member will greet you at the door beginning at 8:15am, letting you know that we are ready to begin school. Until the students enter the building, the parents are responsible for the supervision of their children.

School dismissal begins at 3:15pm and runs until 3:30pm. Once a student is dismissed from school, they

become the parent's responsibility – even if they remain on school property. Please make sure your child has checked in with a teacher prior to leaving school for the day.

Transitions can be hard for students you can support drop off and make it easier for your child by:

- Arriving well-rested and well-fed
- Encouraging independence – this is a lifelong skill that is very important to teach!
- Creating a consistent goodbye routine
- Remembering during a difficult drop off that you can trust the teachers. Say a quick goodbye and let your student settle into their day.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures:

- Each vehicle entering the driveway circle should pull up to the area by the door to release or pick up your child/ren. The area along the curb is for loading and unloading only. Have your child/ren ready to exit when it is your vehicle's turn. Adults should remain in their vehicles. Once children have entered or exited the vehicle, pull away to allow the next car to pull into the space. This will keep the traffic flowing.
- All Early Childhood students **MUST** be walked to the classroom by a parent or guardian.
- If you need or want to enter the building with your child, please park in an available space in the circle, on the street (Villard) or behind the gymnasium. **Please do not park in the driveway along the sidewalk** if you come into the school during drop-off and pick-up time.
- If you must leave your vehicle, do not leave siblings or other children unattended in vehicles. This is for the safety of all children.
- Please inform any nannies, babysitters, or family members who may be picking up or dropping off the procedures. If it is the first time they are picking the student up, we ask for them to bring a photo ID to ensure the student is being picked up by the parent approved person.

Children will only be released to parents unless other specific, written arrangements have been made.

Bringing Things from Home

Sharing books, records, pictures, unique educational toys, items related to special studies or natural phenomena brought from home is encouraged. Children have the opportunity to share with their classmates during Morning Meeting or Circle in their respective classrooms. Please keep toys, collectibles, games, cards, and other toys at home or in your car as they can become very distracting to other students. Occasionally there may be an exception to this rule that is directly related to the curriculum or classroom activities, and this will be communicated to students and parents.

Parent Participation

We have found over the years that students are happiest, have high self-worth, and succeed academically when parents and teachers work together as a team. Therefore, your involvement as a parent is essential to your child's success. You are encouraged to consider ways in which you wish to participate. Each parent has special skills and interests therefore we encourage you to share yours with us. Please remember that we ask you to be patient and respectful of the students and teachers as it is our responsibility to ensure the classroom needs and the needs of the children are being met. If you have a way that you would like to help in the classroom, please share your interests or talents with classroom teachers. Otherwise, staff will reach out to the parent community with needs throughout the year. Prior to volunteering, we ask that you read and sign the *BSS Volunteer Agreement* to ensure that the school and classroom needs, and expectations are understood and communicated.

Photography and Social Media

Taking photos and videos of your child during school activities and functions is a common occurrence and

welcomed. However, many families are not comfortable with their child's photograph being shared on social media. Do not post photos of students other than yours without consent from that child's parents.

Immunizations

BSS requires that all students meet the needs of the State of Montana immunization requirements.

Minimum Requirements from DPHHS:

Age at Entry	Number of Doses - Vaccine Type
Under 2 months	no vaccinations required
by 3 months old	1 dose of polio vaccine 1 dose of DTP vaccine 1 dose of Hib vaccine 1 dose of Hep B vaccine 1 dose of PCV vaccine
by 5 months old	2 doses of polio vaccine 2 doses of DTP vaccine 2 doses of Hib vaccine 2 doses of Hep B vaccine 2 doses of PCV vaccine
by 7 months old	2 doses of polio vaccine 3 doses of DTP vaccine 2 or 3 doses of Hib vaccine* 2 doses of Hep B vaccine 3 doses of PCV vaccine
by 16 months old	2 doses of polio vaccine 3 doses of DTP vaccine 3 or 4 doses of Hib vaccine* 2 dose of Hep B vaccine 4 dose of PCV vaccine* 1 dose of varicella vaccine 1 dose of MMR vaccine
by 19 months old	3 doses of polio vaccine 4 doses of DTP vaccine 3 or 4 doses of Hib vaccine* 3 dose of Hep B vaccine 4 dose of PCV vaccine* 1 dose of varicella vaccine 1 dose of MMR vaccine
by 6 years old	3 doses of polio vaccine, one given after the 4th birthday 4 doses of DTP vaccine, one given after the 4th birthday 3 doses of Hep B vaccine 2 doses of varicella vaccine 2 doses of MMR vaccine
by 12 years old	3 doses of polio vaccine, one given after the 4th birthday 1 dose of Tdap vaccine 3 doses of Hep B vaccine

* varies

	2 doses of varicella vaccine 2 doses of MMR vaccine
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depending on vaccine type used or the ACIP catch-up schedule.

