

## Public Charter Application Cover Page

### New Public Charter District

NAME: Yellowstone Experience School, this entity shall hereinafter be referred to as 'YES'.

Local school district in which the public charter school will be physically located: Livingston School District

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### Local Board of Trustee Evidence:

Refused approval by existing local school board

To be provided by Livingston School District upon approval of Oct 10, 2024 meeting minutes.

Board mtg video link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=hVRI-mV6JW4>

**Executive Summary:** Yellowstone Experience School, 'YES'. **Opening Date:** August 2025

The Yellowstone Experience School provides an applied, community-based approach to academic, social-emotional, and community impact education for students ranging 5-18 years old, or kindergarten to 12th grades. YES is a community school, modeled after Montana's legacy of small, mixed-age, rural schools.

The school is structured into 5 multi-aged classroom group levels, Kindergarten, Lower Elementary (1st-3rd), Upper Elementary (4th-6th), Junior High (7th-9th), and High School (10th-12th) with 10 students per each age group and 2 teachers per classroom group. YES provides academic education for a minimum of 130 students to a maximum of 390 students.

YES is innovative in our district in connected culture, K-12 focused track of blended, direct instruction with applied/ experiential use of concepts and skills, year-round 8am-5pm calendar, and rigorous professional development schedule.

YES teachers work in teams to implement a blend of Experiential, Place-based, Montessori, Project-based Learning, STEAM, and Forest School pedagogy to create a curriculum that is integrated across subjects and meets MT K-12 Content Standards.

## Public Charter Application

**NAME:** Yellowstone Experience School, YES

**Opening Date:** August 2025

**Public Charter Term Length:** 5-year

**Grades to be served:** K-12

**Minimum Enrollment Per Year:** 130

**Planned Enrollment Per Year:** YR1 - 130, YR2 - 200, YR3 - 270, YR4 - 330, YR5 - 390

**Maximum Enrollment Per Year:** 390

Plan to Serve: Elementary Program, Middle Grades Program & High School Program

	Elementary							Middle	High School					
	Lower EI				Upper EI									
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Year 1	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	130
Year 2	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	10	10	10	10	10	10	200
Year 3	30	30	30	30	20	20	20	20	20	20	10	10	10	270
Year 4	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	20	20	20	20	20	20	330
Year 5	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	390

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

- 1. State the public charter school's mission and vision and describe why this initiative is important to the community it will serve.***

Our mission is to empower students to build the knowledge, skills and character to succeed in life through a self-directed, hands-on, and experiential approach to learning. YES is a supportive learning community that develops personal and collective responsibility, creativity, innovation, and peace; lending to a more sustainable future for all.

Vision: YES students are deeply engaged in and invested in their own learning. With a foundation of knowledge, strong sense of self, and connection to community - YES public charter graduates are prepared for lifetime success and are empowered to live a life of well-being and productive citizenship.

The establishment of YES as a public charter is important to Park County because:

- Quality Alternative - Education for All Students** - There is a demand for an innovative, individualized educational option is growing, reflected by the trending increase in student enrollment in homeschool and private school programs. Students are opting out of the current traditional public option in Park County. [In 2024, of the total reported K-12th school age students, 480 students or approximately 23% of Park County students, are opting out of public school and instead are participating in home school, private schools, or hybrid educational programs.](#) Park County public school enrollment is at its lowest in recent years. There are several contributing factors influencing this decline in public school participation, including low test scores, political climate, COVID impact on enrollment, increasing alternative school options, changing demographics, housing issues, fear of extremism and violence, violence and bullying, religious choice, etc. In addition to these societal

factors, families and students have identified the need for school choice to close achievement gaps between high-performing and low-performing groups of public students. Specifically, parents and students are taking responsibility for their own success and experience by moving towards a student-centered approach to education. Those students and families are opting out of traditional options and are pursuing and developing alternatives that better meet their individual needs.

- **Equity** - Parents alone cannot pay the true cost of comprehensive, enriching education providing vast opportunities for students to thrive. Students opting out of the public option due to diverse needs and learning styles are entitled to a public education. Each student deserves a high quality education to provide a foundation of knowledge, skills and confidence, despite ability to pay. Not all families can pay for private options that meet student needs. YES will provide a public option to provide a measured, accountable, equitable public education for those students unwilling to enroll in Park County schools.
- **Suicide Prevention** - Park County continues to witness youth suicide. Studies show that students who feel connected to a community or purpose and have a connection to at least one adult are at reduced risk of suicide, (<https://sprc.org/effective-prevention/comprehensive-approach>). The YES structure of low student-to-teacher ratio and multiple years with the same teaching team allows all students to experience strong relationships with healthy adults and peers, as well as meaningful, individualized educational experiences that students care about. The smaller school community, low student-to-adult ratio, and individualized and meaningful learning opportunities provide the community, meaningful adult relationships, sense of purpose, and healthy self-esteem, known as major protective factors (based on a [Montana Youth Dynamics article](#)).
- **Increased Public Dollars for Education in Park County** - Park County schools leadership have stated that schools are underfunded and under-resourced to meet the diverse needs and demands of all of our unique students. Families with students in search of options that fit individual needs for success and opting out of the public option are paying for private education. Not all working families have the ability to pay for individualized education to meet their child's needs. YES public charter would bring in additional public investment to educate Park County students through alternative programming. An additional public option will bridge the equity gap between learners who would thrive in a small, hands-on learning environment and those whose families cannot afford the time and money it takes to provide these essential services without additional public options.
- **Relevant Approach to Education to Serve Diverse Needs and Challenges of the 21st Century** - It is more important than ever that we re-imagine learning environments that provide opportunities for interest-driven exploration, creativity, collaboration, and development of relevant life skills. It is this knowledge base and foundation that empowers kids with a 'can-do mindset' to support their purpose and contribute as citizens. Young people want to feel valued and connected and want the knowledge, ideas and skills to achieve goals to live their best life. People all over the world are articulating that the skills to succeed now include excellent communication, healthy relationships with self and others, creative capacity for problem solving, and the agency to accomplish goals. Children are facing many unmet future challenges and opportunities and will need to become the citizens and leaders with the hearts, minds, and skills to face those challenges and contribute to positive solutions. Montessori pedagogy, with emphasis in Project-based learning, STEAM, and forest school is an educational approach recognized for building general wellbeing, engagement, social trust, and self-confidence, which prepares students to think critically, dream big dreams, and contribute to a better world as happy, healthy, and fulfilled people.

**2. *Identify the targeted student population and the community the public charter school proposes to serve.***

YES provides a hands-on, meaningful approach to academic, social-emotional, and community impact education for students ranging 5-18 years old, or kindergarten to 12th grades.

The school is structured into 5 multi-aged classroom group levels, including; Kindergarten, Lower Elementary (K-3rd), Upper Elementary (4th-6th), Junior High (7th-9th), and High School (10th-12th) with 10 students per each age group and 2 teachers per classroom group. YES provides academic education for a minimum of 130 students to a maximum of 390 students.

The YES public charter student population is structured as mixed-age and distributed generally equally by age group. YES is responsive to student enrollment demands. Enrollment may vary within an age group reflective on demand year-to-year.

Enrollment capacity will expand from 130 to 390 students enrolled over 5 years to ensure staffing, occupancy, and organizational capacity grows to support the increased numbers of students for optimal individualized growth and learning outcomes.

YES works with the intention of being an integrated school that is representative of the demographics of the larger community of Park County. YES welcomes all learners and does not discriminate based on ability, race, gender, or socio-economic status. YES students may include: Socio-economically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities, Students who identify as Dyslexic, Visual, and Neurodivergent Learners, Homeless Youth, Latino or Hispanic students, White, Black or African American students, students of two or more races, students of Asian, Filipino, American Indian, or Alaska Native Pacific Islander heritage.

Students who will thrive in the YES learning environment and culture are receptive to small-group, mixed-age, individualized learning opportunities with a hands-on approach to Montana Core Curriculum Standards and Park County cultural, environmental, economic and social values and priorities.

**3. *Describe plans and timelines for student recruitment and enrollment, including lottery procedures.***

**Student Recruitment**

Public outreach about YES along with an Intent to Enroll began in June 2024. Since that time, 57 children have signed up with an intent to enroll. Upon state approval, YES enrollment will be advertised in the local paper, social media posts, posters, notification to parents at local events, news releases to all local media outlets, and existing parent email lists.

YES shall provide information to parents and the general public about YES public charter school as an enrollment option within the district through the same means that the district provides and publicizes information about non-charter public schools in the district.

Admissions information will be available on the YES website, [yeslivingstonkids.com](http://yeslivingstonkids.com). Paper applications will also be available at YES school. Open enrollment will begin January 15th, 2025 for the 2025/26 academic school year. Enrollment will close April 15, 2025 if applications meet or exceed student capacity. If applications do not meet capacity, rolling admission will be open until filled.

A parent or guardian must complete and submit a simple, non-discriminatory application form by a published deadline before the ending of the open enrollment period and sign a statement agreeing to abide by all policies and procedures set forth in the Student & Parent Handbook.

#### **Admissions Priorities**

- YES public charter school is open to any student residing in the state, with preference to students who are residents of the located school district.
- A school district may not require a student enrolled in the school district to attend a public charter school.
- YES public charter school limits admission to students within the ages of 5-18 yrs old, grade levels K-12th.
- YES public charter school is organized for students interested in a hands-on, project-based K-12th education.
- YES public charter school shall enroll all students who wish to attend the school unless the number of students exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building.
- If capacity is insufficient to enroll all students who wish to attend the school, YES public charter school shall select students through a lottery for all students on a waiting list.

This section does not preclude the formation of a public charter school for the purpose of serving students with disabilities, students of the same gender, students who pose a sufficiently severe disciplinary problem to warrant a specific educational program, or students who are at risk of academic failure. If capacity is insufficient to enroll all students who wish to attend such a school, the public charter school shall select students through a lottery.

#### **Admissions Lottery**

If YES receives more applications than there are spaces available, a public, computerized lottery will be held to determine admissions. Notification of the lottery date will be made to the public and members of the public will be able to witness the computerized lottery process.

#### **Acceptance, Notification and Waiting Pool**

Once the initial openings have been filled using the procedures described above, YES will notify chosen applicants and inform them of their option to enroll in YES. Applicants who have not been chosen will have their names maintained within the applicant waiting pool. As additional openings become available after the initial stage of drawing names, names will be drawn from the waiting pool in keeping with YES's admissions policies as delineated above. When names are drawn, YES will notify the applicants that they have the option of enrolling in YES. Notifications will give applicants at least three full business days to inform the school of the applicant's intentions. In the absence of an affirmative and timely response by phone, letter, or email, YES will eliminate the applicant from consideration and draw another name from the waiting pool. The applicant waiting pool expires

annually at the end of the formal academic year, or as otherwise determined by the Yellowstone Experience School Board.

**4. *Describe the public charter school's academic program, specifically focusing on why it is innovative in your school district. Include plans to formally assess student achievement on an annual basis.***

YES is innovative in our district in connected culture, K-12 focused track of blended direct instruction with applied/ experiential use of concepts and skills, year-round 8am-3:30pm calendar, and rigorous professional development schedule.

YES is innovative in our organizational design; mixed-age classroom structure; a culture and strong focus on individualized, engaging student experience; and a high fidelity academic curriculum that facilitates an applied, meaningful approach to academic proficiency through community projects and experiential learning opportunities.

YES offers an educational experience for kids ages 5-18 prioritizing three main growth and development outcomes.

