

MEDICINE CROW MIDDLE SCHOOL

August 2019 NEWSLETTER

“Welcome to the Wolfpack”

Principal: Mrs. Nikki Hofmann
Associate Principal: Mrs. Becky Carlson



Dear Students & Parents:

WELCOME TO THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR! The staff and I are so excited to be starting our fourth year in the building and are looking forward to a great school year. This will be our first newsletter of the year, and you can expect a newsletter to come home three more times during the school year. This particular newsletter contains the “everything you need to know” to start the year off right!

There will be an Open House for all Parents and Students on August 20th from 6:00-7:30 pm. You may pick up a copy of your schedule in the Commons Area, and wander around to find your classrooms and locker. There will be a presentation in the gym at 7:00 pm for 6th Grade parents and new students to Medicine Crow to talk about the transition to middle school. This is the parent’s opportunity to get a picture of life at Medicine Crow and what to expect. We are also asking that you write a letter introducing your child to us - nothing formal, just what you would like us to know or what your student would like us to know starting this new adventure. We will have a dropbox set up for the letters during Open House or you can email it to me at: hofmannn@billingssschools.org

All 6th Graders & New Students (ones that are new to our building for the 2019-20 school year): To help students reduce their anxiety over starting in a new school, on your first day of school, **Thursday, August 22, 2019, you will be the only students in the building!** Please enter through the front doors and we will begin in the Commons Area. We will pass out class schedules, practice opening lockers, practice changing classes, and learn about middle school life! **Returning 7th and 8th Graders:** You get to enjoy one more day of summer break! Existing Wolfpack, we are not forgetting you! Because you have “been there, done that” transition to middle school,

you don’t need the Locker 101 training or the “how to survive middle school!” Therefore, **your schedules will be mailed to you** before school starts. You also get to enjoy one more day of summer vacation, and we will see all of you on Friday, August 23rd for your first day of school! We are counting on you to be the leaders and help transition the 6th Graders into a positive middle school experience!

We will be starting a new program this year at Medicine Crow called **WIN - WHAT I NEED. ‘WIN Time’** is a flexible period of 30 minutes added to student schedules to provide extra help and enrichment opportunities. The focus of the time is about learning and academic need. Students may sign up for sessions of their choice. However, they may also be assigned to a priority classroom, which means they are required to report to a specific classroom on that day. WIN time will run on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

WIN is designed to meet the needs of all students and will:

- Provide extra support and time for learning
 - Provide enrichment opportunities
 - Provide time for test makeups
 - Provide time for study sessions
 - Provide time for writing workshops
 - Provide time for completion of missing work
 - Students will receive a student ID card with a barcode for staff to check them in and out of WIN sessions.
- The first ID card is free, replacement cards will be \$5

We are very excited about starting our fourth year at Medicine Crow. We want to make Medicine Crow the very best place for all of us to learn, work, play and grow together. After all, a wolfpack is a family made up of distinct individuals of all ages, skills and abilities. To create this environment, we emphasize students to be **Respectful, Accountable, Safe and Determined.** Our vision is a place for students to learn in an environment where they know the adults care for the welfare and learning of every student; where students strive for their very best, while supporting and being positive to one another, knowing that every adult in the building is pulling for their success. Please feel free to contact me about any questions or concerns you may have, and I am looking forward to a fun and successful year!

Sincerely ~ Nikki Hofmann, Principal

MEDICINE CROW MIDDLE SCHOOL

IMPORTANT DATES

AUGUST

- 16 Football Equipment pick up: 3:00-5:00 pm
- 19-23 Cross-Country, Football, Softball practices start at 3:30 pm
- 20 PARENT AND STUDENT OPEN HOUSE-6:00pm
Presentation in the gym at 7:00 pm regarding transitioning to middle school. We will be collecting sports forms/fees and issuing bus tickets in the Office during the Open House
- 22 SCHOOL STARTS at 8:10 am for 6th Graders & New students only!
- 23 7th & 8th Graders return to school
STUDENTS WITHOUT THEIR TDAP BOOSTER WILL BE EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER

