



Big Sky Discovery Academy 2014-15 PreK & Kinder Program Schedule

8:15-9:15	Drop-off and free choice lessons
9:15-9:45	Morning Circle
9:45-11:15	Morning Work Period
11:15-11:30	Movement/Lunch Preparation Circle
11:30-12:00	Lunch Time
12:15-1:45	Outside Time* (Half Day Pick-Up at 11:30 p.m.)
1:45-2:15	Rest and Story Time
2:15-3:00	Afternoon Work Period
3:00-3:15	Afternoon Circle Time
3:15-3:45	Outside Time & Pick-up time

For 2015-16, we will be amending our schedule to add:

Food preparation, study and nutritious meal programming (organic whenever possible)

KinderMusik

Spanish Instruction

Art Instruction

Skiing opportunities (Nordic and Alpine)

Two licensed instructors (Montana K-8 and AMS Certified) to maintain 10 to 1 student to teacher ratio

Curriculum

Practical Life: The practical life exercises are an essential part of the Montessori curriculum. They focus on coordination and control of movement through exercises in daily life including care of the person, care of the environment and grace and courtesy lessons. Each of these tasks is set up individually on trays and is regularly rotated with new and/or developmentally higher tasks. This area also promotes the fine motor skills in preparation for writing. The development of hand coordination also assists in conceptual development and the materials are designed to encourage independent thinking, logic, problem solving skills and an understanding of sequence, order and natural limits.

Sensorial Development: The sensorial materials allow the child to use their five senses to develop and refine sensory discrimination. Through working with these materials, children learn the concepts such as size, shape, color, taste and sound. These materials are self-correcting, allowing the child to see the problem without being shown by an adult. They also provide the foundation for the development of other skills in the areas of music, mathematics and language.



Math: The Montessori materials provide a concrete foundation of the concepts of 1-10, before introducing the decimal system. Beautiful, concrete materials move from the concrete to the abstract in teaching math concepts whether through working with units, tens, hundreds, or thousands. We start by introducing quantity, then the symbol and finally the association between quantity and symbol. Children also advance to working with the four mathematical operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division).

Language: Language materials begin with vocabulary lessons. The children move on to letter recognition and proper letter formation lessons and then through a variety of fun language games, we build a foundation for early reading by teaching the children phonemic awareness. Once the child is well on their way to mastering this skill, we teach the 26-letter short vowel alphabet. Instead of teaching the names of the letters, we teach them by the sounds that they make. Step by step, the children develop the skills to build then read simple short vowel words. After repetitive practice reading words, they progress to sentences and then on to simple short vowel books.

Cultural Lessons: In addition to the four avenues described above, the Montessori curriculum includes abundant opportunities for learning about the world we live in, including lessons in geography, botany, zoology, history and earth sciences.

Art and Music There is no better way to stimulate the creative skills of children than to offer abundant opportunities to express themselves through art and music. The children will have the chance to work in different media (watercolor, clay, mixed materials, gluing, coloring, etc.) to create their own art. Music will be incorporated at every group time and the children will have the opportunities to hear guest musicians play instruments, and learn musical concepts. We will also be offering KinderMusik this year!

Peace Education: One of the most valuable aspects of Montessori philosophy is Peace Education. During these formative years, we strive to instill a strong sense of community among students, their peers and teachers. Conflict resolution and community line discussions provide a means for all to express feelings, address concerns, and voice appreciation for each other. We acknowledge our likes and dislikes, and honor all our differences. The peaceful community established at school provides a foundation for broadening our studies to our local region, state, country, and international community.

Age Group Mixings: We now have the ability to have lower, middle, and upper level (prek-6th grade) interactions. This will allow students to peer mentor, explore, and discover similar interests, share project-based learning, and form friendships. One of the best ways to learn is by turning lessons over to the students—student-based teaching and learning, with trained, certified, and licensed instructors coaching and facilitating activities and lessons. Five licensed instructors allows for staff to share their specialty talents across grade levels as well!

Bench Mark Assessments (Formative and Summative): For kindergarten-6th grade Montessori students and our private academy 7th and 8th grade students, we will use fall, winter, and spring formative and summative assessments to provide students, parents, and our instructors with strand data so we can measure “grade level” skills. This will also allow us to design and implement instructional adjustments, to tailor our instruction to individual student needs as well as provide a comparison measurement with public schools.