If a prospective student is not vaccinated with all of the vaccines required in (1), the prospective student may be admitted conditionally in accordance with the requirements of ARM [37.114.710](#).

If a religious or medical exemption is claimed, the school must maintain the record of that exemption in accord with the requirements of ARM [37.114.715](#) or [37.114.716](#), whichever applies*.

*Whenever there is good cause to believe that a person for whom an exemption has been filed has a disease or has been exposed to a disease listed in [20-5-403](#) or will as the result of school attendance be exposed to the disease, the person may be excluded from the school by the local health department until the excluding authority is satisfied that the person is no longer risks contracting or transmitting that disease.

Illness Policy

Bozeman Summit School strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for students and staff. If your child is experiencing any of the following symptoms, they will be sent home from school and must remain home until they are well enough to participate and have been fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting free for 24 hours without medication (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc.). Parents will be notified of illness occurring at school via phone. Also, if your child experiences any of these symptoms outside of school they must be kept home until 24 hours after symptoms have resolved:

- Unexplained vomiting
- Unexplained diarrhea
 - Two or more episodes within 24 hours
 - Single episode combined with other symptom(s) i.e. stomach ache, headache, elevated temperature
- Fever (temperature of 100.4 F or higher)
- Fainting

If your child has any of the following symptoms, please monitor closely and keep them home if needed. If the below symptoms are severe we will contact you and may request your student be picked up.

- Undiagnosed or unknown blistering or rash
- Persistent cough or runny nose
- Headache, earache, sore throat, body aches, eye redness/discharge
- Unable to participate in normal classroom activities due to illness/fatigue

Depending on the severity and nature of illness we reserve the right to request a note from a medical provider prior to returning to school.

Discrete and confidential notification(s) will be sent to the school community notifying of illness if necessary.

Midday drop-offs to meet the 24-hour rule must be approved ahead of time and may be denied based on the severity/type of illness (Example: Student was sent home at 1:45 pm Monday, please do not drop off at 1:45 pm Tuesday without approval). No need for approval for a normal morning drop off 24 hours after symptoms have resolved.

If antibiotic treatment is needed for your child's illness (such as strep throat, bacterial conjunctivitis, etc.), they must remain at home for the first full 24 hours of medication.

BSS will follow the latest CDC guidelines on all infectious illnesses, including COVID-19.

If your child is home from school due to illness, please notify the office and/or your child's teacher.

Please contact your child's provider regarding any health care questions or concerns.

Head Lice

If head lice is detected at school, we will request that the student be picked up for treatment at home. A student may return to school the next day only after treatment and must be checked by a staff member prior to reentering the classroom.

Medication Policy

The staff at Bozeman Summit School will oversee self-administration of medication, but will not administer medication directly to a student, unless in case of emergency (i.e. anaphylaxis or severe allergic response, asthma attack, diabetic emergency). Parents should give medication directly to a teacher to be stored in a safe, designated area in the school office. Medications should never be sent in a student's backpack or lunch box.

Non-ingestible over-the-counter (OTC) medications such as insect repellent, sunscreen, antihistamine cream, antibiotic ointment, and burn cream, cannot be administered without parental consent. If your student needs an ingestible OTC medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, parents/guardians will need to fill out a Medication Authorization Form. All forms related to medication administration can be obtained from the front office.

For students who require prescription medication on an ongoing basis (i.e. mood stabilizers, inhalers, EpiPens) the parent will need to provide the medication in the original container that clearly states the student's first and last name, date the prescription was filled, name and contact information for the prescribing medical professional, expiration date, dosage amount, length of time to give the medication, and instructions for administration and storage. This will need to accompany a written Medication Authorization Form signed by the parent (form can be obtained from the front office). Staff will maintain an administration log for each medication a student needs.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to supply the medication in a regular and timely fashion. The school shall not be held liable if the parent/guardian fails to provide the prescribed medication.