- 2 NO SCHOOL- Labor Day
- 27 Fall Picture Day

OCTOBER

- 3 Six Week Progress Reports/Grading
- 10-11 Parent Teacher Conferences (Early Dismissal)

OPENING DAY INFORMATION

August 22nd, all 6th Graders and New Students **only** come in the front doors and begin in the Commons Area. On Friday, August 23rd, **all students** are to report to their Advisory Classroom at 8:10 am. The doors will be open at 8:00 am. Students will be mailed a class schedule indicating what their Advisory Classroom is, in order to report on the first day. The regular hot lunch and salad bar will be available. The school day ends at 3:10 pm. If you are in Band, you do not need to bring your instrument on Friday. Also, you will not need to dress out for PE on this day only.

WEDNESDAY'S 2:10 pm Dismissals

Billings Public Schools will be having an early dismissal on **EVERY** Wednesday for Staff Training. School buses will run early on Wednesdays. Medicine Crow Middle School will be dismissing at 2:10 pm on **EVERY** Wednesday.

STUDENT PLANNERS

Each student will be receiving a Medicine Crow Student Planner which includes a Billings Public School's Student/Parent Handbook during their Advisory Class on the first day of school. The planner contains student procedures that pertain to Medicine Crow Middle School. **We are asking that each student bring \$5.00 on the first day of school to pay for the planner (the \$5.00 covers the cost and the shipping of the planner).** Please ask your child to bring the planner home, so that you can go through the planner with him/her. You will find that most of the information contained in the student planner and the Student/Parent Handbook will help you successfully navigate middle school with your child. Also, the planner is a very important organizational tool for each student. Please ask to see the planner from time-to-time throughout the year. This will help emphasize the importance of the planner's use to the child. Please notice the Billings Public School Student/Parent Handbook in your student's planner. This handbook contains every District policy and procedure approved by the school board that pertains to you and your child. An "Acknowledgement and Sign-Off Sheet" will be sent home with your student on the first day of school. This form is your acknowledgement that you have seen and read the Student/Parent Handbook. Each child and parent is asked to sign and return this sheet by Monday, August 26th to their Advisory classroom teacher.

SCHOOL BUS REGISTRATION

Free busing will be provided for all students who live three (3) or more miles from Medicine Crow. However, because of safety concerns for the students crossing Main Street, these students may have access to ride a school district bus at the cost of \$150 per year. If students qualify for free or reduced lunches, this applies to the cost of busing as well. The cost will be prorated according to when the student begins riding the bus.

Students will arrive at approximately 7:40 am and will depart from Medicine Crow at approximately 3:20 pm.

Students need to pre-register at Medicine Crow for the bus. This applies to both those who ride free and those who pay a fee. Tickets will be available beginning August 19th from 7:30 am-3:00 pm in the Main Office.

Parents and students are reminded that non-bus students may not ride the bus, unless they have prior approval (three days in advance) from Sondra Baker, Director of Transportation 281-5581. Thank you.

MEDICINE CROW MIDDLE SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

SESSION 1 8/19-10/7	SESSION 2 10/7-11/26	SESSION 3 12/9-2/4	SESSION 4 2/3-3/24	SESSION 5 3/23-5/19
Girls Softball 6th, 7th & 8th Grade	Girls Basketball 7th & 8th Grade	Boys Basketball 7th & 8th Grade	Volleyball 6th, 7th & 8th Grade	Track 6th-(Running Events Only) 7th & 8th Grade- (All Events)
Football 7th & 8th Grade	Wrestling 6th, 7th & 8th Grade			
Cross-Country 6th, 7th & 8th Grade				

Stop by our Main Office to pick up the Activities Paperwork, which includes:

- **PHYSICAL FORM**- all 6th, 7th & 8th graders must have a new physical **every year** in order to participate
- **CONCUSSION FORM**
- **MEDICAL RELEASE FORM**
- **MEDIA RELEASE FORM**
- **BPS PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**
- **PARTICIPATION FEE \$45 PER ACTIVITY (MC Shirts-required are \$9.00 and Shorts-optional are \$6.00)**
- **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Turn in the completed, signed forms to Medicine Crow's Main Office.

