



**Shepherd Elementary School
7842 Shepherd Rd., (406)373-5300**



The handbook can be accessed online using the QR code.

2025-2026 PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to another great year here at Shepherd Elementary School! We are very excited to start the 2025-2026 school year and have many programs in place to ensure students have every opportunity to achieve grade-level standards and beyond. This school is dedicated to creating exceptional systems and promoting a culture of universal achievement where all students can learn, while sharing the responsibility with our parents, students, and staff in making this happen. The elementary school implements and utilizes the following steps in ensuring students reach or exceed grade-level standards and expectations throughout the year:

- A school wide culture of universal achievement
- Teacher collaboration
- Classroom lessons aligned to Montana academic standards
- Classroom assessments that guide instruction and interventions
- A system for easily managing data
- Data-driven interventions, both academic and social

Through these systems students are expected to obtain skills necessary to successfully advance and transition between grade levels and become adequately equipped to enter college if they so choose.

Shepherd Elementary utilizes a trimester schedule, with report card grades and midterms being sent out three times a year. Parents/Guardians of students falling below grade level standards will be notified in a timely manner as we welcome and encourage strong home/school connections for the success of every student.

This handbook has been developed to help students and parents keep informed of the expectations of this school. It is important that students and parents read and understand this Student Handbook. Some changes and important subjects have been put into bold print for your convenience. You will find this handbook contains general information, rules, and schedules for the coming year. **After you have reviewed this information, please sign and return all of the Handbook Acknowledgment Forms to school.**

We look forward to a successful year with you and your student.

Yours in Service,

Shepherd Elementary Principal
and the Shepherd Elementary Staff

SHEPHERD SCHOOL DISTRICT #37

District Office	373-5461
Elementary Office	373-5300
Middle School Office	373-5300
High School Office	373-5300
Bus Barn	373-5331

WEBSITES

School Website	http://www.shepherd.k12.mt.us
PowerSchool Website	
There is a link to PowerSchool on the school's home page.	

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District Mission

We Are Shepherd: A safe, respectful, and positive community where our high expectations and emphasis on personal growth support all students in being successful, lifelong learners.

Elementary Vision

Positivity
Respect
Independence
Discovery
Empowerment

Elementary Commitments

At Shepherd Elementary School, our vision is to prepare children for a lifetime of success. Faculty and staff are committed to providing a safe and **positive** environment for children to learn and develop. We will teach **respect** for each other, authority, and oneself. Our curriculum will focus on building responsibility **and independence** to make a smooth transition to middle school, high school, and beyond. Shepherd Elementary will encourage **discovery** and growth of social, academic, and personal skills for every student. We believe in the **empowerment** of our students and hold everyone within our walls to the highest standard.

SHEPHERD ELEMENTARY STAFF **2025-2026**

CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Kindergarten

Mrs. Charity Hunt
Mrs. Amber Hood
Mrs. Mandy Berens

First Grade

Mrs. Jenna Thayer
Mrs. Kary McCann
Mrs. Rachel Grover

Second Grade

Mrs. Chris Nydegger
Mrs. Jan Back
Ms. LeAnn McFarlen

Third Grade

Mrs. Nicole Newell
Mrs. Sharon Cline
Mrs. Allison Matthews

Fourth Grade

Mrs. Alesia Styren
Mrs. Kristen Lunder
Ms. Lori Goodell

Fifth Grade

Ms. Tenley Miller
Mr. Robert Barthule
Mrs. Emelie Edward

SPECIALISTS

Special Education K-5

Mrs. Amanda Camposan
and Ms. Tina Downing
Mrs. Dancia Greenfield
Mrs. Loretta Michels
Mrs. Heather Davis

Librarian

Elementary Guidance
Elementary P.E

Elementary Music K-5

School Nurse
Speech Pathologist
School Psychologist

Ms. Cindy Burns

Ms. Mackenzie Carlson
Mrs. Crystal Pardy
Mr. Sam Lambert

AIDES

Para

Mrs. Julie Russell

Para

Ms. Cindy Glinwood

Para

Mrs. Cynthia Sieler

Para

Mrs. Dixie Sorge

Para

Mrs. Diane O'Connor

Para

Mrs. Donabelle Watanabe

Para

Mrs. Amber Hemmer

Para

Mrs. Amanda Ralston

Printer

Mrs. Lorna Brennan

KITCHEN STAFF

Food Service Director

Food Service Asst. Cook

Amanda Stahl

Beth Campbell

Food Service Asst. Cook

Food Service Worker

Heather Lear

Amy Paige Atkinson

MAINTENANCE / CUSTODIAL

Maintenance	Mr. Kevin Cumber	Custodian	Ms. Salome Antonio
Maintenance	Mr. Tom Sieler	Custodian	Mr. Charles Nelson

ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent	Mrs. Drea O'Donnell	Secretary	Mrs. Kippi Mang
District Clerk	Mrs. Kinsey Szillat	Lunch Accountant	Mrs. Paige Atkinson
Activity Accountant		Special Ed.	
~ Asst. Clerk	Ms. McKenna Sealey.	Coop. Director.	Mrs. Christina Olstad
Principal	Mrs. Autumn Arlian		

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Chairperson	Mr. Carl Openshaw	Member	Mr. Austin Schlosser
Vice-Chairperson	Mrs. Julie Hinkle	Member / H.S. District	Mr. Justin Peterson
Member	Mr. Shane Rekdal	Member / H.S. District	Mr. Shayne Vandivort
Member	Mr. Shane Flowers		

DAILY SCHEDULE

Teachers' Hours	8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Breakfast Program	8:00 AM-taken to classroom
Buses Arrive	8:00 AM
School Starts	8:10 AM Monday – Friday
School Dismissal	3:35 PM Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 2:45 PM Wednesday and Friday
Buses Leave School	3:45 PM Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 2:55 PM Wednesday and Friday

STUDENT SECURITY

To help ensure the safety of our students while they are at school, all parents and visitors must enter at the main front door, sign in at the office, and wear a visitor badge. Students must check in at the office if arriving late to school. We also require that all students be signed out at the elementary office when leaving school for any reason and check in at the office upon returning. Metal detectors will be utilized for students and visitors.

BEFORE SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Unattended children are not allowed in the building or on school grounds before or after school hours.

Supervision for students is provided from 8:00 AM through 3:35 PM on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday from 8:00 AM through 2:35 PM on Wednesday and Friday. This policy is for the childrens' safety. Students riding the bus will go directly to the classroom. Students being driven to school should enter the building at the main front elementary doors. Parents will not be allowed down to classrooms without scheduling an appointment with the teacher. Items that need to be brought to the classrooms in the morning will be left at the office. This includes birthday treats and snacks.

LEAVING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students must have a written or verbal notice from their parent/guardian to leave the school grounds at any time during the school day. Students must be signed out at the office. If a student leaves the school grounds without first completing the above procedure, he/she will be truant and disciplinary action will be taken.

AFTER SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Every student is assigned a bus route, unless the parent chooses to provide daily transportation. The school needs written or verbal notification by the custodial parent whenever any changes arise. Please state the change of plans and who will be picking their child up from school no later than **30 minutes** prior to the end of the school day. If not given **proper notification**, the student **will** be placed on the bus.

Shepherd School students are assigned to an AM and PM bus route, and **may not** ride **any other** bus than their designated buses without administrative approval. In the case of an emergency they may ride another bus providing permission is given by the transportation supervisor and /or principals, and all school personnel are informed. In the case of an emergency, a note will be required from the parent on the next school day.