First Aid and Emergency Policy

All Bozeman Summit School employees must be current on their CPR certification. The school will maintain a first aid kits on site that contains:

- sterile, absorbent bandages
- tweezers and scissors
- a cold pack
- tape and a variety of band-aides
- disposable gloves

A portable first aid kit containing the above items will be taken on all field trips. Parents or designated contact will be called immediately for any serious injuries or illness.

If it is suspected that a student has come in contact with or ingested a poisonous substance BSS will call Montana Poison Control center at 1(800)222-1222.

If an injury or illness above the scope of what our staff and/or first aid kit can manage emergency services will be contacted. If necessary staff will perform life saving CPR and first aid measures and continue until emergency medical teams arrive.

Vision and Hearing Screening

Bozeman Summit School will occasionally offer optional vision, hearing, or developmental screenings. Permission slips will be sent home prior to any screenings and families will have the opportunity to opt-out if they chose to do so.

We encourage all families to get regular hearing and vision screenings through their primary care physician or another specialist, and staff members will be sure to communicate any concerns with vision or hearing in the classroom as it is observed.

Early Childhood Rest Period

Bozeman Summit school will follow current Safe Sleep guidelines as set forth by the DPHHS. Students will be provided a nap mat for rest. Each mat will be labeled with the child's name and will be sanitized daily. Parents can provide 1 lightweight washable blanket. Blankets will be stored separately from other students and sent home every Friday to be laundered and returned on Monday.

Recess/Outside Play and Minor Injuries

It is staff's responsibility to be familiar with playground rules and safety procedures prior to duty. Supervision on the playground is always mandatory. Please ask the Office if you are interested in reviewing our Playground Policy.

Recess will take place in the Gym when the temperature is 10 degrees or below.

Students engage in many kinds of recess activities and even when precautions are taken, accidents may happen. Minor scrapes and bumps are to be expected as children grow in their knowledge of the physical world and their own capacities. Standard first-aid procedures are practiced including applying ice to bumps, washing out cuts and scrapes with soap and water, and applying band-aids as necessary.

Parents will be notified via phone immediately of serious injury. For minor injuries parents will be informed of the injury at pick up and asked to sign a form acknowledging the injury.

***By signing the Parent Handbook form, parents agree that they understand and expressly acknowledge their release of Bozeman Summit School and its staff members, board members and volunteers from all liability for personal injury or death connected in any way whatsoever to their child's participation in activities on BSS's premises. This release includes any claims based on negligence, action or inaction on the part of BSS, its staff and volunteers. This includes all activities on the school grounds such as using playground equipment, skateboarding, sledding, etc. ***

In case of more serious injury, see the policy on "*Emergency Procedures/First Aid Treatment.*"

Please be sure you maintain current telephone numbers where you or a friend can be contacted in case of an emergency.

Safety and Discipline

Our school policy for discipline is one of “positive discipline” and mediation. We have a mediation/conflict resolution curriculum in place, which teaches children personal responsibility and the skills of conflict resolution through mediation. Whether or not a child is in your direct charge, staff is encouraged to intervene when children are displaying inappropriate behavior.

Students have a right to an education in a safe environment. Students do not have the right to deprive others of their fundamental right to an education. It is, therefore, the duty of the school administration to establish and enforce rules and regulations that contribute to a productive, orderly and safe school environment. Employees must review rules of conduct and corrective action on an annual basis to ensure we are implementing the most developmentally appropriate policies.

Teachers will always attempt positive discipline measures. If those measures fail they may excuse a student from the classroom until a resolution can be made.

Guidelines of Conduct

Each student is expected to strive to take full advantage of his/her educational opportunities and to do his/her best in all areas of school life. Each student has the right to an education in an orderly, safe, and sanitary atmosphere and is expected to contribute to his/her environment by meeting the following responsibilities:

1. Respect and work cooperatively with his/her fellow students and school staff
2. Be punctual and regular in school attendance
3. Respond positively and promptly to direction by faculty or staff members
4. Refrain from fighting or other abusive behavior directed toward any student, faculty, or staff member
5. Refrain from the use of profanity or vulgarity
6. Refrain from throwing rocks or snowballs
7. Avoid encouraging or assisting another student to take action which would subject a student to suspension or dismissal
8. Refrain from possession or use of explosives, dangerous chemicals, or weapons on school property or at a school function
9. Possession, use, and/or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as a part of any school sponsored activity are strictly prohibited
10. Refrain from damage to or theft of personal property
11. Refrain from unauthorized entry into or misuse or damage of school property
12. Be financially responsible, with his/her parent or guardian, for willful damage or destruction of school property

Corrective Actions or Punishment

All students shall submit to the reasonable rules of the school. Refusal to comply with written rules and regulations established for the governing of the school shall constitute sufficient cause for discipline, suspension, or dismissal. Corrective action and/or punishment for misconduct must reflect good faith effort of the part of the staff.

