

Bridger Charter Academy Student Handbook

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Bridger Charter Academy

Overview - *what are we?*

Bridger Charter Academy is a school located within Bozeman High School. The charter offers core course credit through proficiency-based instruction on the same BSD7-approved standards in a smaller learning community.*

**BCA is not an online school; students must attend in person.*

Mission - *why do we exist?*

Bridger Charter Academy exists to ensure ALL students learn at high levels so they can contribute to the world community.

Vision - *what must our school become to accomplish our purpose?*

As a professional learning community, the Bridger Charter Academy staff will ensure the academic, personal, and social growth of every learner by providing pathways to rigorous standards and opportunities for lifelong learning.

Collective Commitments - *how must we behave to achieve our vision?*

The Bridger Charter Academy staff models a culture of continuous learning by ...

- Persevering through challenges
- Practicing resilience and a growth mindset
- Demonstrating intellectual curiosity, wonder, and innovation
- Thinking analytically

The Bridger Charter Academy staff models a culture of kindness and empathy by ...

- Developing meaningful relationships with students and colleagues
- Honoring inclusivity
- Valuing diversity of experience, background, and interests
- Implementing a mentoring program with a focus on whole student education
- Utilizing trauma-informed practices
- Fostering a sense of community

As a Professional Learning Community, the Bridger Charter Academy staff will ...

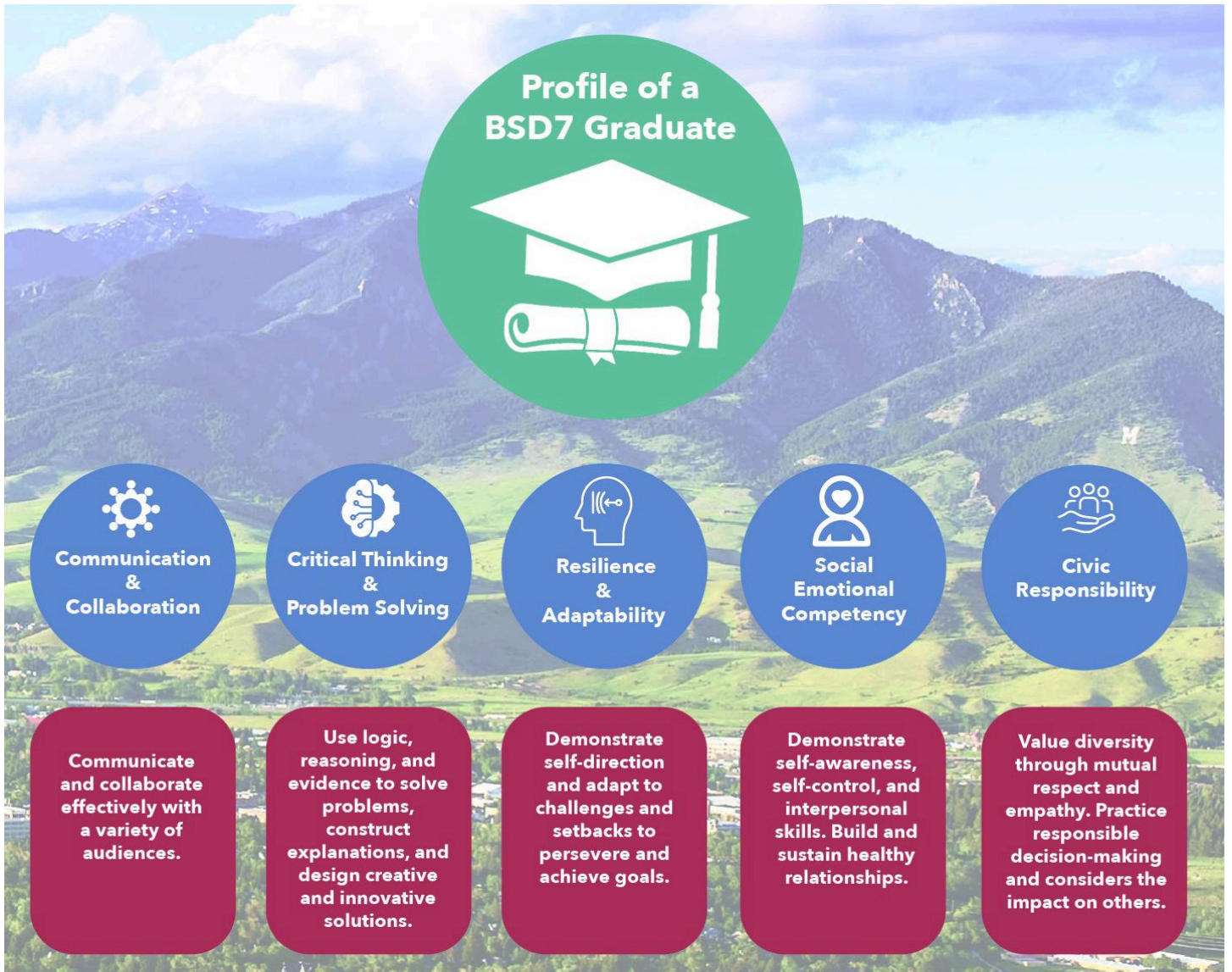
- Identify essential skills and standards
- Implement common formative assessments
- Provide interventions and extensions for students
- Actively reflect on assessment data to inform and improve our practice and to better meet the needs of individual students
- Implement proficiency-based educational practices
- Differentiate instruction to meet student needs
- Engage in ongoing job-embedded professional learning