- **ENGAGEMENT:** Academic and skills proficiency of MT K-12 Content Standards approached through meaningful real-world, experiential learning. All community members find meaning, purpose, and value in what they are doing through real world projects that provide civic engagement and improvement. Creating joyful, playful, and fun experiences that allow for choice and encourage curiosity and creativity. Continuously providing challenging opportunities to build skills, knowledge, and character to best support each individual.
- **CONNECTION:** All community members build a healthy relationship to self, others, and place. Students build a strong sense of self through developing non-violent communication skills, self-knowledge of interests, strengths, and boundaries, while building caring, trusting relationships; all community members build their identities as learners and develop the capacity for agency and autonomy. This allows all to feel valued, empowered, seen, and included in our diverse community. Also, building connection to our natural and built/historic environment by visiting and participating in these spaces.
- **CITIZENSHIP:** Civic engagement and connection to community through relevant projects that explore authentic community challenges and opportunities and empowerment to take action to make change. Through this students become compassionate change agents working together to make our communities better, practice reflection to gain awareness of ourselves and others. This allows us to practice listening to others to make informed decisions that impact more than just ourselves.

These YES Guiding Characteristics lead our Board of Trustees, administration, teachers, parents, and learners in development and implementation of curriculum, instruction, field studies, assessment, professional development, planning, calendar, and budget.

## **Curriculum Design**

YES teachers work in teams to implement a blend of Montessori, Project-based Learning, STEAM, and Forest School pedagogy to create a curriculum that is integrated across subjects and meets MT K-12 Content Standards, and will evolve to meet [OPI's 2026 revised core content standards](#) to best support student learning, parent involvement and support, and teacher efficacy. The Montessori curriculum, developed over 100 years ago with research supporting its success and the flexibility of tailoring it to each individual student, will be the basis for our K- 3rd academic learning. Project-based learning is a real-life approach to academic standards that engages students in their learning for application and use of concepts over a lifetime. Project-based, experiential learning will be the curricular focus of 4-12th learning. Combined with YES Guiding Characteristics, teachers at YES create and direct diverse, innovative curricula in pursuit of in-depth understanding and application of concepts and competencies through personalized and project-based learning practices.

YES teachers create learning experiences designed to foster deeper learning competencies in students, aiming for:

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Collaboration
- Effective Communication
- [Self-Directed Learning](#)
- Healthy Growth and Development Resulting in Self-Regulation, Resilience through Challenges, and Autonomy
- Healthy Relationships to Self and Others and Sense of Inclusion in Supportive Community
- Growth Mindset
- Proficiency and Deep Understanding and Application of Core Academic Content

## **Structures that Support Curriculum and Project Design for Strong Student Learning Outcomes**

YES works diligently to provide a foundation that is a high fidelity experience with outstanding Experiential, Place-Based, Montessori, and Project-based, STEAM, Forest School, and interdisciplinary curriculum to our teachers so that all educators may achieve effective teaching practices for the greatest student-learning outcomes. Work is curated publicly in YES facilities and social media to make products and processes transparent.

To promote excellence in curriculum and project design across all of YES and with each teacher, YES places great emphasis on professional development and adult learning. All new faculty participate in an intensive training/on-boarding week that includes experiential learning, workshops, project tunings, and collaboration time with experienced faculty or professionals. Teachers engage in ongoing professional development through weekly meeting time and dedicated staff days to support and realize the YES mission.

YES prioritizes learning from the students through observation and engagement, then using that information to guide their learning spaces. YES has structures for collegial coaching, as well as official mentor-mentee partnerships for teachers undergoing orientation.

### **Classroom Structure and Culture/Mindset**

Through a partnership in teachers that lasts for up to three years and a supportive, inclusive school community culture, all students are known well by their teachers, engage in and create meaningful work, and are challenged to develop growth mindsets as they meet high expectations at YES.

Students are encouraged to think of themselves as inquisitive, resilient, and capable lifelong learners, and to develop a sense of belonging in academic and real-world settings. From the early years forward, technical careers, university attendance, and application of diverse strengths and interests is part of the discourse at YES, where faculty and students demystify and discuss the college path or other successful uses of passions, skills, and purpose as an accessible, viable goal.

### **Assessment for Growth and Achievement**

YES will use Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST) assessment to track academic growth and proficiency for 3rd-8th grade students.

Assessment will be provided 4 times throughout each school year.

Window 1: October 14-November 22, 2025

Window 2: January 13-February 21, 2026

Window 3: March 24-May 2, 2026

Window 4: May 5-May 23, 2026

YES will also use [Aims+](#) for K-12th students to provide a thorough assessment for both knowledge and foundational phonics and phonological skills as well. YES will also use Aims for benchmark and progress monitor Pre-K-12th core content math standard skills.

Assessment will be led by an independently contracted, certified by MT OPI for standards assessment.

### **Learning Metrics**

YES also uses [Individualized Learning Plans \(ILPs\)](#) as roadmaps for each student's education plan. ILPs document student learning, stakeholder observations and priorities, and social, emotional, and academic goals. ILPs are created by teachers in partnership with students and parents and are a structure to document planned action to achieve goals and measure growth and proficiency. The intention of ILPs is to capture each student's unique learning needs and interests, strengths and opportunities for growth. Thereby, students, parents, and teachers are clear and invested in academic and social-emotional goals with a place where proficiency and growth can be measured. ILPs recognize, measure and validate skills and strengths beyond MT state standards to broaden the metrics that reflect student success so that kids feel seen, successful, and validated in gifts not measured in traditional systems.

ILPs are developed during conferences prior to each learning arc and are used to revise goals and measure growth throughout the year with students, parents, and educators. They are available to students when a student is struggling with giving themselves direction as a reminder of what they chose to be striving for in school.

YES begins each school year assessing students for proficiency and competency of skills. Upon teacher completion of teacher assessments and observations of academic, social-emotional, and student strengths and passion areas, teachers schedule meetings with students, parents/ guardians, and teachers to set individualized, collective goals for the quarter and entire school year.

The academic, physical, social, and competency goals are mapped out with steps and milestones to measure growth, proficiency, achievement gaps in growth and proficiency, and post-secondary readiness.

The YES ILP proficiency scale is used in assessment to communicate and describe each student's growth and progression along a continuum of learning. All ILPs will reflect academic and social development proficiency, individual strengths, and areas for growth with strategies to support and deepen learning.

- Emerging - The student demonstrates an initial interest in the concept and has received direct instruction and modeling of the skill. Students work with ongoing support (through direct instruction or independently with materials that support the skill).
- Developing - The student demonstrates a basic understanding of concepts and is further exploring and practicing the skill. Students may need some additional support from guides, but ideally from a peer.
- Mastered - The student demonstrates a deep understanding of concept and experienced level of skill mastery for use and application in real-world application and goal achievement. Students can support the learning of others. [ILP Template](#)

**5. *Describe any variances to existing standards that the public charter school requires to enhance educational opportunities.***

YES learning is based on the [Montana OPI K-12 Content Standards](#) and also integrates social developmental standards, and citizen-developed community goals.

Students are grouped in multi-age classrooms, providing opportunities to receive and apply instruction within a range of curriculum levels. This accommodates students above, at, and below grade-level and decreases the need for mis-identified IEP evaluations and services. This approach also reduces negative personal perception, related behaviors, and resistance to learning for students who have not yet met grade-level proficiency.

**6. *Describe the instructional design, including the type of learning environment, class size and structure, curriculum overview, and teaching methods.***

**Instructional Design and Teaching Methods:**

YES teachers work in teams to implement a blend of Montessori, Project-based Learning, STEAM, and Forest School pedagogy to create a curriculum that is integrated across subjects and meets MT K-12 Content Standards. YES uses three key integrations that unify YES' educational programming and approach to curriculum. These integrations reflect YES' belief of how learning best occurs.

- A. Integrating Students: YES' instructional design is rooted in its commitment to serving students from across the academic spectrum in a fully integrated environment. Rather than separating students on the basis of perceived ability, students work alongside peers from widely different backgrounds. Underlying this approach is a belief that heterogeneous grouping benefits students from across the academic spectrum. Rather than mis-predicting students' future trajectories on the basis of perceived academic ability, YES prepares all of its students for success in a four-year university and beyond.
- B. Integrating School and Community: YES learning environment extends well beyond the walls of its classrooms to leverage educational opportunities in the community. Students investigate authentic problems and challenges in the community, conduct scientific and ethnographic research in the field, partner with adult professionals, and create products that benefit stakeholders.
- C. Integrating Hands and Minds: Students at YES use technologies, authentic tools and community partnerships to engage in scientific, mathematical, literary, historical, and artistic pursuits. Both academic and technical strands are strongly in evidence at YES.

YES includes general guidelines and recommendations for the teaching methods and material, based on Montessori and project-based learning pedagogy. However, varied working methods support and direct the learning. YES provides teacher discretion to choose working methods suitable for different ages and various learning situations and in interaction with their students.

The selection of teaching methods may also be used to support collaborative learning where competence and understanding are developed with others. The students are guided in acting in various roles, sharing tasks among themselves, and assuming responsibility for both personal and shared goals.

The individual and developmental differences between students is also taken into account in the selection of teaching methods. This kind of differentiation of instruction is based on the teacher's knowledge of their students' personal needs.

Learning should take place inside and outside the school. In addition, use of authentic learning materials, tools, and environment are important as these will help the students to both acquire and deepen their knowledge and skills in real and authentic situations and empower students to create new things now.

### **Learning Environment**

- YES classrooms are learner-centered - the emphasis is on the student's choice for engagement and meaning as well as self-assessment to develop students' capacity for self-evaluation, helping them learn to monitor their progress and design their own learning activities.
- Students are expected to take an active role in designing and creating demonstrations of learning to showcase intended proficiency and competencies.
- Students are expected to work collaboratively in teams on projects, and there is a substantial focus on projects that cut across the traditional subject or disciplinary lines.
- The well-being of the individual as a whole human (social, emotional, physical and academic) is supported and is a basis of the curriculum.

- The materials in the classroom are generally self-correcting, allowing learning outcomes to happen naturally without rewards or punishments (grades or other measures).
- Teachers at all levels of education are well trained and strongly committed to their work.
- All teachers are required to have a teaching certificate, real-world professional experience, and Master's degrees are encouraged.
- The teaching profession at YES is valued and supported financially and socially, encouraging excellence in teachers and also encouraging students to pursue education as a career.
- At YES, there is substantial emphasis and value to subject-specific pedagogy for prospective primary as well as upper-grade teachers.

### **Class Size and Structure**

YES class sizes will have 30 students (10 students from each grade, a classroom will range in 3 grades, for example, 4th, 5th and 6th grade) with two teachers. Kindergarten will have a separate 10 student classroom with 1 certified teacher. Students will be placed in groups outside of their age-determined grade level if emotionally and academically appropriate in support of the individual student's growth and development as well as with consideration of group dynamics.

The structure of the classrooms will have enough flexibility that if students are exhibiting a need to move that we will be able to support that through outside play or organized activities, such as yoga or dance, or putting movement into the curriculum for an individual child (for example, will you hop across the room to get the letter B card.) However, the classrooms are also rigid enough in routine that the students understand the expectations and are able to meet the expectations that encourage growth, learning, collaboration and community.

### **Curriculum Overview**

YES provides a blended approach to curriculum using Experiential, Place-based, Montessori, project-based learning, STEAM, and forest school methods to reach proficiency in the Montana K-12 Core Content Standards for a K-12 education; in addition to competence in social emotional and developmental skills and civics and design thinking. Montessori, Project-based Learning, Forest School, and STEAM applications are demonstrating evidence-based, strong academic proficiency outcomes. [Montessori Charter schools in Colorado show strong math and literacy scores](#); [A study of the impact of project-based learning on student learning effects: a meta-analysis study](#); [New Research Makes a Powerful Case for PBL](#); [A NEW RESEARCH BASE FOR RIGOROUS PROJECT-BASED LEARNING](#) [Project-based Learning is Great, But Students Still Need to Learn Something](#); [The restorative outcomes of forest school and conventional school in young people with good and poor behaviour](#); [Forest School and its impacts on young children: Case studies in Britain](#)

The following subject areas, in line with a MT K-12 Core Content education, with additional subjects, define the YES Curriculum:

English language arts, English language phonics and literacy, literature, foreign language arts; environmental studies/ ecology, agriculture science; health and nutrition education; speech and debate; history and social studies; mathematics; theater; science (physics, chemistry, biology), geography; physical education; music; visual arts; life skills; financial literacy; entrepreneurship; and grace and courtesy.