Primary and Kindergarten Curriculum Overview (3 - 6 Years of Age)

Children will work on or move beyond the following according to developmental stages:

Language Goals

- Students will construct, examine and extend the meaning of various kinds of text.
- Students will organize and evaluate information to share with others.
- Students will use literary knowledge to connect self to society and culture.
- Students will use written and oral communication appropriate for various purposes and audiences.

Use appropriate decoding and word recognition strategies; develop an increasingly extensive vocabulary:

- Identify upper and lower case letters
- Understand concepts of print (letter, word, sentence, left to right directionality, top to bottom, return sweep of print)
- Understand concept of rhyme
- Understand concept of beginning sounds
- Sound/letter symbol associations for consonants and some vowels
- Identify 5-10 familiar words, including their name, numbers and direction words

Assimilate information from prior knowledge and experiences to understand text:

- Use picture clues to determine meaning of unknown words
- Recognize environmental print
- Ask and/or answer questions related to a story
- Make and revise predictions related to a story with teacher assistance
- Begin to differentiate between real and make-believe
- ID fiction/nonfiction

Develop an understanding of the literary elements used in creating stories:

- Identify title, author and illustrator with teacher assistance
- Identify character and setting with teacher assistance
- Retell familiar stories using beginning, middle and end

Respond to text in a variety of ways (speaking, writing, art):

- Begin to express opinions
- Respond to literary texts from various cultures
- Begin to relate ideas from literature to situations involving self and society
- Discuss stories and ideas from fiction and non-fiction sources

Use a variety of resources (print, audio-visual, technology) to gather and evaluate information to share with others:

- Identify different resources available to gather information
- Identify different ways to organize and share information



Written and Oral Communication Goals

Children in Kindergarten will work on the following according to developmental stages:

- Use left-to-right, top to bottom progression
- Write own first and last name
- Write using invented spelling, demonstrating some letter/sound associations
- Use conventional spelling for familiar words
- Use drawings with labels to share experiences
- Use oral language to tell the story depicted in drawings
- Use details in their drawings to develop the text
- Copy environmental print and other messages
- Experiment with different forms of writing (labels, signs, lists, messages)
- Use oral language for different purposes (inform, persuade, express self)
- Begin to follow rules for conversation (taking turns, staying on topic)
- Share and discuss work using complete sentences
- Share an idea on a topic
- Speak in front of a group (i.e. share)

Mathematics Goals

Students will develop number sense, use operations for computation with understanding, explain relationships between numbers and develop beginning concepts of place value using concrete materials.

- Identify like/ unlike objects to form sets up to twenty
- Identify equal/ unequal set amounts (conservation)
- Counting to twenty
- Skip counting by fives and tens
- Associate numeral symbol and quantity to twenty
- Sequencing to one hundred (what comes before or after)
- Use of ordinal numbers
- Identify operations symbols "+", "-", and "="
- Simple addition
- Simple subtraction
- Solve oral word problems
- Introduction to place values up to one thousand

Students will develop an understanding of estimation and measurement:

- Linear comparison (long/short, thick/thin, tall/short)
- Volume/ mass comparison (more/less, full/empty)
- Temperature comparison (hot/warm/ cool/cold)
- Time comparison (minutes/ hour/ days/ week/ months/ year)
- Identify time to the hour
- Name and order days of the week, months of the year
- Use of the calendar
- Recognize penny, nickel, dime and quarter



Students will develop spatial sense and understanding of geometry:

- Identify two dimensional and three dimensional shapes using materials
- Demonstrate the relative position of objects (over, under, beside...)

Students will develop an understanding of patterns:

- Recognize and repeat simple visual, oral and rhythmic patterns
- Sort and classify objects by a single attribute

Cultural Studies Goals

- Students will develop an understanding of the diversity of human culture and the unique nature of places.
- Students will develop an understanding of chronological concepts in analyzing historical events.
- Students will use the process of scientific inquiry to develop their understanding of the natural world.

Typically, children in Kindergarten will work on the following:

- Identify the year and its parts (seasons)
- Identify the parts of a calendar
- Identify the needs of humans through time
- With assistance, develop a personal time line
- Use the clock as a measurement of passing time
- Identify basic land and water forms
- Identify continents, bodies of water, political boundaries
- Compare and contrast cultures and cultural traditions around the world
- Discuss the plants and animals of countries studied
- Use the Scientific Method (observe, predict, draw conclusions)
- Identify living/nonliving things
- Identify plants/animals, adults/offspring
- Identify parts of plants, leaves, flower
- Identify external parts of fish, amphibian, reptile, bird, mammal, insect
- Identify various animal habitats of vertebrates
- Participate in experiments