For the purpose of the school’s policies relating to corrective action or punishment:

1. “Suspension” is the exclusion from school for a specific period of time, after which the student has a right to return. A suspension may not exceed ten (10) days. Only the Head of School may suspend.

2. "Dismissal" is the exclusion from school for a period that exceeds ten (10) days. Once a student is dismissed in compliance with school policy, the dismissal shall be brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees. Only the Head of School may dismiss.
3. "Discipline" constitutes all other forms of corrective action or punishment, including brief exclusions from a class for not more than the remainder of the work period, including exclusion from any other type of activity conducted by or for the school.

Except in extreme cases, students will not be suspended or dismissed unless other forms of corrective action or punishment have failed or unless there is good reason to believe that other forms of corrective action or punishment would fail if employed. Suspensions or dismissals shall be used only for instances of serious student misconduct.

Corrective Action or Punishment – Due Process

It is the intent of the school to provide each student with due process rights.

In the case of repeated inappropriate behavior at any age level, consequences will be determined by the Head of School and teachers and could result in the removal from the environment. Blatant or continued misbehavior of any kind is considered grounds for suspension or dismissal.

Suspension

In the event the student is suspended from any single work period or full day of class for more than one or up to ten consecutive days, the student and when possible the parent will be provided

1. An oral or written notice of charges
2. An oral or written explanation of the evidence in support of the charges
3. An oral or written explanation of the suspension which may be imposed
4. The opportunity to present his/her explanation

The parents and student will be informed of any confidential record of disciplinary action that will be maintained.

Any parent or student who is aggrieved by the imposition of a short-term suspension shall have the right to an informal conference with the Head of school for the purpose of resolving the grievance. At such a conference, the student and the parent shall be subject to questions by the Head of School and shall be entitled to question staff who were involved in the matter being grieved.

Students who are absent as a result of a suspension are responsible for the work missed.

Emergency Suspension

In the case of a serious or life-threatening overt action by a student that necessitates the student's immediate removal from school, the following action will be taken:

1. The student will be suspended immediately, and both the student and student's parents will be informed of the reasons for the suspension
2. Parents will be informed that a confidential record of disciplinary action will be maintained
3. The Head of School will maintain a confidential written file of all suspension proceedings, including communications both written and oral, with parents, teachers, and the Board of Trustees

In cases of serious misconduct which may warrant dismissal from school, the student may be suspended following the appropriate procedures.

Dismissal

Only the Head of School may dismiss a student from school.

Dismissal is the exclusion of a student from school for more than 10 days.

The purpose of dismissal is to protect the educational atmosphere and to provide for the rights and general safety of all persons. Bozeman Summit School reserves the right to dismiss any student who in conduct, industry, or progress proves not to be in harmony with the standards or policies of the school.

The following violations (but not exclusive of others) occurring on school property or at school functions, or in any other context where the school may lawfully assert jurisdiction over the student, may bring dismissal:

1. Continued open defiance of authority
2. Destruction of school property
3. Physical or sexual abuse threat to any person
4. Unlawful or unauthorized use, possession, distribution, or sale of drugs (prescribed or non-described), alcoholic beverages, or other illegal contraband
5. Unauthorized possession of objects that are dangerous to persons or property
6. Violations of school regulations
7. Violation of state or federal law

The Head of School Report of Dismissal is made in writing to the Board of Trustees and shall contain the following:

1. Date suspension occurred
2. Reasons for dismissal
3. Administrator's signature

Intervention Procedure for Violent Behavior Toward Self, Students, and Adults

If a student has behavior that is harmful to themselves or others, staff will notify the student their behavior is unacceptable. The student will be asked to stop what they are doing and take deep breaths to encourage control over their body. If the student refuses to listen, cooperate, and/or shows signs through body language or verbally that they are going to harm themselves or others, staff will take immediate appropriate action. If the child is verbally threatening, staff are instructed to believe the threat and respond in accordance with the discipline policy. The student will be watched by an adult while another adult calls the parent (s) and can then be removed from the school by the parent, if necessary. A behavior report will be written immediately documenting the incident and be signed by the staff and parents of the student.