Goals - *how will we mark our progress?*

- Bridger Charter Academy students will demonstrate proficiency in reading and writing.
- Bridger Charter Academy students will demonstrate proficiency in math.
- Bridger Charter Academy students will show growth in their social-emotional capacities.
- Bridger Charter Academy students will graduate.

Profile of a BSD7 Graduate

BCA staff is committed to helping students develop skills and attributes that are essential for becoming a productive community member as adults after they graduate from high school. These skills and attributes will be developed through the core content learned in courses and through our other community and support structures within BCA.



Essential Structures & Functions of BCA

Whole Student Education

- The structures and functions embedded into BCA are consistently aligned with best practices to support whole student learning.

“A whole child approach to education is one that honors the humanity of each teacher and student, and is critical to equitably preparing each student to reach their full potential. This starts by creating environments of belonging and connection for students and adults to engage and thrive.”

Source: [Whole Child Approach to Education](#)

BCA Teacher Leader

- a teacher with dedicated time who structures and supports the systematic functions for BCA
- organize activities to promote community involvement
- supporting whole students on their academic journey
- contact point for BCA specific questions district and community wide

BCA Counselor

- a counselor dedicated to BCA allows for a consistent system of support
- aligns schedules to support individualized student needs
- delivers school counseling services that support social, emotional, academic, and career-planning programs

Mentoring

- a mentoring program focused on behavioral, social, and emotional habits of success centered on supporting the whole student
- teacher’s role:
 - facilitate and schedule individual meetings every other week;
 - aim to be a trusted figure with whom a mentee is ready to reflect and share;
 - help hold students accountable with expectations;
 - promote growth in habits of success as mentees learn to build their own systems;
 - and instruct and support the self-directed learning cycle, including: reflect, set a goal, make a plan, learn, show evidence of that learning, and continue the cycle for continued knowledge development.
- student’s role:
 - respond to the prompts their mentors share and by reflecting on how they met or struggled to meet their goals;
 - aim to be comfortable sharing what is supporting their success and what is causing any gaps;
 - utilize the action steps in the self-directed learning cycle;

- and remain open to feedback and challenges presented to them in order to, over time, internalize the structures of mentoring and build habits of mind into their own systems of goal-setting and problem solving.