The Montessori approach for learners in grades k-3rd provides materials in the classroom that are diverse to cover (most) of the above curriculum areas that can be used individually, in small groups or classroom projects. The materials in the classroom support the student's learning through being available, prepared, and self-correcting, which allows the students to learn and master a skill at their own pace. The opportunity for experiential learning and community partnerships, provides the resources and materials in addition to classroom materials to offer students a comprehensive educational experience. The students are able to [self-direct](#) their own learning through their daily choices and Individualized Learning Plan goals. The teachers make their assessments through observations and discussions. This cumulative, progressive, self-guided, teacher-supported, and applied learning process, develops a strong foundation of skills and understanding of MT standards.

Each grade level will apply standards skills and knowledge through quarterly, annual, and multi-year community-based projects to engage students through their own interests and connection with our community. These projects develop awareness of community challenges and opportunities, conduct research to understand issues, set goals, design solutions, realize goals, and reflect on the learning process. These real-life projects develop meaningful relationships with community members and empowers kids to see themselves as present change agents. These projects will be developed with the project-based learning coach with teachers to integrate student interests, curriculum standards, and community needs.

For 4-12 grades, there is a strong Project-based Learning, experiential focus with a component of partnership with community businesses and organizations, such as O'Connor Auto Body or Flying J Ranch, as well as various departments in the Montana State University, in partnership with 4-H programs which exemplify YES values and mission. Upper grad students will have opportunities to work with MSU programs to offer [Employment and Internship Opportunities in the Department of Life Sciences- water conservationist, NASA internship, Wildlife management](#), and [MSU Science Math Resource Center](#), where students have the opportunity to learn through real-world business, STEM fields, and organizational skills that are applicable beyond the classroom. These internships, employment, and apprenticeships are facilitated by teachers, an internship coordinator position, and in conjunction with the businesses, organizations, and Montana State University staff to be a pathway to real world success in healthcare, business, social services, STEM, technical fields, and beyond. These partnerships are a mutual benefit to employers and the university to prepare and recruit students for Montana jobs and future higher education. YES will work with Montana State University to use their guidance, and insights into the proficiencies and skills needed for students to be successful and connect YES students with MSU resources, opportunities, and programming to provide students with the educational opportunities to increase skills and proficiencies. Yes will also seek out and work with local youth workforce innovation programs to help incentivize and provide opportunities for Montana kids to encourage students in Montana to stay in our state when they graduate high school.

YES students will have access to Montana Digital Academy curriculum programming to help fill gaps for specific subject matter that YES or Livingston Public Schools do not provide.

**7. *Describe plans for identifying and successfully serving students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners, students who are academically***

***challenged, and gifted students, including compliance with applicable laws and regulations.***

The trend of increased percentages of Montana students identified in need of support of additional support necessitates a comprehensive, resourced, focused plan. YES will partner with the Park County Special Education Coop and public school district as well as the Park County Health Department, Community Health Partners, and Livingston Health Care to provide evaluation and support services for YES students.

For younger students learning foundational skills, the Montessori Method, often seen as an alternative to traditional classrooms, caters to a diverse student population of experience, ability and individual timeline of development. It offers a personalized learning approach, enabling students to explore and progress at their own pace and fostering practical application of their learning. In multi-age classrooms, students interact with peers, gaining varied perspectives on problem-solving and relationships. This approach is particularly effective for students with learning challenges who may need extra time and support for problem-solving. It also benefits those who thrive on personal interactions with peers and teachers. In this flexible environment, gifted students can delve deeper into subjects, pursue their interests, and continually strive for their personal best. Students with identified learning needs receive the necessary accommodations, adaptations and support. Teachers are trained to maintain an open and exploratory classroom atmosphere while being ready to provide individualized support when needed.

YES will use a number of strategies to address the needs of students, whether they have disabilities, ESL, challenged or gifted academically with a wide range of prior experience and achievement.

- **Mixed-Age Classes:** YES' mixed-age classes focus on allowing the child to go at their own pace and to learn from their peers. This allows increased flexibility to spend time gaining mastery over a skill before moving on to a new skill.
- **Staff Meetings and Protocols:** Regular staff meeting time is dedicated to Equity Protocols where teachers have the opportunity to consult with colleagues about students who are struggling and brainstorm additional strategies to support their academic growth. Teachers critically examine their curriculum and instructional strategies to increase access to and engagement with learning for all students.
- **Academic Tutoring:** Students may receive tutoring, including organization skills support, from teachers during class. Since the students are moving at their own pace and learning from the environment, teachers have flexibility for more one-on-one instruction, as needed.
- **Supplemental School Learning Resources:** Supplemental learning materials are made available to students and parents, as needed.
- **Academic Coaches and Education Specialists:** During the core day, academic coaches embedded in the classrooms provide additional support to students who are struggling within the classroom context. Education specialists, who train and supervise the academic coaches, also spend significant time in classrooms observing students who are struggling academically or socially and collaborate with core teachers, as well as the academic coaches, to devise support plans and strategies.

- Student Support Conferences: When a student is identified to be progressing below the student's ability, a student support conference is called, where faculty and parents/guardians discuss strategies for supporting the student's learning.
- Social Emotional Support Practices: Many students who struggle academically are also in need of social-emotional support. In addition to providing academic support, teachers offer social-emotional support through intentional classroom strategies, including group circles and restorative justice practices. School psychologists/ counselors, social- emotional coordinators, and/or teachers develop and model these practices. School psychologists also coach teachers and consult with staff about specific students who need additional support.

YES meets recommended best practice and Montana public school legal requirements for students with disabilities by following the [Montana Office of Public Instruction Special Education Guidance for Public School Districts](#) and ELs by following the [Montana Office of Public Instruction English Learner Guidance for Public School Districts](#)

#### **8. *Describe student discipline policies, including those for special education students***

YES is guided by the premise that many or most behavior concerns are due to an unmet need for a student. YES staff focus on caring relationships with students through long (3-year) relationships with the student and low-teacher to student ratios so that all students are seen, accepted and acknowledged for gifts and strengths by at least one healthy adult mentor.

Students with special needs, such as learning or physical disabilities, often thrive in a Montessori setting. Materials used in Montessori settings engage all the senses. Students are free to move about the classroom, which is an advantage for those children who require a lot of physical activity. Each child learns at their own pace, and there is no pressure to meet formal standards by a predetermined time.

YES also understand that children may have needs such as learning disabilities, physical needs, emotional stress and anxiety; hunger, relationship stress, isolation, bullying, exhaustion, disengagement, boredom, thirst, lack of understanding of material, social pressures, lack of communication skills, lack of conflict resolution, need for connection, etc. We will work to ensure these needs are met so that learning may happen more sustainably.

YES regards suspension and expulsion as a last resort. The procedures and documentation that may warrant suspension or expulsion of a student from YES for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from YES for any reason will be consistent with all applicable federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements.

**Overview of Disciplinary Actions** The purpose of disciplinary action at YES is to ensure that individual students, their parents/guardians and YES community stay focused on growth and learning and are ensured a safe educational environment. Prompt resolution of the problem or issues is expected. Discipline may include any one, a combination and/or all of the following depending on the circumstances, and at YES administration's sole discretion.

- Verbal and/or written warning to the student
- Loss of privileges or removal from extra-curricular activities
- Parent/guardian notification
- A written commitment by the student to improve their behavior and/or performance and/or to take certain affirmative actions to improve
- A meeting with the Dean of Students, Director, or some other school administrator or faculty member
- Academic Consequences
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Denial of Re-admission
- Other forms of discipline that YES may determine appropriate

## **SCHOOL GOVERNANCE**

- 9. Describe the public charter school's organizational chart that clearly presents the proposed organizational structure, including lines of authority and reporting between the governing board, staff, related bodies such as advisory bodies or parent and teacher councils, and external organizations that will play a role in managing the public charter school.***

YES will operate as a public charter school district recognized by the Montana Board of Education and the Montana Office of Public Instruction for public and educational purposes.

YES will be governed by the School's Board of Trustees. The School Director will report directly to the board of trustees.

The School Director will oversee and work collaboratively with the Dean of Students, Parent Advisory Committee, Wellness Director, Library and Custodial Staff, and Administrative staff.

The Dean of Students will oversee and collaborate with teachers, STEAM Lab Director, Student Voice Committee, Director of Apprenticeships,

Each classroom will have a certified licensed teacher. In the event a student has an IEP or 504, content will be modified to include any IEP and 504 requirements to ensure that students are making adequate progress. Each student will have an Individualized Learning Plan based on their goals.

### **Student Voice and Choice Advisory Committee**

Students provide input on what they want to learn, skills they want to develop, and how they learn best to inform YES culture, curriculum, and project development. Student voice and choice is critical in building authentic, ample opportunities for students to build autonomy, develop agency, and develop their identities. This lens allows YES to approach education in a way that puts the student first. The goal is to make sure all students have ample opportunities to develop intellectual agency, build autonomy, and establish their identities as capable, lifelong learners.

## Parent Advisory Committee

Community stakeholders provide input on community projects and partnerships.

### **10. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the governing board, the proposed leadership management team, and other entities shown in the organizational chart.**

The Board of Trustees of the Yellowstone Experience School governs over and operates the LEA-authorized public charter school. The YES Board has legal and fiduciary responsibility for any charter schools that it operates as well as meeting [MT OPI Accreditation Standards, in Title 10, Chapter 55 \(ARM 10.55\)](#). The YES Board meets at least quarterly and holds its meetings pursuant to Montana statutes. The YES Board is comprised of at least seven members, in accordance with its bylaws. [The board will meet guidelines in MCA Title 20, Chapter 6. Part 8](#)

School Director -responsible for overseeing all aspects of the school's local operations including responsibility for ensuring that the school's instructional program features full implementation of YES Guiding Characteristics and delivers measured learning outcomes towards proficiency of the Montana core curriculum. The School Director is responsible for hiring all site-based staff and, working in collaboration with central staff, for preparing a budget for approval by the YES Board.

Teachers -YES is committed to hiring talented, knowledgeable, and passionate teachers as key positions impacting student success. Teachers among the YES charter school represent a range of experiences, including former farmers and ranchers, natural resource managers, biotech engineers, community college professors, film makers, and graphic designers.

YES teachers must meet the MT Office of Public Instruction teacher certification requirements and be MT OPI certified. YES teachers are required to hold a class 1-3 certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which any public school teacher is required to hold.

Dean of Students – works in close partnership with the School Executive Director to ensure that student safety is maintained at all times and that a culture and standard of personal responsibility, work ethic, and kindness conducive to student learning is supported by all site students and parents/guardians.

Yellowstone Experience School Administrative Services- Services performed at the administrative level include, but are not limited to:

- YES Board Support
- Governance Support
- Strategic Planning
- Operation and Fiscal Planning
- Property/Facilities Acquisition/ Financing
- Facilities Design, Renovation /Maintenance
- Payroll, Benefits
- Human Resources Support
- IT Services
- Business Services
- Lunch Program Operations
- Enrollment
- Legal Support
- Administrative Services
- Charter Compliance
- Community Engagement
- Teacher Credentialing
- Curriculum Development Support

- Professional Development for Directors and Teachers
- Program Monitoring, Compliance, and Quality Assurance
- Special Education Services Fundraising
- Grant Generation/ Fundraising, Development
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Proficiency Evaluation

**11. Provide a staffing chart for the public charter school's first year and staffing plan for the term of the public charter school.**

Position	YR 1	YR 2	YR 3	YR 4	YR 5
Kindergarten	1	2	3	3	3
Lower EI Teacher	2	4	6	6	6
Upper EI Teacher	2	4	6	6	6
Junior High Teacher	2	4	6	6	6
High School Teacher	2	4	6	6	6
Directors	2	2	2	2	2
Administrators	1	2	3	3	3
Library	1	1	1	1	1
Custodial	2	2	3	4	4
IT	0.5	0.5	1	1	1
Accounting	1	1	2	2	2
Independent Evaluator contractor	1	1	2	2	2
Parent Liaison	1	1	1	1	1

**12. Detail the public charter school startup plan, identifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.**

YES will commence team recruitment upon approval by the MT Board of Education. There is an initial team in place who will carry out the following start up plan.