SPORTS PHYSICALS

All 6th, 7th & 8th grade students participating in a sport must have a physical which has been completed within one year of the sport. This has changed from previous years, as you will need a new physical each school year that you participate.

STUDENT INSURANCE COVERAGE

The BPS Activities Office has purchased a student accident insurance policy from Special Markets Insurance Consultants, Inc. (SMIC) which covers students involved in school sponsored extracurricular activities and physical education classes. There are several options available.

- Optional 24-hour accident coverage
- Optional school time accident coverage
- Optional 24-hour accident coverage extension
- Optional football coverage
- Spring/Summer weight and conditioning training only
- Optional 24 hour dental coverage
- PatientPlus Card-only \$9.95 per month

SMIC Insurance information will be sent home with your student the first day of school. For more information, or to enroll go to: www.k12specialmarkets.com or call (800)-727-7642 ext 6103.

SOFTBALL

Softball is a fall sport for all 6th, 7th & 8th grade girls. The first practice for softball will be on Monday, August 19th at 3:30 pm. All paperwork as stated above, must be turned into the main office. In addition to the Participation Fee, you must purchase a Medicine Crow t-shirt for \$9, unless you purchased one last year. The same shirt may be worn for all sports.

FOOTBALL

Football season begins on Monday, August 19th at 3:30pm. Equipment will be issued for all interested 7th & 8th grade boys on Friday, August 16th from 3:00-5:00 pm. Each athlete needs to make sure that all paperwork, as stated above, is turned into the main office. **In addition to the Participation Fee, you must purchase a Medicine Crow Football Jersey for \$35.**

Football players must wear the colored mouth guards that are provided, so that officials can make sure that they are wearing them.

We are anticipating an exciting season and hope to see many of you on the 19th in good shape and ready to play football.

CROSS-COUNTRY

The first practice for Cross-Country will be on Monday, August 19th at 3:30 pm. Cross-Country is available to all 6th, 7th & 8th grade girls and boys. All paperwork as stated above, must be turned into the main office. In addition to the Participation Fee, you must purchase a Medicine Crow t-shirt for \$9, unless you have purchased one last year.

If you haven't already begun your training for Cross-Country, you should start as soon as possible. We recommend that you start with one mile/day at least five days per week. Run in the morning if possible to avoid the heat. Be sure to drink plenty of water when you are training in hot weather. Biking and swimming are also excellent conditioning activities. Replace up to two days of running per week with either of these activities.

***TEAM PICTURES FOR FALL SPORTS WILL BE TAKEN AT PRACTICE ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH.**

MEDICINE CROW MIDDLE SCHOOL

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS

6th Grade Students: Per State law, we must have verification that your child has received their 2nd Varicella Immunization, or proof from your physician that they have had the disease.

7th & 8th Grade Students: Per State law, we must have verification that your child has received their 2nd MMR, Tdap, and 2nd Varicella Immunization, or proof from your physician that they have had the disease.

Students without proof of these immunizations will be excluded from school on August 23rd.

RIVERSTONE HEALTH CLINIC

The RiverStone Health Medicine Crow School Clinic will be open starting, Monday, August 12th. It will be open Monday-Friday from 1:00-5:00 pm. The Clinic is located at Medicine Crow Middle School at [900 Barrett Road](#).

If your child still needs a sports physical please call us at 247-3210, to schedule an appointment with one of our medical providers. The cost is \$30 for the sports physical appointment. If immunizations are needed, they can be administered during this sports physical appointment. The MHS Sports Physical form needs to be completed by the parent.