The school has built a road, for bus service only, on the west side of the elementary school and playground for the loading and unloading of students from the buses. The area in front of the elementary building is available for parents to pick up and drop off students.

These procedures are for the sole purpose of the safety of students; please assist us in keeping all students safe.

- A parent permission note is required of all elementary students walking home or riding a bike (at the beginning of every year).
- If your child will be picked up EVERY DAY after school and he/she will not be riding the bus at all during the school year, send one note to cover the entire year of school indicating who has permission to pick them up. This note will be kept on file at the office. We will allow students to be picked up in front of the elementary building, **but nowhere else. Parents are NOT allowed at the bus lane.**
- If you are a parent who will be picking up your child PERIODICALLY after school during the year, send a note to the classroom teacher, or call the office no later than **30 minutes** before dismissal time.
- If you are a parent who will be picking up your child BEFORE SCHOOL IS DISMISSED, send a note or call ahead of time and indicate the date and time you will be picking up your child. Please come into the office and sign your child out. The office will not call your child out of class prior to your arrival.
- If a student is going to the middle school, high school, scouts, or any other practice after school, a one-time note may be written with dates giving the student permission to not ride the bus. This note will be kept on file in the office. All students need to wait in front of the elementary building until the buses leave.

GENERAL INFORMATION

STUDENT RECORDS

Under the Family Educational and Privacy Rights act, the school will permit the parent of a student or an eligible student to inspect and review the education records of the student. All parental requests will be honored in reasonable time. In case of divorce or separation, this school district will provide access to educational records to both custodial and non-custodial parents, unless there is a legal binding document that specifically removes that parent from inspection rights. **School reports and information will be given to the custodial parent. If the non-custodial parent would like a copy of these records, it is their responsibility to notify the child's teacher each school year with their address and phone numbers. Please refer to district policy #3600.**

STUDENT DIRECTORY FORM

If you would like to opt your child out from being included in the year book, program events, local newspaper articles related to education, or other such publications please contact the secretary for the appropriate form. Please refer to district policy 3600F2.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Professional photographers will be at school to take individual pictures of all students. Even though some families may choose not to purchase school pictures, all students will have their pictures taken for record purposes. Group/classroom pictures will also be taken.

VISITORS

All visitors are required to report to the school office upon entering the building. Parents are welcome and are encouraged to visit the school; visitation/conferences with teachers need to be by appointment and are **not** to interrupt instructional blocks.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Due to the growing concerns of confidentiality, all volunteers need to sign a confidential assurance form before volunteering at the school. This form is located in the handbook and must be signed each year.

VOLUNTEERS

Shepherd Elementary School considers its volunteers a very special resource. Volunteers are encouraged to help in all classroom programs and extracurricular activities. **To maintain an optimal learning environment, please refrain from bringing your younger children to school.** Please fill out the volunteer page and confidentiality form. Shepherd School District requires all volunteers, helpers and/or chaperones to have their background check and fingerprinting on file. Background checks and fingerprinting are done in the administration office. Please call ahead to make an appointment. 406-373-5300 ext. 102

CHAIN OF COMMAND

What is shown below is a listing of issues that a parent or citizen may encounter and the position in our district that has responsibility for that area. One should always start with the individual or office responsible for the area at Level 1 before proceeding up the chain of command as it becomes necessary.

Area of Concern	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Academics/Curriculum	Teacher	Principal	Superintendent	Board
Attendance	Elem. Office	Principal	Superintendent	Board
Cafeteria	Food Services	Principal	Superintendent	Board
Discipline	Teacher	Principal	Superintendent	Board
Facilities	Principal	Superintendent	Board	
Guidance	School Counselor	Principal	Superintendent	Board
Instruction	Teacher	Principal	Superintendent	Board
Special Education	Special Education Teacher	Principal	Superintendent	Board
Student Concern	Teacher	Principal	Superintendent	Board
Transportation	Bus Driver	Transportation Supervisor	Superintendent	Board

FIELD TRIPS

There may be field trips throughout the year. To be counted present and attend the trip, students must ride the bus to the event. If a parent would like to take their child at the end of the trip, they will need to fill out and have approved a travel release form 24hrs before the trip. The forms are available at the office.

FIRE DRILLS

The fire alarm is a continuous ringing of bells. Safety demands that the building be emptied quickly, quietly, and as orderly as possible. There is to be no running, pushing, crowding, or unnecessary talking.

Each teacher will give students necessary directions in regard to exits. Each student should know the directions for fire drills in each of their classrooms. Each class should completely clear the building, steps and sidewalk leaving room for the last classes to exit the building. All doors should be closed and lights

turned off by the last person leaving the classroom and exiting the building.

In case of fire or fire drill while students are between classes, they are to use the nearest exit. Teachers will be in charge of the area where they are at the time the alarm sounds.

In case of fire or fire drill while the students are in the elementary gym, middle school or high school, teachers are to be in complete charge. Students are to follow directions given by the teachers.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Lock Down: *USED FOR SEVERE DANGER*

Secure Your Room: *USED FOR HEIGHTENED AWARENESS, TRAINING, OR DOG SEARCHES*

Intruder: *USED WHEN AN ARMED INTRUDER IS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS*

USE OF PHONE

Please refrain from making avoidable calls that can be taken care of at home. In case of emergency, or if necessary for school business, students may obtain permission to use their teacher's classroom phone. Students are not allowed to use cell phones/smart watches during school hours.

CELL PHONE/SMART WATCH POLICY

Cell phones and smart watches must remain in the student's backpack and be turned off once students arrive and until they depart school grounds. This includes the playground and pick-up area. The consequences for violating the cell phone/watch policy are as follows:

First offense: Cell phone/watch will be held by the teacher until the end of the school day (Refocus).

Second offense: Cell phone/watch will be picked up by parent/guardian from the office and a noon detention will be served. (Office referral)

Third offense: Cell phone/watch will be picked up by parent/guardian from the office and one day out-of-school suspension will be issued. (Office Referral)

All future cell phone/watch violations will repeat the third offense consequence.

VALUABLES

Common sense and consideration is the best guide in determining whether or not to bring personal possessions to school. The school administrators and staff can't be responsible for valuables which students bring to school. It is recommended that students leave all valuables at home.

FLOWERS, GIFTS, AND BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS

Any flowers or gifts delivered to the school must be paid for prior to delivery. Balloons are not allowed on buses or in the classroom. Money will not be collected in the office. Students will receive articles in the afternoon before leaving school, as not to distract from the learning environment. If birthday invitations must be passed out at school, students will give invitations to the teacher who will pass out the invitations discretely at the end of the day. We would prefer that birthday invitations be sent by mail to avoid any bad feelings of children not included.

SOLICITATION

Students and faculty are not to be solicited for money on school grounds unless the principal has granted permission.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

RULES OF RESPECT

The school staff finds that in order to provide an acceptable quality of education for students it is necessary that appropriate cooperation and respect be demonstrated among faculty, substitute teachers, staff members, parents and students. Lack of cooperation and disrespect, more than any other factors, interfere with our ability to provide students with satisfactory learning experiences.

DRESS CODE AND GROOMING POLICIES

Parents, as well as the student, assume responsibility for appropriate apparel to be worn at school. A well-groomed personal appearance will be mandatory for all students. Principal or teacher discretion will be used to determine if apparel is inappropriate.