October 2024-June 2025 Fundraising, grant-writing

January, 2025

Founding YES Board of Trustees will recruit an administrative team and begin advertising for staffing positions including additional members of the administrative team, teachers, and all other staff.

File incorporating documents for the Yellowstone Experience School at state and federal level. Campus acquisition committee established and members recruited to secure additional campus space.

Administrative staff will begin outreach about YES public community school charter to educate parents, community members, and stakeholders on the newly established public alternative educational approach to MT Core Curriculum academic proficiency. This team will advertise the enrollment process

to begin February 15th and end April 15th. Advertisements for teachers and staff positions will be posted and advertised. Student Handbook approved. Board begins the budget process.

February 2025

Student enrollment opens, hiring process continues.

March 2025

Teacher professional development training/ orientation planning for YES charter implementation and curriculum planning. Content and Curriculum Advisory Committee established and member recruitment to commence. Members will include teachers and community members.

April 2025

Additional YES campus location(s) secured. Teacher contracts signed.

May 2025

Student admissions announced. Parents notified. Enrollment documents collected. Contracts signed.

June 2025

Supplies ordered. Insurance secured. Contracts signed.

July 2025

Final enrollment documents and records requests recorded. Budget approved.

### **13. *Describe the plans for recruiting and developing school leadership and staff.***

The intentional recruitment, selection, and development of YES school leadership and staff is the most critical strategy to deliver high student growth and healthy school culture.

The Yellowstone Experience School strives to hire leadership, teachers, and staff with diverse backgrounds, competencies, effective teaching strategies, mastery of and passion for subject area, growth mindset, those from racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Research shows that all students benefit from having a diverse group of teachers that come from a variety of backgrounds as they prepare to enter an increasingly global society.

Students attending schools with these characteristics are more likely to:

- develop positive identities,
- develop cultural competencies that can combat stereotypes, reduce unconscious biases, and
- develop greater social cohesion.

### **Hiring Process**

To recruit, vet, and hire a team with the experience, education, certifications and credentials, skills, and mindset to effectively produce student proficiencies, YES aims to begin the hiring process early; consistently implementing multiple steps in the selection process; and tracking application and hiring data, and differentiating essential candidate criteria for important subgroups of teachers.

YES is committed to hiring experienced, knowledgeable, and passionate teachers as key positions impacting student success. We will offer full and part-time positions to recruit the best candidates.

We will start recruitment and hiring by reaching out to our local community, specifically the teachers and professionals who have communicated interest and support for the YES model and a desire to work for YES.

To hire additional staff, YES will hold hiring fairs, working with the MT University schools of education, posting positions with other universities and education websites, recruiting from industry, and supporting new teachers through its own credentialing programs.

Interviews are typically followed by a rigorous full-day review during which candidates teach a class (and are evaluated by students), have a luncheon interview with students, and interview with current teachers and administrators. Teachers among the YES charter school represent a range of experiences, including former biotech engineers, community college professors, film makers, and graphic designers.

### **Leadership Development**

School leadership will be provided necessary training to develop skills in: 1. Implementing Mission and Vision 2. Nurturing Relationships, building trust, and creating a culture of care in support of students, teachers, parents and broader community, 3. Effective Implementation, developing consistent structure and supports that uphold mission and desired whole-child outcomes, 4. Continuous Improvement, promoting data-driven learning culture to continuously improve students' academic growth and develop mindsets, habits, and skills important to student success.

### **Professional Development**

[Frequent, in-depth, and applied professional development is critical for effective teaching and strong student learning outcomes.](#)

Yes professional development aligns with the three core values: ENGAGEMENT- delivery of academic skills and knowledge; CONNECTION- healthy social-emotional development and school culture; and CITIZENSHIP- project-based learning process and community partnership for meaningful, beneficial application of academic and social skills and knowledge.

Approximately 10 hours per month/ 120 hours per year of professional development will be delivered to YES teachers each year.

Professional development consists of off-site, school-based, and organization-wide learning opportunities by staff and contracted experts to teach and practice skills, mindsets, and strategies that support the YES mission. By design, professional development is largely contextual, integrated into teachers' day-to-day work and addressing issues that emerge therein.

Annual staff retreats and designated monthly staff days present additional opportunities for school teaching communities to gather and engage in deeper dives on particular subjects.

Morning staff meetings are held at least once a week and afford the opportunity for regular check-ins and discussions about practice. These meetings may include discussions about exhibitions,

presentations of learning, assessments, and other topics. Veteran and new teachers have the opportunity to collaborate at morning meetings.

Collegial coaching is another important part of YES' professional development process. Starting at first with observation and consultation by the School Director, colleagues, and, at times, other administrators, teachers are engaged in classroom observation and feedback.

**14. *Describe the proposed leadership and teacher employment policies, including performance evaluation plans.***

See Appendix A or click link here for [YES Employee Handbook for additional Leadership and Employment Policies](#)

YES employees have the same rights and privileges as other public school employees except as otherwise provided in [sections 1 through 14 HB549.

Teachers and other school personnel, as well as governing board members, are subject to criminal history record checks and fingerprinting requirements.

YES public charter school employees are not required to be members of any existing collective bargaining agreement between a school district and its employees. However, YES may not interfere with laws and other applicable rules protecting the rights of employees to organize and to be free from discrimination.

**15. *State the proposed governing bylaws.***

See Appendix B or click link for [Amended bylaws provided](#)

**16. *Explain any partnerships or contractual relationships central to the operations and mission of the public charter school.***

The YES public charter will partner in a contractual relationship with the existing Park County Special Education Co-op to provide IEP assessments, evaluations, and services.

**17. *Provide the proposed calendar and sample daily schedule.***

YES will operate with a year-round schedule in-line with the Livingston Public School District.

2025-2026			
September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025
S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026
S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
May 2026	June 2026	July 2026	August 2026
S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Dates highlighted in blue represent non-student instruction days. Summer months follow a 4-day school week, 2 days per month over September - June students don't have school for professional development days.

The daily schedule is 8am-3:30pm

- 8am-12pm** Direct Instruction and Applied/ Interdisciplinary Learning Rotations: Math/ ELA-phonics/ arts/ sciences/ humanities rotations with integrated sciences and humanities curriculum.
- 12-1pm** Lunch hour for outdoor play, reading, personal and social time.
- 1-3pm** Project-based learning instruction and programming, languages, music, artist in residence, community expert/ craftsperson direct instruction and making, field trips, etc.
- 3-3:30pm** Clean up and daily education, experience reflection

## BUSINESS OPERATIONS

18. **Describe plans for providing transportation, food service, and all other significant operational or ancillary services.**

The YES public charter plans to purchase 15-person passenger vans to provide transportation for students and staff for field studies and equitable transportation to and from school.

Purchases will be aligned with all state of Montana procurement requirements. YES public charter also plans to coordinate with the Livingston and Park County public schools to contract transportation to and from school for students within the bus routes if capacity is available.

The YES public charter will contract with a food service professional to provide a hot lunch program to all students that meets all state dietary requirements for children. Lunches will include all components and quantities required by USDA/CACFP guidelines.

**19. *Describe co curricular and extracurricular programs and how the programs will be funded and delivered.***

YES will partner with existing or new Livingston School District/ private/ public co-curricular programs like LINKS, Livingston District athletic programs, the City of Livingston Recreation Programs, FFA, 4-H, etc.

**20. *Describe the proposed financial plan and policies, including financial controls and audit requirements.***

The Yellowstone Experience School public charter will follow the HB 549 legislative requirements for public charter schools for financial plan, policies and financial controls, and audit requirements. YES will employ accounting staff experienced and or trained in Montana state public school accounting. The [Montana Office of Public Instruction School Accounting Manual](#) will be referenced for guidance and direction on best practices.

**Audit Requirements**

YES will contract with an independent auditor with experience in education finance, from the Certified Public Accountants Directory published by the State Controller's Office, for an annual financial audit that will be conducted pursuant to GASB STATEMENT No. 84 or other current MT OPI audit requirements.

**21. *Describe the insurance coverage that will be obtained.***

YES will be covered by the same insurance provider as other Montana Public Schools, specifically provided through Montana Schools Property and Liability Insurance Plan administered by PayneWest.

The following policies will be obtained for the Yellowstoned Experiential School:

General liability, professional liability, workers compensation, and directors and officers liability policies, Auto Coverage, Cyber Coverage, Unemployment Insurance will be secured. Policies will have \$1,000,000 limits or will meet MCA Title 20 policy limit requirements.

**22. *Describe the startup and five-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions.***

***The startup and five-year budgets are based on MCA Title 20, Chapter 9, Part 3 funding allocations.***

Revenues are based on 70 E2 students and 20 M2 and 40 HS students enrolled. Revenues are increased by 3% each year based on MCA Title 20, Chapter 9 increases between FY 22 & FY23. Additional assumptions made include 9 certified teachers, no data for American Indian enrollment

See Appendix C for 5 yr budgets w clearly stated assumptions

**23. *Describe the startup and first year cash flow projections with clearly stated assumptions.***

Based on estimated FY24 funding allocations through MCA Title 20, Chapter 9, Part 3, first year revenues include \$2,476,254.4.

Estimated first year expenditures include \$2,209,731.60, resulting in a contingency of \$266,522.7.

Assumptions include using estimated costs from ERS and Elevate Montessori FY23 expenditures for occupancy, food program, etc.

**24. *Describe anticipated fundraising contributions and evidence, if applicable.***

The projected 5-year Budget fundraising contribution sources include:

Innovative Education Tax Credit: MT State Student Scholarship Organization. An SSO designation allows individuals and businesses to re-allocate their state taxes towards our school scholarship fund. Individual and business taxpayers donate directly to an approved SSO and can receive a tax credit of up to \$200,000 that can be carried forward for up to three years. Your accountant can provide more details. Donations are on a first come first serve basis starting January 1 2025, with a \$5,000,000 limit for all SSOs statewide.

Grants and Sponsorships: We actively seek grants from government agencies, specifically the US Department of Education, foundations, and private organizations that support educational initiatives, specifically charter start-up costs, support, and development. Additionally, partnerships with local businesses and community stakeholders will provide sponsorships for specific programs.

Individual Donations:

Community Fundraising Events: To engage the local community, we organize events like art exhibitions, craft fairs, and workshops. These events not only provide valuable support but also foster a sense of community involvement.

In-Kind Donations and Volunteer Support: We actively seek in-kind donations of materials, tools, and equipment from local businesses and individuals. Additionally, volunteer contributions from community members with expertise in various fields will supplement program delivery.

Charter Foundation Grants and Financing: There are several national private charter start-up grants that fund first year operations. We have submitted two applications for a total of \$1,250,000 to date. Charter start-up financing is also available.

**25. *Describe the facilities plan, including backup or contingency plans.***

The Yellowstone Experience School would like to use an existing Livingston District school facility for the first year of operation to provide direct-instruction classroom space. Our top priority for classroom-style learning space with a unified school campus is an existing public school building in a central location that is accessible for Park County students and families. Washington School, closed due to low enrollment, is our primary preference. This unused school space provides a gymnasium, playground, classrooms, kitchen, bathrooms, and offices. This location of a public school would provide one public school on our northside of the community. Parents with siblings attending YES would enjoy one drop-off location for their children for their K-12th educational journey. According to Section 13. Of HB 549 Public charter school access to district facilities and land. (1) A public charter school district has a right of first refusal to purchase or lease at or below fair market value a closed public school facility or property or an unused portion of a public school facility or property within the located school district.