PAYSCHOOLS

It's the mark of our times - the merging of the Internet with our day-to-day business. Now, the Billings Public Schools is among the first school systems in the country to bring that convenience to parents by offering an online payment processing system, "PaySchools". More and more busy people turn to the Internet every month to pay their bills online, and we saw there was a need to offer that same kind of service to the parents and community members in our district. Through this system, parents can access PaySchools through the school's website and pay for school-related fees and products online, either by e-check or MasterCard, Visa, or Discover cards. The parent will immediately receive an email receipt confirming their purchase(s). PaySchools does not save or store bank or credit card information to ensure privacy and security for users. PaySchools offers parents the ease of being able to make purchases 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week, the security of knowing the school has received payments, the protection of sensitive account information, and the convenience of having records of purchases and payments available online. Schools save significant labor costs by reducing manual processing of payments and handling fewer checks.

For more information about PaySchools, please contact Dawn at 281-8601, or visit the school's website at: www.billingssschools.org/medicinecrow

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Parent verification of any absence is required. Parents are asked to call Mrs. Schaefer, Attendance Clerk, at 281-8618 each day your child is absent from school. If no phone call is made, the parent should send a note with your child when he/she returns to school the next day.

If you are planning an absence in advance (taking a trip, hunting, etc.), please send a note to school before the absence. The student may be given his/her assignments, so the work can be made up before the absence, or take it with them to have completed when they return to school. If books or other materials are needed, please call Mrs. Schaefer at 281-8618 for assistance. Materials can be picked up after 2:30 pm. **Please understand that we do not collect homework assignments, unless the student will be gone for two consecutive days.** If your child needs to leave school during the school day for an appointment, a note (or phone call) should be given to the Attendance Desk before the 8:10 am bell rings, so we can issue a call slip for the proper time. Students are not allowed to leave the building during the school day without first checking out at the Attendance Desk. If this does not occur, the absence will be treated as an unexcused absence. Our policy for leaving school to have lunch with a parent is:

- **The student must be accompanied by his/her parent**
- **Attendance Clerk must have a parent notification by 8:10 am**

We are always concerned about your child's whereabouts and thus are diligent about verifying any absences. We appreciate your assistance!

POWERSCHOOL

Parents will be able to access PowerSchool from the Medicine Crow website. There is a ParentConnect Module that provides parents with secured internet access to a wide array of their child's school data, such as: district, school, and classroom news, student demographics, student schedules, attendance activity, class assignments, report cards and progress reports, transcripts, standardized testing results, and email links to teachers, counselors, and school administrators. Parents can access the program through any internet-connected computer or cell phone. We will have letters available at the Open House on Tuesday, August 20th with the sign-in information (Username and Passwords). Teachers will be asked to update their gradebooks by the end of the day on Thursdays (as much as possible). It is a very useful communication tool to keep up to date on how your child is doing in school.

MEDICINE CROW MIDDLE SCHOOL

CHECKS WRITTEN TO MEDICINE CROW

Parents and students: When writing checks to Medicine Crow, please remember:

- We cannot cash checks or give cash back
- If you are paying for an activity, breakfast/lunch, etc, please write separate checks, as the money is deposited into separate accounts
- Please put the student's name in the "memo" section of the check.

Thank you for your cooperation!

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH AT MEDICINE CROW

A computerized system for purchasing meals is used at Medicine Crow. Students use their assigned student ID numbers to access their accounts during meal services in the cafeteria. This number can be found on their class schedules. Students will punch their number into a keypad. **Please stress to your students they must not share their ID number with other students.** The student accounts will be utilized to deposit funds for meals and/or a la carte purchases. Depositing funds will keep lost or stolen money to a minimum and can be used for breakfast, lunch, milk, or a la carte items. The program will allow the purchase of one breakfast and one lunch per day at the meal price set up for Full Paying, Reduced, or Free qualifying status. If a student purchases a second meal, extra milk, or other a la carte items, they will be charged at the per item price regardless of eligibility. At the end of each school year, any remaining balance in your student's account will remain in their account for the next school year. **We will continue to have a "NO CHARGE" policy.** The cost of a full paying student lunch is \$3.00 per day (\$15.00 weekly, \$60.00 monthly). **BREAKFAST WILL NOT BE SERVED THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF SCHOOL.** The cost of a full paying breakfast is \$1.30 (\$6.50 weekly, \$26.00 monthly). A Sodexo associate will be available in the cafeteria on August 20th from 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm to collect money for student accounts. If you have any questions regarding the computerized system, please call Kim Boehm, our lunch clerk, at 281-8610.