Unacceptable apparel includes:

(with exception of Principal/Staff discretion i.e. Homecoming, Halloween)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bathing suits• A dress outfit, or shirt without sleeves (NO low cut shirts or spaghetti straps)• Hats (inside building) /bandanas/any head covering• Slippers• Face paint• Spray paint in hair• Costumes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biking or spandex shorts (unless wearing shorts over the top)• No bare midriff shirt or blouse (measurement is when a student raises their arms the shirt or blouse shows no midriff)• Dresses, skirts, skorts, or shorts shorter than four inches above the top of the kneecap• Heelies (shoes with roller skate wheels on the bottom)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gang-related items• Any clothing that has printing or pictures that are offensive, derogatory, sexually, or inappropriately suggestive• Sunglasses (inside building) during school hours• Clothing with alcohol, drug, tobacco insignias and/or weapons.
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Shoes must be worn at all times.

A teacher or principal shall be allowed to further restrict the manner of dress when it could interfere with the education, health, or safety of a student in the teacher's specific area.

Consequences for coming to school in unacceptable dress or improper grooming:

- a) Contact parent/guardian to bring proper clothing to the school and the student will change immediately before being allowed to return to class.
- b) If attempt to contact parent/guardian to bring appropriate clothing is unsuccessful, the student will be placed in clothing provided by the nurse until the appropriate clothing can be brought to the school.
- c) Repeated violations: Continued abuse of the dress code will result in Out-of-School Suspension.

RECESS POLICY

Please send students to school dressed appropriately for our Montana weather. All students will be going outside for recess, unless the wind chill is below zero, as determined by the office weather station and/or office and principal discretion. If the temperature is 50 degrees or lower students will be required to wear their coat or jacket. Students won't be able to stay inside due to illness without a doctor's note.

GENERAL PLAYGROUND GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

We believe all students can and will behave appropriately on the playground, if the playground rules are clearly understood. We will not accept any student inhibiting the enjoyment of free play of other students nor physically endangering him/herself or others on the playground. Therefore, the playground supervisor will use his/her own judgment to best enforce these rules. See the list of expectations as well as possible consequences.

I am being a responsible, respectful and safe elementary student by:

Playground	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not fighting (kicking, pushing, hitting, tripping, spitting) • Not throwing objects (rocks, snowballs, sticks, mud, etc.) • Not name calling • Using safe conduct on the playground equipment. No tag in equipment area. • Staying away from building and dangerous places (puddles, mud, ice, etc.) • Not using sharp or hard objects on the playground (baseballs, golf balls, sticks, hockey pucks, bats, etc.) • Not bringing skateboards, roller blades or Heelies to school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not taking toys outside (balls are acceptable i.e. football, soccer ball, basketball etc.) unless approved by the principal • Using appropriate language • Using jump ropes properly • Showing courtesy to other students by not interfering with games in progress • Playing in designated areas. Students are <u>not</u> to play on the football field, grandstand, and the track • Not playing rough (no contact games like rugby, tackle football, wrestling)

BEHAVIOR POLICIES

I am being a responsible, respectful, and safe elementary student by:

Classroom	Hallways	Restroom	Lunchroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Following directions • Respecting property • Respecting others • Participating in a positive way • Showing tolerance for others' differences • Being on task • Completing work • Being prepared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving others personal space • Using zero voices • Returning to class promptly • Respecting property • Walking • Keeping my belongings in the proper place • Moving safely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respecting others' privacy • Flushing the toilet • Washing my hands with soap and water • Reporting problems to classroom teacher • Returning to class promptly • Using the restroom at the appropriate time • Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a quiet voice • Giving others personal space • Returning my tray properly • Putting trash in the trash can • Using proper manners • Eating my own food • Keeping the table and floor clean

UNACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Designated staff or the Elementary Principal will administer appropriate consequences for unacceptable student behaviors. This may include suspension for up to 10 days. Refer to possible list of consequences. In extreme cases, school board policy will be implemented.

I am being a responsible, respectful and safe elementary student by:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following a reasonable directive of a staff member, substitute teacher, teacher or administrator. • Being prepared and on time. • Completing work. • Not having hands on or physical aggression. • Being respectful in tone, body language and attitude. • Following technology expectations given by the teacher. • Not damaging or stealing school or private property. • Not using or possessing alcohol, smoking/chewing/vaping tobacco or drugs. • Not using any form of profanity, written or verbal. Included in this prohibition would be the use of obscene gestures, signs, pictures, or other physical profane behaviors. • Not bringing devices or weapons that may endanger other students or themselves. • Not fighting. • Not making threats.

- Not Bullying/harassing/intimidating/hazing
- Not cheating.
- Not making intimate contact at school, on buses, etc.
- Not leaving school grounds during school hours without proper permission.
- Not chewing gum, candy or sunflower seeds during the school day.
- Not using electronic games and equipment during the school day unless designated by the teacher.
- Not trading of any items on school grounds or buses.

- Repeated violations - any series of behavioral violations that create a pattern of misconduct will result in further disciplinary action.
- In the event of any disciplinary action from the above violations on behalf of the administration, the parents will be contacted via phone or letter on the day of or day after the infraction. If suspension occurs, a follow-up conference may take place with parent(s), child, administration, and/or other support personnel before child re-enters the school or classroom.

The behavior guidelines and expectations apply to all students at all times including all school functions.

THREATS

Any verified threats against students, staff, or facilities will result in a minimum punishment of 2 days out of school suspension. This could be up to and including expulsion based on the threat. Any second offenses verified in the same year will result in punishment up to and including expulsion.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/HAZING POLICY

Definition of Bullying

“Bully behavior occurs when there is deliberate intent to harm, dominate, inflict pain, exclude or otherwise cause distress to the person being targeted. The person who bullies purposefully misuses his/her power (size, age, popularity, confidence, verbal ability), usually repeatedly. The balance of power between the bully and target is not equal.” **This plan supports Shepherd Board Policy #3226.**

Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Hazing

The Board will strive to provide a positive and productive learning and working environment. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. This includes bullying, harassment, or intimidation via electronic communication devices (“cyber bullying”). **To report an incident, see the elementary school website for a reporting form.**

<https://www.shepherd.k12.mt.us/domain/19>

The following procedure will be used to handle repeated bullying issues:

1. When a student reports harassment or bullying to a school official, the administrator will meet with the student accused of bullying.
2. After the administrator investigates the allegations, he/she will determine if it is a bullying issue.
3. If it is determined by the administrator to be a bullying offense, the person doing the bullying will be assigned out of school suspension for a day. Parents of the victim will be notified. Parents and student doing the bullying will need to meet with administrator before coming back to school.
4. Student will be placed on a behavior contract and work with school counselor to address the issue of bullying.
5. If student breaks his/her behavior contract, and bullies again, student will be assigned two days out of school suspension. Same procedure will be followed to return to school.
6. Third offense of bullying, student will go before the Board of Trustees for long term suspension or expulsion.

Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Hazing may be perpetrated by one person or by a group. This behavior will not be tolerated at Shepherd Schools

BULLYING INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Date of Incident: _____ **Time of Incident:** _____ **Repeat infraction? YES NO**

Location of Incident (circle all that apply):

Hallway Restroom Classroom Gym Lunch Room Playground Locker Room Bus Stop On Bus Parking Lot

To/From School After School Program School Sponsored Event Text/Phone/Internet/Social Media Other: _____

Name of victim(s):

Name of student(s) bullying:

Name(s) of witnesses/bystanders:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Type of Bullying:

☐ Verbal

☐ Physical: Result in injury? YES NO Reported to School Nurse? YES NO Reported to Police? YES NO

☐ Cyber

Bullying Behaviors (circle all that apply):

Shove/Pushed Hit, Kicked, Punched Threatened Stolen/Damaged Possessions

Excluded Taunting/Ridiculing Writing/Graffiti Told Lies or False Rumors

Stared/Leered Intimidation/Extortion Demeaning Comments Inappropriate Touching

Cyber-bullying using: Text messages Website Email Other: _____

Racial, Sexual, Religious or Disability Circle one and describe: _____

Reported to school by (circle all that apply):

Teacher Student Bystander Victim/Target Parent Bus Driver Anonymous Other: _____

Describe the incident:

Physical Evidence? Notes Email Graffiti Video/audio Website Other: _____

Actions Taken (see Protocol for Guidelines):

Consequences: _____

Remediation: _____

Referral for additional support services: _____

Parent Contact: Date _____ Time _____ Person making contact: _____

Result: _____

Today's Date: _____ **Reported by:** _____ **Signature:** _____

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

For the purpose of the firearms section of this policy, the term “firearm” means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or silencer; or (D) any destructive device pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 921 (4). Such term does not include an antique firearm pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 921 (16).

The District does not allow firearms or weapons on school property. Any student found to have possessed, used or transferred a weapon on school property will be subject to discipline in accordance with the District’s discipline policy. For purposes of this section, “weapon” means any object, device or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury, including but not limited to air guns, pellet guns, BB guns, fake (facsimile) weapons; all knives and blades longer than 4”, clubs, metal knuckles, numchucks (also known as nunchucks), throwing stars, explosives, fireworks, mace or other propellants, stun guns, ammunition, poisons, chains, arrows, and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon. Any of these offenses will be handled according to Board Policy 3311.

CONSEQUENCES

All students should be aware that there are consequences for their actions, both good and bad. The consequences of good conduct include the establishment of a positive atmosphere for learning. The consequences of negative conduct, as an individual or as a member of a group, will vary with the “degree of offense”, aligned to the school behavior plan. Parent conferences, suspensions, and permanent expulsions from school are in order to maintain an atmosphere conducive to quality education. If a student skips or refuses applied consequences the principal reserves the right to send the student home for the remainder of that day (OSS - out of school suspension). When a student misses their assigned consequence (absent, sick, etc.) they will need to make it up the next day they are in school.

Depending on the age of the student(s) involved and severity of the infraction, disciplinary and remedial actions for students may include, but are not limited to one or more of the following:

- **Parent Notification**
- **Loss of Privileges**
- **Apology Letter**
- **Parent Conference**
- **Loss of Recess**
- **Reassignment of Seats**
- **Referral to, or appointment with school counselor or other professional**
- **Payment for damaged property**
- **Detention**
 - **Lunch**
 - **After School**
- **Suspension**
 - **In-School**
 - **Out-of-School**
- **Referral to Law Enforcement**
- **Expulsion**

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is primarily the responsibility of the teacher and the teacher can expect the full cooperation of the administration when he/she provides discipline. Teachers will use the Shepherd Elementary School-wide Management Plan in conjunction with their own classroom discipline plan.

SHEPHERD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Help keep our school a safe place to learn by being Respectful, Responsible and Safe.

Expectations

1. Follow directions the first time they're given
2. Keep hands, feet, objects and other body parts to yourself
3. Use positive language: no harassment, put downs, teasing or foul language
4. Stay in your assigned area
5. Be on time and prepared

Encouragement

1. Verbal recognition and notes home
2. Privileges (i.e. free time, extra recess, treats, working with other grade levels)
3. STANGS tickets (STANGS store)
4. Class/School wide rewards (i.e. popcorn party, video, game with principal)

Enforcement

1. Warning
2. Minutes out of passing time, free time or recess
3. Lunch detention
4. Parent contact by teacher and refocus sheet
5. Referral to the office with blue discipline form and refocus sheet
 - Parent contact by administrator or teacher

Severe misbehavior including fighting, vandalism, drugs, weapons, leaving school grounds without permission, insubordination and threats will face immediate administrative action as defined by school board policy.

**** If the Principal is off campus a member of the behavior committee will be designated to take disciplinary action or contact necessary administrator to handle the situation.*

ATTENDANCE AND GRADES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

State law 20-5.103 requires regular school attendance of a child of school age. Participation in the classroom is a significant aspect of a student's academic performance, and failure to attend is considered to be grounds for academic sanction. In addition, when a student is tardy or returns to school from an absence, teaching time is interrupted, as the teacher must take time to instruct that student. The student attendance policy should be carried out with the primary objective of encouraging each student to attend school regularly and to maintain academic standing.

Parents/guardians will receive attendance letters on 4, 8, and 10 absences from school. Once a student reaches 10 absences in a semester, they are considered truant by state law. When a student reaches 10 absences during a semester, principal will make contact with parent/guardian to discuss attendance issue.

PRE-EXCUSED ABSENCE

For reasons other than illness or family emergencies, parents should request in writing a prearranged excused absence. To enable teachers a reasonable amount of time to prepare lessons, you must request a pre-arranged absence at least two (2) days ahead of the actual event. Please make this request through the elementary office.

MAKE-UP WORK

In the event of illness, a phone call before school will enable your child's teacher to prepare the assignments and materials for pick-up after 3:00 p.m. If you know your child will be absent, please request assignments in advance of that date.

ATTENDANCE

Absences:

Absences due to temporary illness or injury, or any one of the following: exposure to contagious disease, sickness of a family member, extremely inclement weather, religious holidays, or other absences that are excused by a parent/guardian either by phone or written notice, will still count against our ten day policy. **The absences listed below will not count against the ten day policy with approval from principal.**

- Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services (With a doctor's note)
- Death in the family (Must be approved by the principal)
- Attendance at a funeral service (Must be approved by the principal)
- Family Vacations-up to five days, once a year. (Must be approved by principal at least two days prior to going on trip. Work must be gathered before leaving and turned in upon return to school and done appropriately, or it will be considered an unexcused absence. Students who have an excessive number of absences will not be approved by principal.)

Students who have a doctor or dentist appointment during school hours must bring a note to their teacher, or call the office before 8:30 AM stating the time they are to be dismissed. Students who are absent for a medical reason should provide the school with official written verification from the doctor or dentist within the same trimester of the absence. If proper verification is submitted, it will not count toward the ten (10) day attendance rule.

All students arriving to school after 8:10 AM must check in at the office and receive a pass before going to their classroom. The following codes will be used in PowerSchool and attendance letters that are sent home.

T = Tardy

Students arriving at school between 8:10 AM - 8:30AM will be tardy.

P=Principal Approved Absences

An absence that is excused by the principal, either by phone or written notice. These absences do not count against the ten (10) day policy, however, homework must be complete upon return. See the list above.

E = Parent Excused

An absence that is excused by parent contact, either by phone or written notice. An excused absence will count toward the ten (10) day rule. To Ensure your child does not miss valuable instructional/learning time, we ask that you do not check siblings out for school music programs.

N=Nurse Excused

An absence when the student is sent home from school by the nurse for medical reasons. This is not counted toward the ten (10) day rule.

U = Unexcused

An absence from school, without any parent contact. An unexcused absence will count toward the ten (10) day rule.

M = Medical

Any absence for medical reasons. Students should provide the school with official written verification from the doctor or dentist within three days of the absence. If proper verification is submitted, it will not count toward the ten (10) day rule. Students are expected to return within one hour of the end time of an appointment. **A note is needed for each appointment.**

I = ISS

In School Suspension (ISS) is a result of a disciplinary action. The student will attend school in an alternative learning setting and this action will not count toward the ten (10) day rule.

O = OSS

Out of School Suspension (OSS) is a result of disciplinary action. The student will not attend school, and this action will count toward the ten (10) day rule.