Washington school is not currently being used by the Livingston School District for M-F 8-3:30pm educational purposes. The building will accommodate first year enrollment projections of 130 students.

YES students will also use different facilities and locations to provide a business/ entrepreneurial and /innovation campus where students use an art/ studio, STEAM(science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) labs, and a maker space with tools, science, engineering, and art materials.

We plan to secure an additional agriculture/ ecology campus for students to learn agricultural skills, resource management, and product production best-practices and skills.

Within five years, YES will expand the educational campus to include classroom space, a maker space, and agriculture and open space to create a school campus where students can learn in direct instruction, use expanded technical equipment, and have access to native landscapes and agricultural space giving students the ability to grow food and learn restoration and sustainable agricultural practices. At this campus, YES teachers and students will grow food, learn about native species, permaculture, food gathering, and study nature to rewild and restore native habitats. This campus with real-world learning opportunities allows teachers and experts to teach kids to live with wildlife and will plant thickets and maintain other wild places alongside garden spaces and near school structures to encourage local wildlife diversity and habitat complexity. This is a living laboratory to develop and practice management practices.

Students need consistent access to natural outdoor spaces to explore, play and grow. Time spent during childhood in wild places develops love and connection to our natural world and develops a child's sense of self and relationships with others. Students should be given the most beautiful places to learn and grow which reflect the value we place in them. Students need to feel empowered and

autonomous to practice following their curiosities through play in the outdoors- this will support their trajectories as lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and stewards connected to the places they love.

This expansion of the school campus for ecological and agricultural learning will give our educational programming the facilities to model best practices in project-based learning that also develops student character, healthy relationships to self and others, and engagement with the community and local environment.

Our backup plan is to fundraise for an alternative learning space. There is an existing vacant commercial building, the former Livingston Enterprise Building, that is located near the Livingston School District upper elementary, middle and high schools, as well as the Special Education Coop, that lends to students using shared district resources and programs to further complete and enhance their comprehensive educational experience.

This building is on the market listed for \$2.2 million and would need some renovation but is close to move-in ready.

## **COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND NEED**

### **26. *Describe the specific evidence of significant community support.***

#### **Park County Students Unenrolled in District**

According to the October, 2024 Park County Rural Schools Superintendent's Office data, approximately 23% of students or 480 kids reporting enrollment in Park County are opting out of public school. This includes students who are home schooling or attending private schools.

Last year, the Livingston Public School District made the decision to close an elementary school due to declining enrollment and to combine students and teachers in another existing school. This is a trend that has been growing over the past several years.

Parents of unenrolled and publicly enrolled students would like a publicly-funded, securely-resourced, student-experience and outcome-designed option. Many families struggle to pay tuition for private options and independent programming but continue to consume due to the desired outcomes, experience, opportunities, and overall well-being of their students.

Parents signed up with intent to enroll 57 students for 2025/26.

The [Park County Community Health Needs Assessment](#) (CHNA) conducted by the Health Dept. in 2022. Is a collaboration between Livingston HealthCare and the Park City County Health Department. This report states that about 60% of survey responders somewhat to strongly disagree that Park County is a good place to raise a family. The report includes data from the 2021 Montana Youth Risk Assessment Survey from MT OPI Elsie Arntzen about reported bullying, suicide for middle school and high school students: During the past 12 months have been bullied on school property. Middle School, 19.17% High School, 12.12% During the past 12 months have been bullied electronically (including texting, Instagram, Facebook or other social media) Middle School, 19.17% High School, 10.53% During the past 12 months have been the victim of teasing or name calling because someone thought you were gay, lesbian or bisexual. Middle School, 15.98% High School, 8.27% During the past 12

months, felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that they stopped doing some usual activities. Middle School, 30.41% High School, 39.85% During the past 12 months, seriously considered attempting suicide Middle School, 14.06% High School, 18.05% During the past 12 months, made a plan about how they would attempt suicide. Middle School, 15.10% High School, 16.54% During the past 12 months, actually attempted suicide. Middle School, 7.2% High School, 9.85%. YES structure, culture, professional development and curriculum support positive student and staff mental health.

YES supports Children and Families Priority #1 of the CHNA data informs the current [Community Health Improvement Plan](#). Teacher support and education (K-12 and Early Childhood) • Increase salaries • Advocacy, regulation and taxes • Incentives to work in the industry (childcare for caretakers) • More autonomy • Affordable staff housing, possible stipends • Improved relationships between employers and employees • Improve health and wellness opportunities for staff • Simplify and standardize social/ emotional learning curriculum across grades.

In the 2024 Community Resource Assessment Report, completed by MT DPHHS-funded Communities that Care Committee, directed by the Park County Health Department, the #2 Priority Risk Factor was a low commitment to school. YES's engaging and meaningful approach to learning as well as the culture of respect and belonging supports an increase in commitment to school.

See Appendix D for Reports

## **27. Describe the opportunities and expectations for parent involvement.**

YES secures parental involvement, participation, and input in a variety of ways. For example, the School Executive Director meets formally with parents and guardians at least twice a year regarding Title I spending, YES learning goals and project plans, and MT OPI state laws and compliance. Meeting agendas cover subjects including review and analysis of learning outcome results as well as budget development, as it pertains to Title I funds and state and federal funding.

YES features active parental involvement, as parent involvement is a key factor in student academic achievement. YES has a Parent Association. Activities that the parent association may undertake includes, but is not limited to:

1. Communicating Board meeting agendas and meeting attendance opportunities
2. Creating and distributing a Parent Association Newsletter
3. Sending Parent Association announcements via email and/or other means
4. Meeting regularly and serving as a liaison to other stakeholder groups such as YES's administrators, associated student body groups, and others
5. Sponsoring/supporting community-building activities, such as orientations, school photos, socials, special fundraising events, and community-service activities
6. Supporting classrooms directly, such as Room/Team Parent coordination, teacher wish lists, and chaperoning
7. Coordinating school-wide fundraising, such as book fairs, and other fundraising partnerships with local businesses.

YES engages with stakeholders through family meetings, student and family surveys, and staff professional development each school year. YES begins dialogue regarding learning outcomes and tenets in the fall with a series of family meetings YES goals for that year. The process culminates in a winter/spring meeting where budgets and goals for the YES are discussed. Families are invited to attend these meetings through email, weekly newsletters, and phone calls made by the family outreach coordinator.

**NOT AN EXISTING LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD? COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION**

- 1. Provide specific evidence that the applicant has sought from the local school board the creation of a school or program of the located school district serving the mission and vision of the proposed public charter school.***

The YES founding members began reaching out to the Livingston District Superintendent and school board members about creating a partnership for alternative, hands-on programming beginning in 2021. Beginning summer 2023, YES founders met with the current Livingston District Superintendent monthly to discuss a proposed charter partnership.

See Appendix E for Emails and meeting schedule provided

- 2. Provide specific evidence that the local school board declined to create the school or program and declined to submit a proposal for the creation of a public charter school to the Board of Public Education.***

Link to October 10, 2024 Livingston school board meeting:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=hVRI-mV6JW4>

- 3. Provide a legal description of the property of the existing school district from which the boundaries of the public charter school district are proposed to be formed.***

Legal Description: PALACE ADD (LIVINGSTON), S14, T02 S, R09 E, BLOCK 49, LIV OP/PAL ALL

See Appendix F for Image of YES public charter school district

- 4. Share background information on the initial governing board members and, if identified, the proposed school leadership and management team.***

See Appendix G for initial governing board members

# Yellowstone Experiential School Charter Application

## Appendices

### APPENDIX A: Employee Handbook

#### Yellowstone Experiential School Employee Handbook 2025-26

##### Welcome

The Yellowstone Experiential School (YES) community is delighted that you have chosen to collaborate with us, and we hope that you will enjoy your experience working and learning as part of our team!

As you become familiar with our culture and mission, we hope that your engagement with YES affords you an opportunity to enhance your professional life as an educator, creative, centered- secure individual, and life-learner.

YES is characterized by a strong sense of community founded on a cooperative relationship amongst staff, parents and children. With your active involvement, creativity, and open heart, YES will continue to achieve its goals. We sincerely hope you will take pride in being an important part of YES' success.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information that may help you with particular questions pertaining to employment. An understanding of professionalism on the part of an educator is assumed, and so it is not entirely specified in this publication. We define professionalism as conducting oneself with responsibility, integrity, accountability, and best effort aligned with relevant training and experience.

It is a great responsibility and privilege to be entrusted with children's growth, well-being, and development. We take this responsibility and gift to be with children of the utmost importance. Modeling healthy behaviors to your peers and team, students, parents, and greater community is expected.

Though it is a responsibility to be a healthy model for kids, a student's well-being and academic growth is not the sole responsibility of any educator. We each play a role in the growth and development of the children we work with but are only one element or moment in time of any child's life. All we can do is our best and trust it is enough.

Please take time to review the policies contained in this handbook. In the event of a discrepancy among any materials, the Employee Handbook will govern.

If you have questions, please feel free to ask the School Director.

##### Table of Contents

##### Overview

Mission  
Vision

##### Purpose

Tenets  
Objectives

## **Employment Standards**

- Integration Clause**
- Equal Opportunity**
- Anti Harassment Policy**
- Disability Accommodations**
- Immigration Policy**

## **Employment Responsibilities**

- Open Door Policy**
- Conflicts of Interest**
- Confidentiality**

## **Employment Relationship**

- Employment Agreement**
- At-Will Status**
- Expectations**
- Best Practices**
- Curriculum and Instruction**
- Professional Responsibility**
- YES educational**

## **Content and Action Expectations**

- Student/ Teacher Relationship**
- Parent Communication**
- Parent- staff Guidelines**
- Student Evaluation**
- Evaluation**
- Work Week and Hours**
- Calendar**
- Paychecks**
- Substitutes**
- Personnel Files and Employee**
- References**

**Termination**

## **Overview**

## **Workplace Safety**

- Background Information**
- Public Health Policy**
- Smoke-Free Workplace**
- Building Guidelines**
- Security**
- Emergency Procedure**
- Illegal Activity**
- Substance Misuse**
- Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

## **Workplace Guidelines**

- Parking**
- Dress Code**
- Attendance**
- Communication Policies**
- Social Media**
- Computers and Other resources**
- Fundraising**
- Expense and Reimbursement Policy**
- Professionalism**

## **Benefits**

- Health Care**
- Life Insurance**
- Retirement**
- Vacation, Time Off**
- Leaves of Absence**
- Worker's Compensation Insurance**

## **Employee Handbook Receipt and Acknowledgement**

The Yellowstone Experiential School public charter, located in Livingston, Montana, was founded in 2019 as an independent school providing mixed-age, small group education with a focus on exploration, creativity, personal development, and civic engagement.

The YES program focuses on blending curriculum direct instruction with project-based learning, a proven methodology that integrates English language, math, science, the arts, and humanities with relevant, meaningful projects to provide students with a deep educational experience. YES emphasizes problem-solving, creativity, and academic proficiency. Empathy to Impact and 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals are woven into the curriculum.

The school is committed to fostering a community that is inclusive and reflective of the diversity of our families, faculty, and administrative staff.

The Yellowstone Experiential School (YES) public charter is a community school for 4-14 year olds in Livingston, Montana.

**Yellowstone Experiential School public charter Mission:**

YES provides a joyful, individualized, and meaningful education for 4-14 year olds through real-world, interdisciplinary learning experiences; development of caring, trusting relationships to self and others; and engagement with community partners working together to meet challenges and opportunities through creativity and critical thinking.

**Vision**

Deeply engaged in their own learning, with a foundation of knowledge, strong sense of self, and connection to community— YES public charter graduates are prepared for high school and postsecondary success and are empowered to live a life of well-being and productive citizenship.