Habits of Success



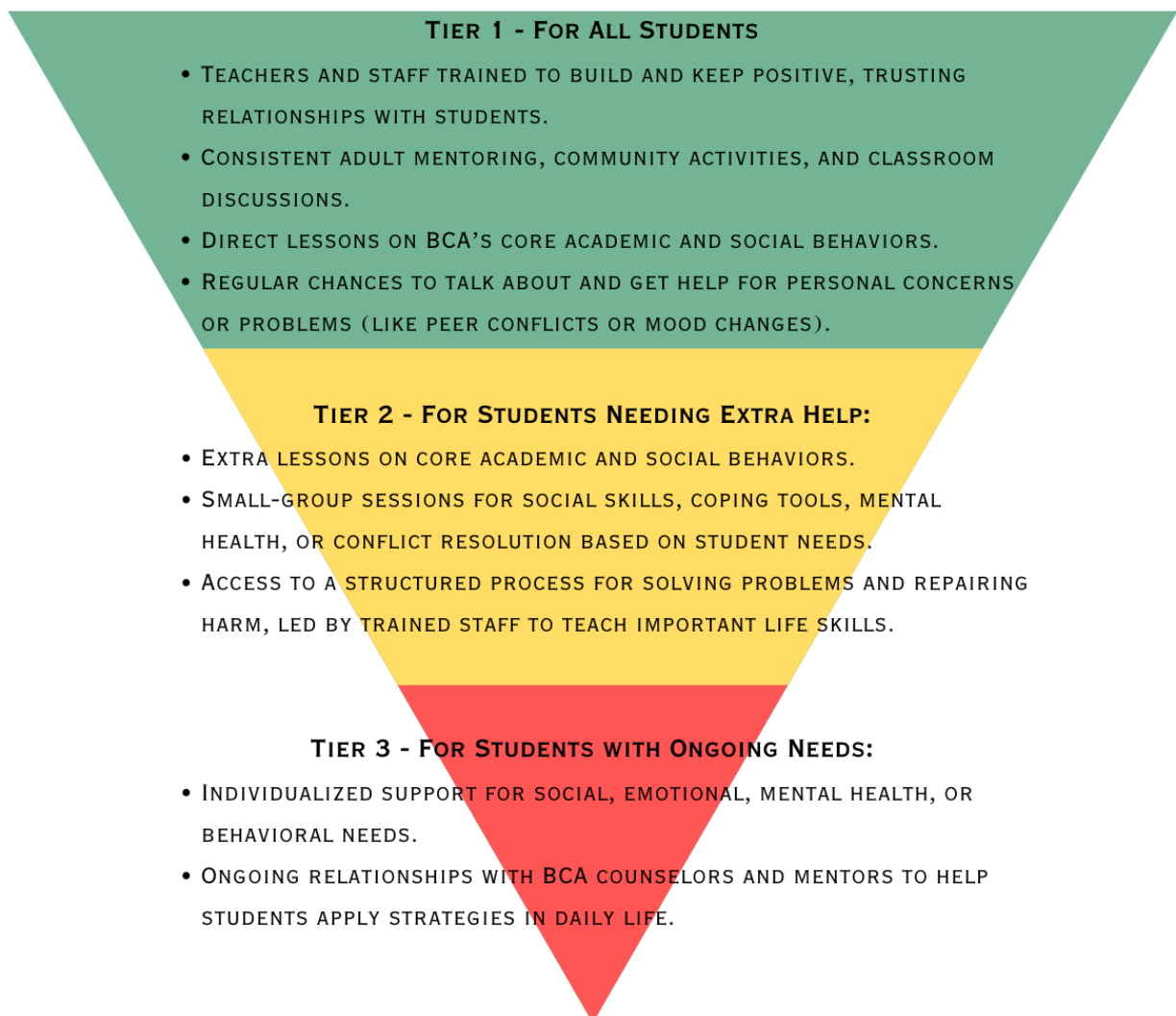
Self Directed Learning Cycle



Climate & Culture

Foundational Predictability within BCA

- **Why?**
 - by providing structural and functional predictability in a student's day, BCA is providing a more consistent educational experience so students can use their energy to focus on their education
- **How?**
 - physical space of BCA is centralized within BHS - to support a smaller community experience
 - smaller class sizes with a goal ratio of 15:1 (student:teacher) to support students more fully with their academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs while fostering meaningful relationships
 - using one LMS (learning management system, Canvas) with consistent teacher design and consistent course expectations throughout all BCA courses
 - continuous collaboration amongst teachers supporting, re-centering, and reflecting on needs of the whole student
 - classroom management strategies aligned with best practices in social and emotional learning



BCA Community

BCA community works to create a safe, supportive, engaging and healthy school environment that promotes collegial relationships among students, parents/guardians, and staff. As a staff, we focus on developing students' self-awareness, independence, and habits for success.

- **Community Expectations**

- **Overall Expectations.** BCA staff and students follow all BSD7 rules and policies, as outlined in the Student Handbook available here: [Students & Parents - Bozeman High School](#).
- **BCA Expectations.** the following are specifically supported within our classrooms to create positive learning environments:



- **Community Activities & Events**

- **Bridger Breakfast.** Hosted by and supported via donations from students and staff on Fridays
- **Community Meetings.** To discuss upcoming events and foster a sense of community
- **Thanksgiving Celebration.** Spending time together and pausing to reflect, practice gratitude, and enjoy our community
- **Volunteering.** Within the elementary schools and Hawk's Nest: including crafts, reading, and field day assistance
- **Bridger Graduation.** A ceremony and a celebration - at BHS auditorium, day prior to BHS ceremony
- **School Board Luncheon.** Students and staff connect with district leadership annually.
- Additional community-building events and activities are developed as opportunities arise.