F = Family Funeral

An absence to attend a family member's funeral. Please contact the school principal or office with written or verbal notice. If given proper notification, up to five days will not go toward the ten (10) day rule.

H = Homebound

An absence where the student is not in school, but is still enrolled in our school district and receives homebound services. This absence will not count toward the ten (10) day rule.

House Bill 358 enacted by the 1985 Montana legislature became effective October 1, 1985. It is called the Missing Children's Bill. This law states parent should take the responsibility to inform the school when their child will not be in attendance at school. The law requires a phone call by the parents to the school be made by 9:30 A.M. If parents do not notify the school, the school must make an attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or legal custodian to make sure they are aware of the student's absence from school. An automated phone call is made at 9:50. Documentation will be kept of the attempted contacts. In case of a child's absence the school appreciates knowing that your child is safe, and you are aware of his/her absence from school. The elementary daily attendance is calculated by AM and PM attendance. Students will be counted absent if they are gone more than half of the morning or afternoon session.

	AM Session 8:10 - 12:00 Monday through Friday	PM Session 12:00 - 3:35 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday	PM Session 12:00 - 2:45 Wednesday and Friday
Tardy	Arrive between 8:10 - 8:30	Arrive between 12:00 -12:30	Arrive between 12:00 - 12:30
Absent	Arrive/Leave between 8:30 - 12:00	Leaves between 12:00 - 2:15	Leaves between 12:00 - 1:15
Present	-----	Leaves after 2:15	Leaves after 1:15

CURRICULUM STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

Shepherd Elementary School has worked hard to align our local standards to the state and national standards in the areas of language arts (reading and writing), math and science. These standards have been carefully worded in student-friendly language. Assessments have been created to help teachers know when a student has mastered each standard. Our teachers have also identified which of these standards must be mastered for successful completion of grade level requirements.

We call these our “Priority Standards.” These skills are so important that students may not move to the next grade unless they have mastered them.

PROMOTIONS AND RETENTION

Promotions and retention are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, social and emotional growth. The primary reasons for considering retention are:

- A. When the student has good learning potential, but has not mastered essential skills needed in the next grade up.
- B. Intervention strategies have not met significant levels of improvement.
- C. Frequent or long absences. (See attendance policy)

When a child is not succeeding at his or her grade level work, the classroom teacher may request to have a Student Success Team meeting. The S.S.T. may consist of the classroom teacher, principal, school counselor, Title I Reading/Math specialist, and, special education teacher. Parents will be contact after each meeting. At that time, it can be suggested to provide more intervention for a student or to test for possible learning disability.

It will also be the S.S.T.’s responsibility to make a recommendation whether or not to retain a student for the next school year. The administration will then make the final decision on whether or not to retain a student.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents are invited at any time to call for a conference with any or all of a student's teachers. Parent/student/teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring to discuss student progress.

STANDARDS-BASED REPORT CARDS AND GRADES

Halfway through each trimester, a mid-term report will be issued to help the parents and the child stay up-to-date on their progress in school. Report cards will be issued at the end of each trimester. Mid-terms and report cards will be sent home with the students on the following dates:

Mid-Terms	Report Cards
1st Trimester—Wednesday, Oct. 8 th , 2025 Sent home Oct. 10 th , 2025	1st Trimester—Tuesday, Nov. 25 th , 2025 Sent home Dec. 3 rd , 2025
2nd Trimester—Wednesday, Jan. 7 th , 2026 Sent home Jan. 9 th , 2026	2 nd Trimester— Friday, Feb. 27 th , 2026 Sent home March 4 th , 2026
3rd Trimester—Wednesday, April 8 th , 2026 Sent home April 10 th , 2026	3rd Trimester— Friday, May 22 nd , 2026

What is a standards based report card and why does Shepherd Elementary School use them?

Shepherd Elementary School provides grade reports in grades K – 5 each trimester. These grade reports are standards-based report cards. A standards-based report card lists the most important skills students should learn in each subject at a particular grade level.

Instead of letter grades, students receive marks that show how well they have mastered the skills. The marks might show whether the student is consistently exceeding grade level expectations, meeting, making progress but not meeting or showing little or no progress. Students usually get separate marks for effort and work habits, also called behaviors that promote learning. These are important for parents to keep tabs on even if these characteristics aren't included in the assessment of the student's academic skills.

On many traditional report cards, students receive one grade for reading, one for math, one for science and so on. On a standards-based report card, each of these subject areas is divided into a list of skills and knowledge that students are responsible for learning. Students receive a separate mark for each standard.

The marks on a standards-based report card are different from traditional letter grades. Letter grades are often calculated by combining how well the student met their particular teacher's expectations, how they performed on assignments and tests, and how much effort the teacher believes he put in. Letter grades do not tell parents which skills their children have mastered or whether they are working at grade level. Because one fourth-grade teacher might be reviewing reading out loud accurately, while another is teaching reading for comprehension, getting an A in each of these classes would mean very different things. The parent of a child in these classes would not know if the child was learning what they should be learning to meet the state and district grade level expectations (standards).

Standards-based report cards should provide more consistency between teachers than traditional report cards, because all students are evaluated on the same grade-appropriate skills. Parents can see exactly which skills their children have learned.

Grades used to report achievement are:

Standards-Based Grades (K-5)	
Behavior Grades that Promote Learning	V = Very Good
	S = Satisfactory
	N = Needs Improvement
Exceeds grade level expectations	AD = Advanced
Meets grade level expectations	P = Proficient
Making progress toward grade level expectations	NP = Nearly Proficient
Does not meet grade level expectations	NO = Novice
	-- = Not Assessed

ELEMENTARY HONOR ROLL

Each trimester, intermediate students in grades 4 and 5 who meet or exceed proficiency at grade level standards for - (Math, Reading, Language, Science, Social Studies, and nearing proficient or above in P.E., Library and Music) will be on the elementary honor roll.

TEXTBOOKS/DEVICE – FINES

Classroom materials are carefully selected by your teachers and other professional educators. They are paid for by your parents and other adults through tax funds. These books deserve maximum use and reasonable care. After books are issued and their condition noted, they are the student's responsibility until you check them in at the end of the courses. A fine may be assessed for other than normal wear or for lack of proper care of books, including library books.

- A. Loss of material - value of material when issued.
- B. Willfully damaging material - cost of new material.
- C. Other than normal wear - a fine may be assessed.

DEVICE FINES

The FEES below will be incurred if the damage is done intentionally, is the result of neglect, or if the device is broken more than once in the same school year for the same issue.

Device	Lost Device Fee	Glass/Screen	Headset Jack	Charging Block or Cable
Chromebook	\$250	\$50	\$ market repair cost	\$25

HEALTH INFORMATION

IMMUNIZATIONS

State law requires that before any student is admitted and enrolled in a public school they must have evidence of a successful vaccination for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough and polio. Also, required are a measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccination and two varicella vaccinations.

EMERGENCIES

It is important that the school be able to contact parents in case of illness, emergency or accident. Therefore, it is important that school records include current home phone numbers, the phone number of a designated relative or neighbor, numbers where parents may be reached at work and the name and number of the student's family doctor. It is also important to notify the school of change of address and phone numbers to keep the records current.

INJURY

In the event of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the school nurse or by designated school personnel. School personnel will render first aid only in the case of minor injury. In the event of serious injury or illness, when emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, the student will be taken to the emergency room at the hospital. Remember, an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached and the name and telephone number of the student's family doctor must be on file at the school.