**Purpose**

**Quality Alternative - Education for All Students:** Students are opting out of the public option in Park County. Community members realize the benefit of well-educated youth as future citizens and leaders of our local community and state. Park County residents want an intentional, cohesive, measured, and relevant educational alternative for those students to ensure a strong democracy, low crime rates, capable labor force, community innovation, public service, and citizenship.

Students and families in our community are demonstrating the need for alternative options to our sole traditional model. Of the total reported K-8th school age students, 399 students or approximately 20% of Park County students, are opting out of public school and instead are participating in home school, private schools, or hybrid educational programs.

Park County public school enrollment is at its lowest in recent years. There are several contributing factors influencing this decline in public school participation, including political climate, COVID impact on enrollment, increasing micro school options, changing demographics, housing issues, fear of extremism and violence, etc.

In addition to these societal factors, families and students have identified the need for school choice to close achievement gaps between high-performing and low-performing groups of public students. Specifically, parents and students are taking responsibility for their own success by moving towards a

student-centered approach to education. Those students and families are opting out of traditional options and are pursuing and developing alternatives that better meet their individual needs.

The approximately 400 students who are not enrolled in the free, public option are looking for a personal fit that meets academic and social needs.

**Equity:** Parents alone cannot pay the true cost of comprehensive, enriching education providing vast opportunities for students to thrive. Students opting out of the public option due to diverse needs, are entitled to a public education. Each student deserves a high quality education to provide a foundation of knowledge, skills and confidence, despite ability to pay.

**Suicide Prevention:** The creation of YES as a public charter to be accessible to any student despite ability to pay is also critical as Park County continues to witness youth suicide. Studies show that students who feel connected to a community or purpose and have a connection to at least one adult are at less at risk (Add as reference/source. The YES structure of low student to teacher ratio allows all students to experience strong relationships with healthy adults and peers, as well as meaningful, individualized educational experiences that students care about. The smaller school community, low student to adult ratio, and individualized and meaningful learning opportunities provide the community, meaningful adult relationships, sense of purpose, and healthy self-esteem known as major protective factors (based on a [Montana Youth Dynamics article](#)).

**Major protective factors for suicide include:**

1. Effective **behavioral health care**
2. **Connectedness** to individuals, family, community, and social institutions
3. **Life skills** (including problem-solving skills and coping skills, ability to adapt to change)
4. **Self-esteem** and a **sense of purpose** or meaning in life
5. Cultural, religious, or personal **beliefs that discourage suicide**

**Increases Public Dollars for Education in Park County:** Schools are underfunded and under-resourced to meet the diverse needs and demands of all of our unique students. Families with students in search of options that fit individual needs for success and opting out of the public option are paying for private education. Not all working families have the ability to pay for individualized education to meet their child's needs.

The Yellowstone Experiential School public charter would bring in additional public investment to educate Park County students for alternative programming. An additional public option will bridge the equity gap between learners who would thrive in a hands-on learning environment and those whose families cannot afford the time and money it takes to provide these essential services without additional public options.

**Updated, Relevant Approach to Education to Serve Diverse Needs and Challenges of the 21st Century:**

It is more important than ever that we re-imagine learning environments that provide opportunities for interest-driven exploration, creativity, collaboration, and development of relevant life skills. It is this knowledge base and foundation that empowers kids with a 'can-do mindset' to support their purpose and contribute as citizens.

Kids want to feel valued and connected and have the knowledge, ideas and skills to achieve goals to live their best life.

People all over the world are articulating that the skills to succeed now include excellent communication, healthy relationships with self and others, creative capacity for problem solving, and the agency to accomplish goals.

Kids are all facing many unmet future challenges and opportunities and will need to become the citizens and leaders with the hearts, minds, and skills to face those challenges and contribute to positive solutions.

Project-based learning is an educational approach recognized for building these skills, producing confident students prepared to think critically, dream big dreams, and contribute to a better world as happy, healthy, fulfilled people.

YES offers an educational experience for kids ages 4-14 prioritizing three main growth and development outcomes.

1. **ENGAGEMENT:** Academic and skills proficiency of MT core curriculum standards approached through meaningful real-world, experiential learning.
2. **CONNECTION:** Strong sense of self, strengths and purpose and personal well-being and healthy, caring, trusting relationships through direct instruction, healthy adult modeling, and inspiring, skill building experiences.
3. **CITIZENSHIP:** Civic engagement and connection to community through relevant projects that explore community challenges and opportunities and empowerment to take action to make change.

These **YES Guiding Characteristics** lead our Board of Trustees, administration, teachers, parents, and learners in development and implementation of curriculum, instruction, field studies, assessment, professional development, planning, calendar, and budget.

**ENGAGEMENT: All community members find meaning, purpose, and value in what they are doing.**

Project-Based Learning

Providing meaningful, real-world, and experiential learning with an authentic audience and outcome

Love of Learning

Creating joyful, playful, and fun experiences that allow for choice and encourage curiosity and creativity

Growth

Continuously providing challenging opportunities to build skills, knowledge, and character to best support each individual

Discovery

Exploring a wide variety of content, experiences, ideas, and materials

**CONNECTION: All community members build a healthy relationship to self, others, and place.**

Self

Developing non-violent communication skills, self-knowledge of interests, strengths, and boundaries, and caring trusting relationships; community members build their identities as learners and develop the capacity for agency and autonomy

#### Community

Feeling valued, empowered, seen, and included in our diverse community

#### Place

Building connection to our natural and built environment

#### Learning Team

Educators, family, and students working together to build Individualized Learning Plans

**CITIZENSHIP: All community members practice critical thinking and awareness to benefit ourselves and others.**

#### Collaboration

Becoming compassionate change agents working together to make our communities better

#### Reflection

Practicing mindfulness and awareness to gain understanding of ourselves and others

#### Critical Thinking

Using an open-mind and multiple perspectives to make informed decisions

#### Knowledge Base

Using flexible, direct instruction and interdisciplinary projects for deep understanding of core curriculum standards to support an educated citizenry

### ***Employer Objectives***

In order to achieve the mission, YES strives to:

- i. treat each employee as an individual, with respect and dignity;
- ii. hire, promote and compensate solely on the basis of merit without regard to race, color, creed, gender, religion, marital status, registered domestic partner status, age, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition including genetic characteristics, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local law or ordinance or regulation;
- iii. encourage every employee to take an active interest in his or her job and to contribute his or her best efforts and abilities to meet our mission;
- iv. provide a joyful, supportive, balanced place to work; and
- v. encourage employees to discuss with administration all ideas that could improve working conditions, policies and practices.

The community of YES is marked by a culture of collaboration, professionalism, and respect. As adults, every encounter we have with students or other adults is an opportunity to model kindness, acceptance and peace, the three core values of our school.

In meetings, YES employees agree to the following commitments

- Establishing clear meeting intentions
- Assuming best intentions
- Leading with curiosity
- Making space for all ideas and questions and being willing to table ideas
- Making thoughtful contributions, by thinking “Is what I’m going to say kind, necessary, true, and helpful?”
- Rejoicing and reflecting
- Being open to new ideas and feedback

Each YES employee is an integral part of providing quality education for children.

As an employee, it is crucial to model the behaviors YES wishes our students to learn. We model appreciation for individual and group differences by treating all of our students, parents, and colleagues with respect. We are committed to multiculturalism as an ongoing process. This commitment is reflected in our curriculum, admission practices, and in our relationships with faculty, staff, children and their families.

### ***Employment Standards***

#### ***Integration Clause and the Right to Revise***

This employee handbook contains the employment policies and practices of YES in effect at the time of publication. All previously issued handbooks and any inconsistent policy statements or memoranda are superseded.

The YES Board of Trustees and School Director reserves the right to revise, modify, delete, suspend, terminate, or add to any and all policies, procedures, work rules or benefits stated in this handbook, whether in whole or in part, at any time. However, any such changes must be in writing and must be signed by the School Director. No oral statements or representations can in any way change or alter the provisions of this handbook. Any written changes to this handbook will be distributed to all employees so that employees will be aware of the new policies and procedures.

Nothing in this employee handbook, or in any other personnel document, including benefit plan descriptions, creates or is intended to create a promise or representation of continued employment for any employee.

#### ***Equal Employment Opportunity***

The YES strictly prohibits unlawful discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, by or against any Employee, student, or volunteer. Every person has the right to work and learn in surroundings that are free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment. YES hires, promotes, transfers, terminates, and makes all other employment-related decisions without unlawful consideration of an employee's race, creed, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, age, or national origin, or any other basis prohibited by local, state, or Federal law. All employees are expected to comply with this equal employment opportunity policy.

### ***Anti-Harassment Policy***

Harassment is verbal, visual, or physical conduct that belittles or shows hostility or dislike toward an individual because of his/her race, creed, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical or mental disability, age, national origin or any other characteristic protected by law and that: (1) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, (2) has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance, or (3) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to, phrases, slurs, jokes, gestures, disparaging or negative stereotyping, threatening, intimidating or hostile acts (e.g. blocking another's movement), or the display or circulation (including electronic) of cartoons, pictures, photographs and jokes.

Sexual harassment is a form of Employee misconduct which undermines the integrity of the employment relationship and is unlawful discriminatory behavior. Sexual harassment includes requests for sexual favors and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment, (2) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. It may include subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve a person of the same or opposite sex. Sexual harassment may result in emotional stress, low self-esteem, low morale, absenteeism, reduced productivity, and high turnover. Depending on the circumstances, it may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, flirtation, whistling, or touching;
- Obscene or vulgar gestures or comments;
- Sexually explicit emails, voicemails, or other communications;
- Sexual jokes or "kidding," even if indirect or suggestive;
- Display of magazines, books, posters, or pictures with a sexual connotation;
- A pattern of hiring or promoting sexual partners over more qualified applicants;
- Unwelcome physical contact such as patting, pinching, or constant brushing against another's body;
- Requests or demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt promises for preferential treatment or threats concerning an individual's employment status;
- Threatening retaliation after a negative response to sexual advances; or

- Any harassing behavior, whether or not sexual in nature, directed toward a person because of the person's gender, e.g. hazing Employees working in non-traditional work environments or a male supervisor yelling only at female Employees and not at males.

All Employees are expected to work actively to maintain a workplace that is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment, based upon sex or any other protected basis, and to conduct themselves in such a way so as to ensure that no discrimination or harassment occurs.

### **Reporting Harassment**

If you experience or witness job-related unlawful discrimination or harassment, you are required to report the harassing or discriminatory conduct to your supervisor immediately. If your supervisor is the person responsible for the alleged harassing or discriminatory conduct, is not available, you believe it would be inappropriate to contact your supervisor, or you are not comfortable reporting to your supervisor, you must immediately contact the School Director. Every supervisor or manager who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment, or learns of any employee's concern about harassment, whether in a formal complaint or informally, must immediately report the issue to the School Director.

### **Investigating Harassment**

If you report harassing or discriminatory conduct, your concerns will be investigated, and you will not suffer retaliation for reporting such concerns. It is important that such situations be identified and reviewed so that any improper actions can be corrected.

Confidentiality of the report or complaint and information gathered during the investigation of the report or complaint will be protected to the greatest extent possible; however, due to the nature of the investigatory process, complete confidentiality cannot be assured. All employees, whether directly involved or not, are expected to cooperate with all investigations.

### **Discipline**

Violation of this anti harassment policy may result in disciplinary action including IMMEDIATE TERMINATION without notice.

### ***Immigration Policy***

YES is committed to employing only United States citizens and legal residents who are authorized to work in the United States. The school does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

YES does not intentionally or knowingly hire, or continue to employ, an individual who is not legally authorized to work in the United States and requires all new hires to complete Form I-9 as required by law. In addition to completing an I-9 form, YES will use the E-Verify program from the Department of Homeland Defense and the Social Security Administration to verify employment eligibility. If a Tentative Non-Confirmation notice is issued by E-Verify, the employee will have to contest the notice to the appropriate agency. The employee may continue to work at the school until there is a final determination of work eligibility.

