



Means...

Shepherd Students are College Bound!

100% of Shepherd students will meet or exceed standards in reading, writing, and math.
College Bound!!!

Students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade are exposed to college readiness at Shepherd Elementary. We share the philosophy of the TurnAround Schools in believing it is our job to prepare students to go to college if they so choose. The staff is committed to providing the education of the whole child using established standards and all available resources.

Classrooms have adopted a college, decorated classrooms, bulletin boards, and created college cheers which are shared at STANGS assemblies (monthly assemblies to celebrate student achievement). Students are also encouraged to wear their college t-shirt or college colors on College Bound Mondays. College flags also hang in the hallway outside each classroom. On Tuesdays students and staff wear their No Excuses t-shirts so show their commitment to learning for all students.

Classrooms have been involved with colleges in a variety of ways. Some examples are:

- Campus visits
- College presentations
- Website tours
- Penpals
- Attending college events

Shepherd Elementary was the first NEU school in Montana. We are proud to share that our entire district is a part of the NEU network. Our school will utilize resources, grants, and tools from the GMM Initiative (Graduation Matters Montana). As Montanans, we need to work together and share the accountability of graduating more students from high school with an opportunity to attend college if they so choose. Parents, students, and staff alike are very enthusiastic about Shepherd Schools being College Bound!

There is...A Culture of Universal Achievement

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At Shepherd Elementary ALL students are expected to achieve and be 100% proficient in all grade level standards. We strive to promote a culture of universal achievement. Since the implementation of NEU, Shepherd has provided multiple opportunities for our administration and staff to attend conferences such as the Turn Around Conferences. We were fortunate to have Mr. Damen Lopez participate in a Skype interview with our staff during one of our monthly book studies based around his book, No Excuses University. Damen was also a guest speaker for the opening of the 2014-2015 school year for our district.

Although all subject areas are important in obtaining a culture of universal achievement, we have made reading and math our top priorities at Shepherd Schools. Through data analysis and team collaboration, teachers work with students within and among grade levels. Intervention and extension block times are used to provide appropriate instruction for all students. This instruction is provided by classroom teachers, Title I staff, Special Education staff, Gifted and Talented staff, and support staff. We also have an instructional coach in place who does observations and lesson modeling in classrooms to improve reading and math instruction.

Our district utilizes Wednesday afternoons from 2:45-4:00 for collaboration. Grade level teams meet to examine student data, group students, and work on standards alignment and assessments. We are currently using a data management tool to track our academic and behavior data.

Each student at Shepherd elementary is deserving of a quality education that prepares them for college if they so choose. This is the belief that we adhere to each day!

There is...A Commitment to Collaboration

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Our mission at Shepherd elementary school is ensure the education of the whole child using established standards and all available resources.

The staff at Shepherd Elementary is committed to a high level of collaboration. In accomplishing this we strive to: share daily duties, resources, and all data related to student learning.

An environment conducive to effective collaboration will allow educators to make informed decisions based on the three critical PLC questions:

- What do we want students to know and be able to do?
- How will we know when they have learned it?
- How will we respond when students have or have not learned it?

When addressing these three critical questions we strive to meet our goal of 100% of students meeting and/or exceeding standards in reading, math, and writing.

Time is essential to quality collaboration. District-wide, members are committed to defining and making time for team planning and grouping. We have also designated Wednesdays from 2:45-4:00 as our PLC time focused on enhancing student learning.

The staff is committed to developing strong relationships with each other. We celebrate individual, team, and district school-wide successes. We are honest with one another as we respectfully address concerns. We support one another during times that are challenging both professionally and personally.

There is...Analysis of Student Data

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The staff at Shepherd Elementary is committed to the use of specific assessments. These assessments are scheduled throughout each school year. Staff members work as a district to create a schedule for all school wide assessments. Grade level teams create and follow an assessment schedule using pacing guides.

State Assessments: Shepherd staff reviews, analyzes, and discusses among team members on how to improve student learning based off of SBAC scores. The data is also shared with the parents at Parent-Teacher conferences the following Fall.

District Assessments: District reading assessments (AIMSweb, MAPs) and math assessments (AIMSweb, MAPs) are used to improve instruction, student learning, and student grouping. Teams meet to analyze and discuss data from these assessments on a regular basis. Interventions are put in place if needed, based on the data from these assessments.

School Assessments: Standards-based assessments in writing, math, and reading are shared and discussed during Wednesday collaborative team meetings.

Formative Assessments: These occur daily in the classroom with teachers checking student understanding through the use of whiteboards, oral response, written response, math manipulatives, as well as utilizing technology in a variety of content areas. Teachers use this information to adjust instruction for re-teaching, new lessons, and enrichment.

Individualized Student Goals: Each year students will create reading, writing, and math goals that they will work on achieving throughout the year. These goals are reviewed, celebrated, and adjusted accordingly. Once goals are met, new goals will be created.

There is...Standards Alignment

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It is the belief of Shepherd Elementary that the use of Montana Common Core Standards are the basis for determining what students should know and be able to do from kindergarten through fifth grade.

Standards alignment is a process that is never complete; it is an ongoing practice. Each staff member will strive to achieve mastery level learning with all students. It is the expectation of Shepherd School District that all teachers will use the adopted curriculums. In our effort to align our teaching to the common core standards we ask ourselves the following four questions:

Specific Skills: What major skills need to be targeted in order to effectively teach each standard?

Assessments: What assessments will we use in order to offer summative and formative data for each standard?

Instructional Methods: What strategies and practices can we use to teach each standard to our students?

Resources: What resources and materials will we use to insure learning for all students?