ILLNESS

Out of concern for your child's well-being, and respect for his/her "healthy" classmates, we ask that you refrain from sending sick children to school. If your child is not feeling well enough to participate in the regular school program, he/she will probably be more comfortable staying at home. We have no area large enough to monitor children who request to stay inside during recess.

ANIMALS

Due to student allergies, no animals (excluding guide dogs) will be allowed inside the school building. Under special circumstances, animals may be brought with approval from the principal. The animals will have to be shown outside the school building. Animal show and tell will need principal/teacher approval.

HEARING SCREENING

Pure tone screening is mandated for students in grades K, 1, and 10. Students in other grades will also be screened if they are new to the school, on the annual hearing recheck list, or referred by the school or parent/guardian. If your child is absent, unable to complete the pure tone screening, or does not pass the pure tone screening, they will be referred for a hearing rescreen. The Hearing Conservation Program audiologist will conduct the hearing rescreen and, in addition to the pure tone screening, may also conduct one or both of the following, Otoacoustic Emissions (OAEs) Screening, which is a measure of cochlear (inner ear) function that does not require the child to respond and/or Immittance Screening, which measures the movement of the eardrum by putting positive and negative pressure into the ear canal.

MEDICATION

PURPOSE

It is recognized that many children are only able to attend school on a regular basis because of the effective use of medication (prescription and/or non-prescription) in the treatment of disabilities and/or illness. Parents/guardians of students requiring administration of medication during school hours may make arrangements to come to school to give the medication.

If the parent/guardian requests that school personnel supervise the administration of medication, then the following policy and procedure must be adhered to both by parent/guardian and by school personnel. If the student is physically unable to take medications on their own, or whose level of functioning does not allow for him/her to be responsible to take their own medication, then the parent/guardian may make arrangements for the school personnel to administer the medication, according to the following policy and procedure.

POLICY

Montana State Law and the administrative Rules of the Board of Nursing allow licensed nurses to delegate specific nursing tasks to un-licensed person. (Auth: Sec 37-8-202, MCA; Sub-chapter 17.)

In the school setting, this allows the school nurse to delegate administration of student medication to specific school personnel. Administration of medication is a nursing function. Delegation of medication is strictly at the discretion of the school nurse.

If the school nurse assessment reveals that delegation is appropriate, the following procedure will be followed:

PROCEDURE

- Whenever possible, medication should be given at home.
- To avoid adverse medication reactions at school, the first dose of medication must be administered at home.
- Medication WILL NOT be given until the medication form is completed by the parent/guardian and the authorized prescriber and is on file in the school health office.
- An adult must bring the medication to school.
- If your child takes medication in the morning at home and is coming to school late due to an appointment/other unknown reason or delayed school opening, the morning dose should be given as usual because the school dose will be given at the time ordered. **Any deviation from the scheduled time requires a new order.**
- Medications:
 - Prescription medication (s) must be in a container labeled by the pharmacist with the student's name, prescriber's name, name of medication, dosage, route, directions for administration, conditions for storage, prescription date and expiration date.
 - Over-the-counter medication(s) must be provided to the school in the original sealed container. It is also important to make sure there is a current expiration date on it. Staff may not dispense outdated medication. **Medication must be age appropriate dosing.** A physician signature may be required upon request at the discretion of the school nurse.
 - Antibiotics which are given three times a day are not usually given at school. Please consult your prescriber before bringing these medications to school.
- *Students are not permitted to carry any medications, **including over the counter**, on a school campus.* However, an authorized prescriber, parent/guardian and school nurse may authorize a student to self-carry his/her prescribed medication, if necessary, with appropriate documentation. (e.g. inhaler and EpiPen)
- Parent/guardian may pick up unused medications from the school office during and at the close of the school year. NO medication will be sent home with your child. Medication remaining after the last day will be discarded.
- If medication is given on an as-needed basis, specify the exact conditions or symptoms when medication is to be taken and the time at which it may be given again.
- Unless otherwise specified, medication order is valid for the entire school year.
- If your doctor changes the dosages or frequency of medications given at school, these orders must be in writing. The changes will require a new medication form to be signed by the physician. Verbal orders on medication changes will not be accepted.
- **ALL MEDICATION ORDERS MUST BE RENEWED ANNUALLY.**

- The school nurse/delegated school staff will assume responsibility for placing medications in a locked cabinet.
- If the school nurse is not available to give medication, another delegated trained staff member will be assigned to do so.
- School nurse/delegated school staff will assist and observe the student in taking medication according to the authorized prescriber's instructions. The date and time each medication is given will be recorded on the Medication Administration Log by the staff assisting the student in taking medication.
- The school district and its employees are not responsible for undue reaction of this medication.
- School nurse/delegated school staff may not administer any medication at times other than those specified on the authorized form.
- Shepherd staff will not administer any product not approved by the FDA. (essential oils/drops; atomizers; etc.)
- The school nurse reserves the right to review and deny requests for medication administration during school hours based on completeness of compliance with these procedures.

ILLNESS POLICY: When to Keep Students Home

In most situations Shepherd prefers students come to school and if they become ill at school, the parent/guardian will be notified. However, here are a few guidelines to help parent/guardian in deciding when to keep your child home from school.

Symptom	Student must be at home?
Diarrhea Frequent, loose or watery stools compared to child's normal pattern: not caused by diet or medication	Yes- If your child looks or acts ill: if the child has diarrhea with a fever and/or vomiting. Make sure your sick child stays well hydrated. <i>Student can return when he/she has not had diarrhea during the last 24 hours.</i>
Fever A fever is a temporary increase in your body temperature, often due to an illness. Having a fever is a sign that something out of the ordinary is going on in your body.	Yes- When fever is >100, also if student has other symptoms accompanied by fever such as sore throat, rash, headache, muscle aches, rash, loss of appetite, etc. <i>Student can return when fever has been gone for 24 hours without medication and the child's appetite and energy level returned to normal.</i>
Flu The flu can be serious, and symptoms of the flu typically come on suddenly. Common signs and symptoms of the flu include: Fever, body aches, chills, headache, dry/persistent cough, fatigue, nasal congestion, sore throat, nausea or vomiting.	Yes- If your child has a fever >100 or will be unable to participate in class. <i>Student can return when fever has been gone for 24 hours without medication and energy level has returned to normal.</i>
Coughing Severe, uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, rapid or difficulty breathing (Children with asthma may be cared for in school with a written authorization for medication/treatment and health care plan)	Yes- Medical attention is recommended.
Mild Respiratory or Cold Symptoms Stuffy nose with clear drainage, mild cough, sneezing	No- Child may attend school if able to participate in class.
Rash	No- Body rash without fever or other symptoms usually does not require student to remain home. Yes- Medical advice is recommended for rash with fever, open and weeping wounds, or quickly spreading rash.

Vomiting Vomiting is a protective reflex to rid your body of viruses, bacteria, or parasites in your digestive system.	Yes- Keep student's home if they have vomited <u>one</u> or more times in the last 24 hours. <i>Student can return when he/she has not vomited in the last 24 hours.</i>
Diagnosis	Student must be at home?
Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis) Symptoms of pinkeye include redness, itchiness, discharge that forms a crust during the night that may prevent your eye or eyes from opening in the morning	Yes- If given antibiotics, please keep at home until he/she has taken the antibiotics for at least 24 hours. If your health provider decides not to treat your child, a note is needed to return to school.
Impetigo A common, contagious, superficial skin disorder caused by a bacterial infection. Symptoms of impetigo involve red sores that quickly rupture, ooze for a few days and then form a yellowish-brown crust	Yes- Doctors note is needed to return to school. Please keep child home at least 24 hours after antibiotics are started. Lesions should be covered until healed and there is no cracking or weeping.