If the school receives a “no match” letter from the Social Security Administration (“SSA”) concerning one of its current employees, the following steps will be followed:

1. A check of school records will take place to ensure that the discrepancy was not a result of the school’s clerical error (such as a typo, transposing hyphenated last names, etc.). If such an error is found, the school will make the correction, notify the SSA, and verify that the name and Social Security number now match. The school will make a record of all oral and written communications with the agency. This step must be taken within 30 days of the school’s receipt of the no-match letter.
2. If the matter is not resolved by step #1, YES will ask the employee to confirm that school records are correct. If the employee indicates they are not correct, they will be corrected and the school will notify the Social Security Administration and verify that the name and SSN now match. This step must be taken within 30 days of the school’s receipt of the no-match letter. If the employee indicates that the information the school has is correct, the school will notify the employee that he or she has 90 days from the school’s receipt of the no-match letter to address the situation with the relevant agency to get the matter resolved.
3. If the matter is not resolved within 90 days, the school will ask the employee to complete a new I-9 form within 3 additional days (93 days from the date the school received the no-match letter). The employee may not present documents that contain the disputed SSN and the employee must present a document containing a photograph. The school will keep a copy of the new I-9 with the original I-9.

If the no-match is not resolved through one of the steps mentioned above, or if the employee refuses to complete a new I-9 as outlined, then the school may terminate the employee to avoid a finding by the Department of Homeland Security that YES had constructive knowledge that the employee was an illegal resident.

It is against the law to utilize another person’s identity to secure employment. The school will not tolerate any employee utilizing another person’s identify to obtain employment. Engaging in identity theft will result in immediate termination of employment.

### ***Disability Accommodations***

YES complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), as amended by the ADA Amendments Act (“ADAAA”), and all applicable state and local fair employment practices laws, and is committed to providing equal opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities. Consistent with this commitment, YES will provide a reasonable accommodation to disabled applicants and employees if the reasonable accommodation would allow the individual to perform the essential functions of the job, unless doing so would create an undue hardship.

## **Requesting an Accommodation**

If you believe you need an accommodation because of your disability, you are responsible for requesting reasonable accommodation from the School Director or School Director. You may make the request orally or in writing. YES encourages employees to make their request in writing, and to include relevant information such as:

- A description of the accommodation you are requesting
- The reason you need accommodation
- How the accommodation will help you perform the essential functions of your job

After receiving your oral or written request, YES will engage in an interactive dialogue with you to determine the precise limitations of your disability and explore potential reasonable accommodations that could overcome those limitations. YES encourages you to suggest specific reasonable accommodations that you believe would allow you to perform your job. However, YES is not required to make the specific accommodation requested by you, and may provide an alternate effective accommodation, to the extent that any reasonable accommodation can be made without imposing an undue hardship on YES.

## **Medical Information**

If your disability or need for accommodation is not obvious, YES may ask you to provide supporting documents showing that you have a disability within the meaning of the ADA and applicable state or local laws, and that your disability necessitates reasonable accommodation. If the information provided in response to this request is insufficient, YES may require that you see a healthcare professional of YES's choosing, at YES's expense. In those cases, if you fail to provide the requested information or see the designated health care professional, your request for a reasonable accommodation may be denied.

YES will keep confidential any medical information it obtained in connection with your request for reasonable accommodation.

## **Determinations**

YES makes determinations about reasonable accommodations on a case-by case- basis considering various factors and based on an individualized assessment in each situation. YES strives to make determinations on reasonable accommodations expeditiously, and will inform the individual once a determination has been made. If you have any questions about a reasonable accommodation request you made, please contact the School Director or School Director.

## **No Retaliation**

Individuals will not be retaliated against for requesting an accommodation in good faith. YES expressly prohibits any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation, or retaliation against any individual for requesting an accommodation in good faith. YES is committed to enforcing this policy and prohibiting retaliation against employees and applicants who request a reasonable accommodation in good faith. However, the

effectiveness of our efforts depends largely on individuals telling us about inappropriate workplace conduct. If employees or applicants feel that they or someone else may have been subjected to conduct that violates this policy, they should report it to the School Director or Director of Human Resources. If employees do not report retaliatory conduct, YES may not become aware of a possible violation of this policy and may not be able to take appropriate corrective action.

## ***Employment Responsibilities***

### ***Open Door Policy***

In furtherance of its open door policy and continuing efforts to secure prompt resolution of problems and disputes, YES has established an informal grievance procedure. Any controversy concerning the meaning, application or violation of the rules, policies or procedures of the YES, or terms and conditions of employment, including any disciplinary action or termination, shall be treated as a grievance and settled, if at all possible, by the following procedure. Such matters shall be exclusively resolved in accordance with the procedure herein provided.

### **Grievance Procedure**

An employee may seek to have any such action reviewed internally, according to the provisions of the following procedure.

**STEP ONE: DISCUSSION WITH SUPERVISOR.** The aggrieved employee shall discuss the matter with the employee's immediate supervisor. If the grievance pertains to the employee's immediate supervisor, then the employee shall discuss the matter with the School Director or School Director.

**STEP TWO: SUBMISSION OF FORMAL GRIEVANCE.** Within five (5) business days from the day that the employee is informed of any decision or determination with which he/she disagrees, the aggrieved employee shall submit to the School Director or School Director a written statement of his/her grievance, which shall set forth the following:

- The employee's name, position, and approximate length of employment
- The particular decision or determination with which the employee wishes to review
- The reasons that the employee feels that the decision or determination should be rescinded, modified, or reconsidered, and
- The names of any persons with whom the employee feels is involved with, or knowledgeable concerning, the determination or decision to be reviewed.

**STEP THREE: FORMAL DETERMINATION.** Within ten (10) days of a timely written submission as described above, the School Director or School Director shall undertake one of the following:

1. In the event that the School Director or School Director feels that he or she has sufficient information available to review the action complained of, he or she shall respond, in writing, to the employee, informing him or her that the written submission was reviewed by the School Director of School Director and based on the information available to the School Director or School Director, that the decision or determination complained of in the employee's written submission is

either affirmed, rescinded, or modified.

2. In the event that the Office Manager feels that more information may be needed to fully review the employee's written submission, the Office Manager shall notify the employee of a time and date where the employee may be present, in person, to discuss the employee's written submission. Such meeting, which shall take place within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the employee's written submission (unless a later time is specifically agreed to due to time or scheduling conflicts of the employee or Office Manager). At this meeting, the Office Manager may elect to have any other persons present who, in his or her opinion, may materially assist in resolving any factual disputes pertaining to the employee's written submission.
3. In the event that the meeting referred to in (2) is held, the School Director or the School Director will issue a written determination which affirms, rescinds or modifies the decision or determination within ten (10) days of the meeting. A copy of this written determination shall be forwarded to the employee at his/her last known address.

### ***Inappropriate Workplace Relationships***

Situations of actual or potential conflict of interest are to be avoided by all employees. All employees of YES are prohibited from romantic involvement with YES students. Romantic involvement with parents of students is discouraged if the relationship begins after hiring. Personal or romantic involvement with a supplier or subordinate employee of YES impairs an employee's ability to exercise good judgment on behalf of YES and creates an actual or potential conflict of interest. Administrator-subordinate romantic or personal relationships also can lead to administrative problems, possible claims of sexual harassment, and morale problems.

An employee involved in any of the types of relationships or situations described in this policy should immediately and fully disclose the relevant circumstances to the School Director or School Director for a determination as to whether a potential or actual conflict exists. If an actual or potential conflict is determined, YES may take whatever corrective action appears appropriate according to the circumstances.

### ***Confidential Information***

Faculty and staff are in daily contact with and have access to confidential and privileged information about students, their families, faculty, staff, other employees, and business dealings of the school. To protect the privacy and integrity of the school, its faculty, the students and their families, it is imperative that such information never be divulged or otherwise improperly used by faculty or staff members. Employees are responsible for safeguarding confidential information obtained during their employment with YES. Any breach of this policy will not be tolerated and may result in termination.

The processes and protocols, schedules, curriculum, and metrics are integral to the YES learning model. No proprietary material may be copied, reproduced, distributed, displayed, or performed without the prior written consent from the School Director and School Director.

## **Employment Relationship**

### ***Employment Agreements***

YES uses annual Employment Agreements for all faculty members. Non-teaching staff members receive annual letters communicating their coming fiscal year's salary and benefits information.

### **Probationary Period**

All employees not subject to an Employment Agreement must successfully complete a probationary period. A new employee's probationary period is the first twelve (12) months of an employee's employment with YES, but this period may be extended prior to its expiration for up to a total of eighteen (18) months at the discretion of YES, during which time YES may discharge the employee for any reason not a violation of law; no warning letter shall be required prior to the discharge of a probationary employee.

### ***Employment Expectations***

All employees are expected to:

- i. serve as a positive and contributing member of the YES community;
- ii. conduct themselves in a professional manner consistent with the expectations of their supervisors (e.g. punctuality, consistent attendance, attending to responsibilities, high quality of work);
- iii. comply with YES's policies and procedures as set forth in this manual and as announced or distributed by the School Director or direct supervisors;
- iv. communicate effectively and appropriately with parents and other members of the community. utilize effective teaching strategies;
- v. embrace and utilize the teaching philosophies espoused by YES;
- vi. effectively manage students for physical and emotional safety as well as conducting selves with integrity and respect for others and property, both inside and outside of the classroom.

Employees are expected to use **YES email and Slack** in the following ways:

- All staff should be checking email and Slack daily during the work day, including Fridays
  - Staff should use any planning times longer than 30 minutes to check their email & Slack at least once
  - On Friday workdays, teachers should regularly be checking their email & Slack throughout the day up until at least 3:00 pm
  - Staff should let colleagues know if they plan to be away from email or Slack for an extended period of time on Friday
  - Staff are not expected to check email or Slack before 8:00 am, after 4:00 pm, on the weekends, or on holidays
- Staff are not required to have Outlook or Slack on their phone, but can if they would like
- Staff should respond to emails/Slack messages within 2 workdays
- Staff should use email/Slack to set up a meeting to discuss something with a colleague rather than in-person. This allows all individuals to focus and prioritize throughout the day. If it is a team topic, add it to the appropriate meeting agenda.

- All staff should have a professional email signature that includes:
  - First and last name
  - Preferred pronouns
  - Title
  - [YES](#) (with hyperlink to website)
  - [YES logo](#)
- All staff who work with students should regularly be inputting SEL & academic observations about students into Slack
  - Academic observations for teacher's subject areas should be inputted at least once a week
  - SEL observations should be inputted as relevant within 48 hours of observation
  - Serious incidents should be inputted the day it happens and fill out the appropriate safety report

Employees are expected to use **texting/phone calls** in the following ways:

- All staff will keep texting/phone calls to a minimum and use Email and Slack for work-related communication
- Texting/phone calls may be used when:
  - There is a more immediate/urgent need
  - There is permission from the receiving party
  - There is non-work related communication, e.g. carpooling

Employees are expected to use the **YES Google Calendar and Drive** in the following ways:

- Use login:
  - 
  -
- Use the three Google Calendars to keep track of meetings, events, and staff absences/substitutes
  - YES Staff
  - Elementary
  - Middle School
- Make sure to either add relevant calendars to your personal calendar or keep the calendars open on a tab
- Use these calendars to check for information on meetings and events before reaching out to ask leadership or a colleague
- Use the [YES Staff Resources Google folder](#) to find and store resources
- Keep resources organized in folders
- Add this folder to your personal Google Drive or log in to YESstaff drive to access

Employees are expected to use the **YES Google Photo Albums** in the following ways:

- Use YES Google Photos album to document student experiences at school for families
  - [Middle School](#)
  - [Elementary School](#)
- Regularly document student learning, work, and experiences through photos and upload to the appropriate album

- Staff can upload by logging into the YES Staff Google account or through the own personal account
  - Hint: having the Google Photos album app on a phone makes for easy and quick upload

Employees are expected to follow the **Staff Absence Protocol** outlined below.