Child Abuse and Neglect

By Montana law, all school employees are mandatory reporters. All BSS staff must report if they know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused, neglected, or abandoned. Regardless of who the perpetrator is thought to be, school staff must report all suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse Hotline at 1(866)820-5437. Reporting must happen within 24 hours of receiving information concerning suspected child abuse or neglect.

Field Trips, Trip Permission Slips and Transportation Policy

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of our curriculum and are encouraged. We work hard to plan trips and coordinate appropriate coverage for these events. If you are volunteering to support a field trip, we ask that you provide ample notification if you are unable to attend so we may find alternative coverage.

In addition, we work closely with local organizations to ensure the successful execution of these events. The cancellation or change of a field trip schedule will be a coordinated effort between the BSS administration, teaching team, and the hosting organization. We will notify parents of any unforeseen changes to field trips as soon as possible.

Trip Permission Slips

Parents are asked to sign a Field Trip Permission form annually for any field trip the class takes within a 30 mile radius of the school. For longer field trips, parents will sign a separate permission slip which will be sent home prior to the trip. Parents will be notified in advance of a scheduled trip through the Bloomz app and/or class email.

Transportation and Safety Policy

The law requires children under 6 years of age and weighing less than 60 pounds to be in a booster seat when traveling in a vehicle. **Please be sure to leave your child's booster seat at the school on field trip days.**

The safety of children, staff, and volunteers must be provided for during all school activities. Proper restraint systems and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to and from school activities.

- Volunteer drivers must have completed the BSS Volunteer Agreement form prior to driving for any school activity.
- Volunteer drivers will not be reimbursed by BSS for providing transportation to or from school activities.
- Private passenger vehicles used to transport students must be properly registered and insured and must be driven by individuals with a valid driver's license for the type of vehicle used. **Prior to any school activity where a volunteer driver is utilized, a copy of the volunteer's proof of registration, liability insurance, and valid driver's license must be submitted to the school office.**
- Private passenger vehicles must be used for their intended purpose and a working seat belt must be provided for each passenger.
- Students will be transported properly in a seat belt, car seat or booster seat according to current Montana regulations. Parents may be required to supply a booster or car seat as needed for their child. Staff and/or volunteer drivers will be sure that car seats, booster seats and seat belts are used properly, and each child is properly secured before setting the vehicle in motion. Staff and/or volunteer drivers will assist with releasing children from their transportation safety restraints when needed. All adults in the vehicle will use proper restraining devices according to the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations.
- No child weighing less than 75 pounds or less than 13 years old may sit in the front seat of any vehicle used to transport students. The only exception to this rule is when the parent of a student is the driver of the vehicle where the student sits in the front seat.

- The number of passengers in the vehicle will not exceed the manufacturer's stated capacity for the vehicle or the number of seat belts available.
- Students will never be left unattended in a vehicle, even for brief periods. All students will be accompanied by an adult to and from the vehicle to ensure safety.
- All children will be accounted for before leaving the school and again before returning.
- All travel routes will be planned, and the driver will be familiar with the route ahead of time. If possible, vehicles should attempt to travel together to and from school activities.
- Smoking is prohibited in any vehicle used to transport students.
- To prevent distractions, the driver is not permitted to talk on a cell phone or play loud music. If a cell phone must be used, the driver must safely pull off the road and come to a complete stop.

Outside Care Conflict of Interest Policy

In order to maintain the professional integrity of our school program, it is inappropriate for parents to employ Bozeman Summit School staff for personal childcare.

Student Records

The school shall maintain student records necessary for the educational guidance and/or welfare of students for orderly and efficient operation of the school. All information related to individual students shall be treated in a confidential and professional manner. Student records are the property of the school but a copy for parents is available if requested. A parent may challenge any information in a student record believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student.

Student records shall be forwarded to other school agencies upon request. Parental consent shall be required before the school may release student records other than to a school agency or organization.

School Closures

In the event of an emergency or severe weather, Bozeman Summit School will follow the recommendation and guidance of the Bozeman School District. If the Bozeman Public Schools are closed Bozeman Summit School will be closed. In the event of a utility or gas distribution we will use our best judgment and notify parents if we must close early. We will remain open only if it is safe to do so.

Emergency Disaster Plan

Bozeman Summit School has a comprehensive and detailed Emergency Disaster Plan which is available upon request. Please notify the office if you would like a copy.

Bozeman Summit School

Excellence in Montessori Education

I have read the 2023-2024 Parent Handbook and I agree to follow the policies and procedures as written.

Name of Student (s): _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (please print): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____