Students are not allowed to order delivery of food themselves. With nearly 700 students, time and staffing do not allow for payment, pulling a student out of class to receive the delivery. Parents may drop off lunches at school.

SCHOOL PICTURES

- Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders will have their pictures taken on Friday, September 27th. Flyers will be sent home with information on picture packages.



BOOK FAIR

Medicine Crow's Librarians, Mrs. Meyer and Mrs. Anderson, plan to have a Book Fair the week of October 7-11th. Students will be able to browse and purchase books at any time during this week. The library will be open from 7:30 am - 4:00 pm every day. Money raised from the Book Fair will be used to purchase additional resources for the library.

HOMEWORK

The amount of homework varies. However, the suggested guidelines are for a student to have ten minutes of homework for each year in school. Therefore, a sixth grader would have 60 minutes of homework; a seventh grader would have 70 minutes and an eighth grader would have 80 minutes. Typically, our students have math homework every night. If your child is spending more than 1 ½ hours on homework every evening, you should talk to the teacher.

Electronic Devices - Away for the Day

"Away for the Day" means just that. Student cell phones, iPods, or other electronics with Internet access are put away in backpacks and lockers from 8:00am - 3:10pm. When students are eating breakfast or come in from outside to go to lockers in the morning at 8:00am, cell phones/electronics are turned off and put in backpacks. The backpack, with the phone/electronics, is then left in the student locker. If students have their phones out between these times, they will be asked by any adult in the building to turn over their phone to that adult. The adult takes the phone to the Main Office, where the student picks it up at the end of the school day. Consequences will occur with repeated offenses. You might be asking why, in this age of technology, would we make such a policy and fight this battle? Simple. Current research on the development of the teenage brain - especially at the middle school age - shows that too much screen time is detrimental to brain development, attention span, ability to focus, and face to face social development. The self control to avoid looking at and responding to the phone at every ding and chirp throughout the day is just not developed. The distraction to learning and social development is too great. If you are curious about an "Away for the Day" cell phone policy, please search <https://www.awayfortheday.org/> for more information.

MEDICINE CROW MIDDLE SCHOOL

MEDICATIONS AT MEDICINE CROW

Medicine Crow is committed to meeting your middle school student's health care needs. Prescription and over the counter medications are allowed at school and can either be given by the nurse, or your student can keep them at the Attendance Office with Mrs. Schaefer, and take them accordingly. If the medication is a prescription, please come in and pick up the appropriate paperwork to be filled out and signed by your prescribing provider. If your student has trouble remembering to take their prescription medications, the school nurse will give the prescribed medication at the time designated by your student's provider. If your child remembers to take their prescription medications or wants to keep over the counter medication at school, example acetaminophen/ibuprofen, it will be kept at the Attendance Office with Mrs. Schaefer and self-administer paperwork must be signed by the parent. Medicine Crow staff does not dispense any stock medications (acetaminophen/ibuprofen). If your child needs over the counter medication for a headache and they do not have their own supply with proper paperwork filled out at the Attendance Office, they will not receive any medication.

If your child has asthma, or has allergies that need medication, please come to the Attendance Office and get the appropriate paperwork to be signed by your child's medical provider. Please have your child's emergency medications (inhalers or epipens) available on the first day of school. We ask that our students keep a back up inhaler or epipen at the Attendance Office during the school year in case of an emergency. One of the school Nurses will be calling you to update or develop your child's emergency healthcare plan.

TEEN FOOD PANTRY

Medicine Crow Middle School has a Teen Food Pantry for students in need. We accept non-perishable food donations any time of the year. We are in need of any non-perishable items, especially dinner items and canned fruits, but we appreciate any donations. We also appreciate school supplies (especially binders and trapper-like keepers). Have any Skyview t-shirts or sweatshirts? We love those too! Please feel free to drop them off at the main office. THANK YOU!

ALL PARENT OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, August 20th

6:00-7:30 pm

Please come meet your child's teachers and walk through his/her day!