References: Mayo clinic, WebMD, Denver Children's Hospital; Selekman, J. (2013). *School nursing: A comprehensive text* (2nd ed.). F.A. Davis CO

SERVICES

CAFETERIA

Students are expected to show good manners, consideration, and courtesy toward others in the cafeteria. They can be friendly and sociable as they talk with their friends, but should avoid all boisterousness and loud talk. When students have finished eating they should leave the tables neat and clean. Trays are to be taken to the return area as soon as the student has finished eating. The refuse is to be placed in waste barrels provided for that purpose. There is to be no running and pushing in the cafeteria or going to and from the cafeteria. Remember, students are in class during lunch period, so the halls should be kept as quiet as possible.

According to the standards of the State of Montana Division of School Food Services, those students receiving a school lunch shall be given a minimum of three (3) different food items from different food groups. **They are not to drink soda pop with their hot or cold lunch.**

Eating lunch in the cafeteria is a privilege and if students do choose to misuse the rules, the privilege can easily be taken away until the student assures the school their behavior will improve. Students eating in the cafeteria may either buy their entire lunch or bring a lunch from home. Students in grades K-3 will not have access to a microwave. Please don't send foods that need to be heated. If a student doesn't have an appropriate lunch, they will be asked to get a hot lunch.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PRICES

TICKETS

20 Meals	\$60.00
10 Meals	\$30.00
5 Meals	\$15.00
1 Meal	\$3.00
Adult Meal	\$4.75

GRADES K-5

BREAKFAST

Student	\$1.75
Adult	\$2.35

Milk may be purchased for \$.50 per carton.

SPECIAL EVENTS/FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

1. **Open House/Curriculum Night:** Parents are invited to open house at school shortly before or after school starts. This event is held in the evening and is an excellent opportunity to get to meet your child's teacher, visit in the classroom and become familiar with the school building (this is not a time for individual conferences).
2. **Parties:** There may be parties throughout the year as deemed by the classroom teacher for special occasions. If you would like to help during one of these parties, please indicate that on the "Would You Like to Help Out" parent volunteer form in this booklet. Birthdays may also be celebrated at school. Parents should contact the teacher and make prior arrangements if they would like to send treats, etc.
3. **Family Engagement Nights:** Parents are invited to come and explore fun opportunities with their students. The goal will be to provide reading and math support and strengthen home/school connections. Learning and engagement will be provided as well as take home activities to build reading and math skills. Volunteers are always welcome and encouraged.

Please refer to policy # 3233 Equal Access and Education. The policy provides equal access to public facilities to youth groups. We will not discriminate against a group based on membership of a protected class.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Many times the classroom teachers are aided by specialized teachers or services to meet the needs of their students. These are called Special Services. Our school provides the following Special Services:

1. **Special Education Program**
This program has been designed to provide individualized academic assistance to children with specific learning handicaps. Included among these may be handicaps in any of the following areas: vision, hearing, speech and language skills, motor skills, social/emotional behavior, and academic learning abilities. Please refer to board policy #2160.
2. **Speech and Language Therapy Program**
The Speech and Language Program provides evaluation and therapy for students with speech, language, or hearing problems.
3. **Title I Program**
Title I teachers work with the classroom teacher to provide remediation/extension for children in reading and math. It provides an excellent opportunity for students to receive additional support or enrichment. Please refer to board policy #2161 and 2162P Rights of parents of a child with a disability.
4. **School Psychologist**
Our school psychologist provides psychological testing services and follow-up.
5. **Health Nurse**
Our nurse provides consultation or offers alternate educational programs due to the health status. The nurse assists with visual screening and reviews immunization records.
6. **Counselor**
The school counselor is a guidance specialist who provides counseling and informational services to individual students, small groups, and occasionally to entire classes. This may include, but is not limited to, Friendship Recess and a mentoring program. Do not overlook the help that is readily available from your teacher, administrative staff, principal, and counselor.
When it is practical to do so, try to make an appointment in advance. This can easily be done calling the counselor's office and leaving your name. If the counselor is out of the office at the time, leave a brief note at the main office.
Parents may request an interview with the school counselor concerning problems related to their children. Counseling sessions and conferences are treated as confidential.
7. **Hearing Screening**
Hearing screening is provided by a team of specialists from the Yellowstone Easter Seal Center. Free evaluation will be provided for those students who need further testing.



Shepherd Elementary Schools

Notification of Counseling Support

Elementary school counseling services in Shepherd are an integral part of the total school community and complement learning in the classroom. School counselors are certified or licensed professionals who possess a master's degree and are endorsed in school counseling. Elementary school counselors advocate for students and are important members of the educational team. We consult, collaborate and work closely with parents, teachers, school administrators and other professionals to provide the best possible resources and services to help maximize student potential.

Counselors help address any emotional or behavioral issues that may interfere with a student's ability to learn in the classroom. We know that children learn best when they are not worried or experiencing unsolved problems. The delivery of counseling support is structured to meet the needs of the individual and may look different for each student.

This notification is to inform you that your child will receive counseling support structured in classroom guidance lessons, group setting or on an individual basis as needed. As a parent, you are your child's first and most valuable teacher. We recognize the power of family support and involvement as we work together to help your child have a rewarding school experience and meet his or her potential.

Please feel free to contact us so we can discuss how to best meet the needs of all children. We look forward to hearing from you!

Mrs. Loretta Michels



PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

In accordance with the educational goals and objectives of the Shepherd School District, we affirm the unique values, needs, and talents of the individual student. Therefore, we acknowledge our responsibility to provide adequate and appropriate learning opportunities for all.

Shepherd School will focus on the special needs of those students with demonstrated or potential high intellectual ability, and those who are highly motivated and productive and thus require an accelerated or enriched environment for optimal learning. While our emphasis will be to provide the means, methods, and materials that will empower these students to achieve up to their potential, it is our belief and desire that this process will expand and enhance learning opportunities for all.

DEFINITION

Shepherd Public Schools defines gifted students as those at all grade levels who possess and demonstrate high intellectual ability, and/or academic ability, and are therefore in need of differentiated programming in order to optimally develop and achieve.

ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH OPPORTUNITIES

1. SPELLING BEE – Fourth and fifth grade students participate in a school wide-contest. The winners then advance to county, state and national spelling bees.
2. CURRICULUM COMPACTING AND SUBJECT ACCELERATION - Students may be pre-assessed for mastery, subject pacing and challenge level to match ability.
CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT - Student attends classes at next highest level during part of the day.
3. ACCELERATED READING AND MATH - Students are provided with assignments that match their demonstrated ability level.
4. INDEPENDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS (Implementation date 9.94) - The independent research projects provide students with the opportunity to develop their interests under the mentorship of a community member and/or staff member. Through this mentorship they develop projects that pursue their research questions.
5. MTSS – The MTSS process is an instructional, assessment, intervention, and extension process for systematically delivering instruction, monitoring student progress, and making decisions about the need for intensifying instruction. The fundamental question that MTSS addresses is: “Under what conditions will a student successfully demonstrate mastery of our standards?”
6. FLEXIBLE GROUPING – Students are grouped in accordance to their ability level in specific subjects.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (MTSS)

Shepherd Elementary School is participating in the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) process with the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). MTSS is the practice of providing high-quality instruction/intervention matched to all students’ needs, using assessment to determine a student’s needs to make important educational decisions to guide instruction. MTSS is a proactive process that enables learning for all students by providing both prevention and intervention services. There are eight non-negotiable, essential components of MTSS:

1. Strong Leadership
2. Evidence-based Curriculum and Instruction
3. Ongoing Assessments
4. Collaborative Teaming
5. Data-Based Decision Making
6. Fidelity of Implementation
7. Ongoing Training and Professional Development
8. Community and Family Involvement

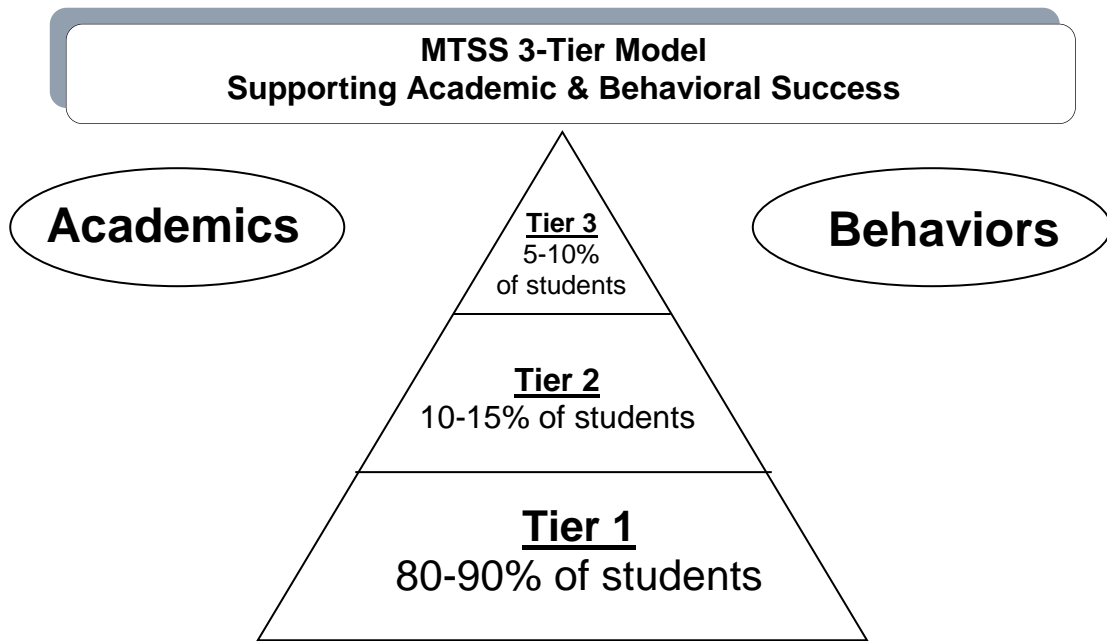
Each element is part of an interrelated process which will be applied to every student. Essentially, instructional practices are evaluated and adjusted based on results of reliable and valid student data. If any component is missing, the process breaks down.

The MTSS process is an instructional, assessment, intervention, and extension process for systematically delivering instruction, monitoring student progress, and making decisions about the need for intensifying instruction. The fundamental question that MTSS addresses is: “Under what conditions will a student successfully demonstrate mastery of our standards?”

A multi-tiered system of support provides guidance for delivering comprehensive, quality instruction for all students. It ensures prevention as well as remediation. It provides for whole group instruction, small group instruction and/or individualized instruction based on student need. MTSS is based on the assumption that most students will respond to general education curriculum and instructional practices without any additional supports. It also supports those who will need supplemental and/or intensive levels of instruction or enrichment to make benchmark goals. Shepherd Elementary School will use a three tier model.

To ensure that the MTSS process is followed and that parents are involved in this educational process for their children, the following activities will be completed:

1. All K-5 students will be given universal screenings in reading and math three times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring).
2. Students who do not meet the benchmark criteria set forth by the district will be progress monitored to ensure adequate progress is being made.
3. All K-5 students may receive diagnostic testing (as needed) to help determine appropriate levels of intervention.
4. All students will be instructed using an evidence-based core program. All intervention programs available to students will also be evidence-based.
5. Fidelity checks will be implemented. This will encompass the MTSS process, assessments, and all core and intervention programs.
6. Documentation will be kept and made available (upon request) on all students throughout the MTSS process.
7. The referral process for special education can be started with signed parental consent for students who do not make adequate gains after extensive intervention opportunities have been provided.
8. Parents will be contacted throughout the school year explaining their child’s educational program, current intervention, and/or progress. Contact will be made via conferences, phone calls, and/or written reports. Parents may comment, and suggestions will be made if student improvement is needed.
9. When requested, or as need arises, MTSS related workshops will be offered for K-5 parents and students, as well as the public. They will be invited to learn about the MTSS program, student selection, and evaluation processes. Suggestions and recommendations for the MTSS program will be encouraged at this time.



Tier 3: Targeted Individual Instruction/Learning & Behavior Support

Targeted students participate in individual assessment, tailored interventions or behavioral modifications to respond to their needs and the use of frequent, formative assessments. This would include pull-out enrichment. Consideration for specially designed instruction should only occur when data indicates a need. Consider core replacements.

Tier 2: Needs-Based Instruction/Learning & Behavior Support

Targeted students will participate in instruction that is different from Tier 1. It utilizes established intervention protocols, provides enhanced opportunities for extended learning, uses flexible, small groups, and includes more frequent progress monitoring. Check In Check Out (CICO) will be used to support behavior needs.

Tier 1: Core Instructional Programs & School-Wide Behavior Support

All students participate in instruction and behavior support that is in the general education classroom, standards-based, differentiated, evidence-based, and positive behavior support by progress monitoring and balanced assessment.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

Section 504 is an act which prohibits discrimination against persons with a handicap in any program receiving federal financial assistance. The act defines a person with a handicap as anyone

who: 1) has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities include activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working); 2) has a record of such an impairment; or 3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Shepherd School District recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a handicap will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

SEXUAL/RACIAL HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

Refer to Shepherd School District Policy #3225

TITLE IX (EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY)

No person at Shepherd School shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. The Title IX coordinator, be reached at 373-5300, Shepherd High School, 7842 Shepherd Road, P.O. Box 8, Shepherd, MT 59079-0008

Please refer to Shepherd School District Board Policy #3225

STUDENT/PARENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Refer to Shepherd School District Board Policy #1700

HOMELESS STUDENTS

When a child loses permanent housing and is determined to be homeless as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act, enrollment action in the best interest of the child shall be taken, pursuant to federal guidelines and Shepherd School Board Policy #3125 and 3125F. The parent or guardian of the homeless student has the option to:

1. continue the child's education in the school of origin for as long as the child remains homeless or, if the child becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year during which the housing is acquired; or
2. enrolling the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

Assistance and support for homeless families in the Shepherd School District can be found at <http://montana211.org/> or by calling 2-1-1. Montana 2-1-1 is a free, anonymous service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Shepherd School collaborates with parents and guardians to promote the mutual goal of student achievement. To ensure parents are aware of their rights and the opportunity to engage with the School District, specific policies and procedures are available on the School District's website at <https://www.shepherd.k12.mt.us/Page/895> and are available to be printed upon request. Please consult the following policies to learn more about methods to be an active part of your student's education:

- Uniform Grievance Procedure – Policy 1700
- Student and Family Privacy Rights – Policy 2132
- Parent/Family Engagement and Involvement in Education – Policy 2158
- Student Health Instruction – Policy 2335
- School Activities and Clubs – Policy 3233, Policy 3510, Policy 3550
- Student Health – Policy 3410
- Student Immunization – Policy 3413
- Student Records and Confidentiality – Policy 3600