- **Family & Community Connections**

- Consistent family outreach to support students as needed
- Strong connections to community and collaborating agencies with resources to support and provide critical services to young people such as [CAP](#), [Thrive](#), [BYEP](#), [HRDC](#), [bridgercare](#), along with other community and family organizations

Curriculum Overview

The overall components of curriculum used for core instruction in BCA include:

- **Proficiency Based Learning**
 - Courses implement projects as a means incorporating student voice, choice, and differentiation of student learning needs.
 - The focus is on students' demonstration of proficiency in desired learning outcomes (ie. the knowledge and skills in the various content areas).
- **Rigorous Standards**
 - Courses have the same rigor and goals as BHS/GHS - including the [BSD7 adopted curriculum standards](#). Their learning in BCA will be supported through timely differentiated support.
- **Assessment**
 - Students are assessed based on specific content and skills for a course and have the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency (and/or improve proficiency) on formative and summative assessments. Grades will reflect learning outcomes of the student's proficiency in the content area.
 - Students will be assessed using department and statewide assessments in order to monitor learner progress as well as evaluate the efficacy of the instruction.

BCA Assessment Category Weights
<p>Formative Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - typical daily coursework where students are building content knowledge and course skills - worth 20% of semester grade <p>Summative Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mastery of content knowledge and course skills shown through more typical unit projects and overall assessments - worth 70% of semester grade <p>Semester Cumulative Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - end of the semester cumulative assessment (ie. semester tests, final papers, course final product) - worth 10% of semester grade

- **BCA Course Disclosure Document**
 - [2024-2025 BCA Disclosure Doc Template](#)
- **BCA Core Course Offerings**
 - Elective courses are completed through BHS and necessary to meet graduation requirements.

English	Math	Science	Social Studies	HE & Art
English I English II Eng III/US History English IV Science Fiction & Fantasy	Algebra I Geometry Algebra II	GeoPhysical Science Biology	World Geography Eng III/US History Government Human Geography	Health Enhancement Art Foundations

- **Course Completion**
 - Students **must** proficiently demonstrate their content knowledge and skills with the standards from the BSD7 approved curriculum in order to earn a passing grade in the class and consequently earn course credit. Grading scales will align with the BSD7 handbooks.

Technology in BCA

In Bridger Charter Academy, we use the same software and technology as other BSD7 high schools. Students are expected to follow the same technology guidelines indicated in the BSD7 student handbook.

- **Learning Management System**
 - Courses will utilize **Canvas** to house curriculum and deliver content in a consistent and effective manner and allow students to access course materials through an online platform. Parents and other support staff within BHS will have access to the platform with the intent of supporting students. The LMS platform supports classroom instruction, differentiation, transparent grading and feedback, and collaboration between teachers and students.
 - **PowerSchool**
 - The grading software that will be used to record and store official grades for courses. You will access your students' most up-to-date grade here.
 - **Student Chromebooks**
 - Students are expected to have their chromebooks with them every single class period and are responsible for them according to the BSD7 student handbook.
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Admission to BCA

New Student Procedure

Students interested in joining BCA must first complete the [BCA Interest Form for Potential Students](#). Next, prospective students and/or parents meet with the teacher leader and/or counselor in order to learn more about BCA and have their initial questions answered. To be eligible to join BCA, students must be knowledgeable of the core tenets of BCA and agree with the expectations of engaging with the BCA community.

Availability

- All high-school age students in the Bozeman community are welcome to attend BCA, and are accepted in order of application, based on course and staff availability. GHS-zoned students will transfer to BCA/BHS for all classes if they join.
- In order to maintain the learning community spirit, students must be enrolled in a **minimum of two BCA core** classes to be enrolled in Bridger Charter Academy and considered official members and to thus be eligible for its additional components, such as mentoring.
 - The English III & US History combo course counts as two core courses during a student's junior year.

Student Fit

- Who is a Bridger student?
 - There is no typical Bridger student. Students of all abilities, starting skill levels, interests, backgrounds, identities, individualized needs, or present/future goals are welcome.
- BCA is a strong fit for students seeking:
 - a focus on academic, personal, and social-emotional growth using habits of success;
 - strong, positive teacher/student and student/student relationships;

4. If you decide after transfer that BCA is not for you, you will return to your attendance school, GHS. You may choose to request a new [transfer application](#) to stay at BHS.

Activities & Athletics Protocols

- Bridger Charter Academy students are students of Bozeman Public Schools.
 - Students are eligible to participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and athletics offered through Bozeman High School.
 - In order to remain eligible for participation in [MHSA](#)-sanctioned activities, students must pass 4 courses in the term preceding the activity season.
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BCA Goals

The BCA staff is committed to continuous improvement of our school. The staff work together in a professional learning community with job-embedded professional development to identify needs of the students and school and then work towards solutions. They develop annual professional practice goals and student learning goals, which are driven by BCA needs and evaluated through qualitative and quantitative data collected.

Need More Information?

For questions, comments, or requests for more information, please visit our website for the most current contact information for teacher leader, counselor, and/or principal. Go to <https://bca.bsd7.org/>