Medicine Crow Middle School Dress Code

The Medicine Crow dress policy is designed to provide an appropriate, distraction free learning environment. Just as adults will dress appropriately for work, students are expected to dress appropriately for school as that is their "job." Please see the SD2 Handbook Dress Code Policy #3203.

Basic Guidelines at MCMS:

- Shirts will be long enough to cover the stomach.
- Tank tops-think sleeveless shirt! Straps must be at least 2" wide on the shoulder. No spaghetti strap or racer back tops.
- All undergarments - bras (sports or otherwise), boxers, briefs, etc. - need to be covered at all times.
- All shorts and skirts must be within 2 inches of mid-thigh and the pockets must not be longer than the shorts.
- No slippers or pajamas are allowed.
- Leggings with sheer panels and jeans with cut-out holes need to be school appropriate and not show any undergarments.
- Suggestive/inappropriate slogans, advertisements for drugs/tobacco/alcohol are prohibited.
- School administration reserves the right to final decisions regarding gang related attire.
- Hats may be worn to school but need to be removed and placed in my locker by 8:10. I may not wear it on my belt during the school day.
- I may not wear a coat or jacket to class. Hooded sweatshirts are O.K. but I must remove the hood during the school day.
- My backpack/purse/drawstring bag needs to stay in my locker. If I'm headed to and from my PE class I may take my drawstring bag.

MET BUS TICKETS

September MET bus tickets and schedule books will be available in the main office beginning August 19th. **Students who purchase a September MET bus ticket pass by August 22nd, will be allowed to ride the MET bus free for the rest of August.** If purchasing a MET bus ticket at Medicine Crow and paying cash, please have the exact amount, as the main office doesn't usually have change. You can also pay by check. Please make checks out to MET. The price for a monthly ticket is \$21.

MEDICINE CROW MIDDLE SCHOOL

CASA VOLUNTEERS

Did you know that the number of children entering foster care in Montana has skyrocketed in recent years? In 2018 alone, 510 children were removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect in the Billings area, resulting in more than 900 children currently in local foster care. You could be the voice for one of these children by becoming a volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocate. Please give CASA of Yellowstone County a call at (406) 259-1233 or visit yellowstonecasa.org to learn more about upcoming information sessions and how you can make a difference in the life of a child.

Warm regards,
Ben McKee
Recruitment Coordinator
CASA of Yellowstone County
406-259-1233

6th GRADE: SOS PROGRAM

We are pleased to have the opportunity to offer students in Billings Public Schools a chance to participate in a program called Signs of Suicide (SOS), as part of our suicide prevention efforts. SOS is currently the only school prevention program listed in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. It provides school-based interventions that address suicide risks and prevention of suicide attempts.

Program Highlight

The program highlights the relationship between depression and suicide by teaching that most often suicide is a fatal response to a treatable disorder-depression. In addition, the program focuses on the relationship between depression, suicide, and drug and alcohol use. SOS provides information for students to recognize depression in his or herself, as well as in their peers. It also teaches action steps that youths can take if they experience signs of depression, risk of suicide or see these signs in a friend.

SOS Goals

The goals of the SOS prevention program are:

1. To increase understanding of depression as an illness, and suicide as a behavior related to untreated or poorly managed depression.
2. To improve attitudes about intervening with peers who are experiencing symptoms of depression, and who might be thinking about suicide.
3. To encourage youths who maybe contemplating suicide to seek help.

Program Presentation

Trained school personnel will be presenting the program. The presentations will occur in the Health Enhancement classes of all 6th grade students.

SOS Core Component

A core component of SOS is the "Brief Screen for Adolescent Depression," which will be administered during the presentation. The screening instrument asks students seven questions that require a "yes" or "no" response. Should a student score in the critical range on the screener, parents will be contacted.

Parent Meeting

There will be more information about SOS and a parent meeting regarding the SOS Program later in the Fall. Please note that you will have the option to "opt out" your child from the presentation. More information about the SOS Program and the "opt out" forms will come home with your child in the Fall, before the students start the program.