- Email the School Director as soon as you are aware of an upcoming absence to request leave.
- The School Director will add it to the YES Staff Google calendar and coordinate teacher coverage.
- If it is a last minute substitution, such as in the case of an illness, text or call the School Director.
- In the case of a one day absence, the School Director may coordinate for internal coverage when possible. The School Director will contact a substitute for longer absences or when internal coverage creates too heavy a burden on internal staff.
- Provide the School Director emailed and printed substitution plans with all needed materials.
- Substitution plans should include:
  - List of students
  - Schedule for the day that includes locations
  - Overview of routines
  - Details about administering learning activities
- In some cases when all are in agreement, the teacher, School Director, and substitutes may coordinate for substitutes to plan and lead their own activities. In this case, a list of students, schedule, and overview of routines should still be left for the substitute.

Employees are expected to **plan and document their curriculum** in the following ways:

- All curriculum should be documented and placed in the Planning folder in the YES Staff Google Drive
  - All plans can simply be an overview and can be adjusted and changed throughout the year
  - There are templates/examples for each type of plan for staff to use, but staff are also welcome to use their own format
  - If plans are on paper, teacher can upload a picture of their plans
- Each team (elementary & middle) should have an overview document for each Arc (example template)
- Each subject area teacher should have a general scope and sequence for each group of students (example)
- Each teacher should have a folder with their daily/weekly plans (example 1, example 2)

Employees are expected to participate in creating and implementing student **Individualized Learning Plans** in the following ways:

- Educators, families, and students will have 4 ILP conferences throughout the year - one in the beginning of the year and one at the end of each arc
- Teachers will enter student SEL and academic observations for each student at least one week before conferences.
- Teachers will support students with reflecting and goal setting in preparation for conferences. Teachers will help to enter this into each students' ILP.

- Teachers will lead ILP conferences and will prepare by reviewing colleague's observational notes in order to be able to speak to the observations of all teachers.
  - Teachers will work with the families and students to set objectives for the upcoming arc. Either with the family or after the conference, teachers will fill in how we will know the student is progressing towards this objective and how the team will help the student meet the objective.
  - Teachers will send the completed ILP to the family after the conference.
- Teachers will review all student completed ILPs and use this in their planning and teaching.
- The Head of Student Support will create a student objective "cheat sheet" for each team.

Employees are expected to participate in **meetings** in the following ways:

- Educators have the option to attend meetings in-person or virtually, though are encouraged to attend in-person when possible.
- All meetings will be in our YES Staff Google calendars with the relevant team members listed who should attend. Members of the meeting can add any agenda topics to the description section of the event.
- When possible, staff members should add topics to the agenda and wait until the meeting to discuss.
- Notes will be documented in Slack for all team meetings.
- Educators should be available for all staff meetings on Fridays.
- Further trainings or meetings may be held on Fridays before 3:00 pm, though leadership will make an effort to give educators as much planning time as possible.
- Each team (elementary and middle) will have one weekly team meeting that will include the School Director and Head of Student Support. These team meetings will be 1-1.5 hours depending on need.
- Each team member will have a weekly check-in meeting with the School Director. These meetings can last 15-30 minutes depending on the need.

Employees are expected to **communicate with families** in the following ways:

- Regular parent communication in-person and through email is essential to a positive partnership.
- In addition to responding promptly to parent emails, proactively communicating to parents about incidents, observations, etc. is important.
- If an in-person conversation is held, it is helpful to follow-up with an email for documentation purposes.
- Document relevant emails, meeting requests, and meeting dates in Slack.
- If a more serious physical, behavioral, or emotional incident occurs it is important to communicate with a parent that same day.
- The School Director and Head of Student Support, can also support with parent communication as needed. It is helpful to 'cc them to relevant emails.
- Weekly Friday emails should be sent with 2-3 observations in relation to one or more ILP objectives.
  - If possible, they should also include picture(s).
  - The teaching team can divide these weekly emails between them.
  - Document emails in student Slack channel
- YES Parent Code of Conduct

Employees are expected to utilize and adhere to the **educator to-do lists** for each team.

- The School Director will regularly update educator to-do lists for each teaching team
  - Elementary
  - Middle
- The to-do list will include the date by which an item should be completed and detailed instructions.

### **Best Practices for Teachers**

YES is a professional learning community that openly supports teachers to be self-reflective, innovative, eager to learn, and to constantly seek out opportunities to collaborate and grow.

Below are the actions that make a highly effective YES educator in meeting the mission of YES .

This document will be used in conjunction with the Observation, Evaluation, and Support Program.

The Yellowstone Experiential School Rubric is a framework used to guide the long-term, iterative work of continuous improvement. Its detailed indicators help schools assess their organizational growth, set goals and priorities, and measure progress in a range of key areas. In short, the rubric helps YES staff and stakeholders understand where they are on the journey to realizing the mission, vision, and learning goals—and how to take practical steps to achieve their goals.

In the rubric, each design principle has a set of indicators that help isolate discrete facets of practice within a particular principle. The rubric scale has 4 rating delineations and their key words are as follows:

SUSTAINED	ESTABLISHED	DEVELOPING	EMERGING
<i>all/almost all always/almost always consistently</i>	<i>most usually frequently</i>	<i>several sometimes inconsistently</i>	<i>a few occasionally infrequently none or almost none</i>

**ENGAGEMENT:** All community members find meaning, purpose, and value in what they are doing.

**Project-Based Learning:** Meaningful, real-world, and experiential learning with an authentic audience and outcome

- displays and documents current student work to an audience beyond the teacher and affirms the work of the classroom is important, needed, and worth doing.

- consistently monitors student engagement and connects curriculum to student interests
- invites community partners to collaborate on projects
- creates meaningful opportunities to demonstrate student work with a broad real audience
- the work teachers and students do together is infused at all points with choice, design, and revision.
- the academic integrity of the work teachers and students do together is clear, and has meaning and relevance.

**Love of Learning:** Joyful, playful, and fun experiences that allow for choice and encourage curiosity and creativity

- maintains a learner-centered classroom that is a cognitively vibrant place
- the work is characterized by the active learning of both teachers and students.
- imagination and creativity are encouraged throughout the process of introduction, practice, demonstration, and completion of all learning activities.

**Growth:** Continuously building skills, knowledge, and character to best support each individual

- the role of the teacher-as-collaborator facilitates students to build skills to become more capable of self-support and self-respecting independence.
- creates projects and executes lesson plans with clear instructional objectives using a variety of classroom techniques that reflect an understanding of a wide range of effective pedagogical approaches and where learning targets are clear to students, parents and educator
- uses a variety of ongoing methods to assess student development, skill levels, and learning profiles, and differentiates instruction accordingly
- uses information from various forms of assessment to gauge student learning
- presents new activities and curriculum that build cumulatively
- educational experiences are responsive to student need to gather more facts, become more skilled, develop more depth of understanding, and use lessons as the basis for future experiences and learning.

**Discovery:** Exploration of a wide variety of content, experiences, ideas and materials

- presents content from a variety of lenses in order to be inclusive and illuminate multiple perspectives
- actively integrates technology to enhance student learning and innovation
- includes varied learning experiences for students over the course of their experience at YES

**CONNECTED:** All community members build a healthy relationship to self, others, and place.

**Social-Emotional:** Developing collaboration, self-knowledge, confidence, and well-being

- kindness, acceptance, and peace as core values are modeled and cultivated.
- healthy life skills
- approaches conflict and natural consequences which may arise with restorative justice and understands the point at which to consult with other educators, parents or the administrator
- direct-instruction, assessment, feedback, and differentiation of developmentally appropriate social-emotional skills

- provides accommodations and modifications to support students socially and emotionally

**Community:** Feeling valued, empowered, seen, and included in our diverse community

- helps students build pride and a sense of ownership in the school community
- supports an environment where students feel safe and honored, both personally and intellectually
- fosters a classroom environment where student interactions are characterized by the willingness to acknowledge differences and to share and respect different perspectives
- the value of teamwork is a consistent feature of classroom activity. Peer teaching and small group work are utilized to build experiences in which every learner is not only included but needed.

**Place:** Connection to our natural and built environment

- recognizes the importance of the classroom and actively maintains its appearance, organization, and physical space
- provides place-based YESn that builds understanding of students' natural environment
- takes the learning outside into the natural and built environment
- partners with community members to build community partnerships
- provides learning opportunities to better understand, love, and take pride in this place

**Learning Team:** Educators, family, and students working together to build student learning plans

- uses formative and summative assessments to deeply understand where student are at academically, socially, and emotionally
- communicates regularly with appropriate stakeholders - fellow teachers, parents, and students - about where students are at and how they can continue to grow
- provide opportunities for student reflection and for their voice to be heard about their own learning
- provide opportunities for parents to share their needs, priorities, and observations
- incorporate student and parent insights into student learning plans
- use student learning plans to guide instruction

**CONSCIOUS:** All community members practice critical thinking and awareness to benefit ourselves and others.

**Citizenship:** Becoming compassionate change agents who make our communities better

- makes connections between the classroom work, the surrounding communities, and the world beyond the community are clear.
- Uses materials that are sourced locally if possible, reused, and recycled
- responsible for waste accumulation and recycling all paper, plastic, metal. Compost of food waste is encouraged
- ensures that environment, curriculum, instruction, and projects are inclusive, diverse, and equitable
- provides opportunities for students to learn diverse perspectives
- supports students with the tools and experiences to become change-makers

**Reflection:** Mindfulness and awareness practices to gain understanding of ourselves and others

- facilitates reflection, as an essential activity, at key points throughout the work. Revisions and refinements, which are critical to improving learning, addressing accountability and living intelligently, are encouraged and supported
- integrates constructive, ongoing assessment and evaluation
- teaches and incorporates mindfulness activities

**Critical Thinking:** Using an open-mind and multiple perspectives to make informed decisions

- develops and models a multicultural practice
- teaches students tools to seek out multiple perspectives and always incorporates multiple perspectives into discussions, instruction, and projects

**Knowledge Base:** Direct instruction of curriculum standards to support an educated citizenry  
YES integrates Good Life Goals with MT Core Curriculum Standards and Social Emotional Learning standards into projects so that students receive an YESn that is both locally and globally aware, while also building a core base of knowledge, skills, social emotional tools, and self awareness. Growth, learning and development with these three set of standards is reflected in our subject matter and learning outcomes/ projects.

- Montana Core curriculum standards are integrated into quarterly project planning and assessed through observations and assessment. Proficiency is documented in each student's Individualized Learning Plan.
- Developmentally appropriate social emotional skills and competencies are mutually agreed upon by parents, students and educators and are documented in Individualized Learning Plans
- We Will Park County is a citizen-informed initiative to help our citizens, organizations, and governmental entities better impact our shared future. Launched in 2019 from the input of more than 700 residents, We Will established a vision for the community across **five key areas:**

Landscapes and Natural Amenities

Small Town and Rural Lifestyle

Economic Performance

Housing and Affordability

Health Safety and YESn

These goals will be integrated into quarterly curriculum and projects and learning and outcomes and measured and documented. All projects will have community goals integrated into learning outcomes.

### ***Professional Educator Responsibility***

The Educator:

- continues to develop knowledge and skills to stay current with contemporary thinking and best practices by seeking opportunities for growth and renewal included and not included with YES professional development opportunities
- actively seeks feedback and advice directly from individuals who can best collaborate on the issue at hand
- maintains an open-minded, positive, and reflective attitude; displays enthusiasm and inspiration in teaching and shows genuine concern for student growth
- maintains a professional demeanor, attitude, and appearance in all circumstances
- uses time and resources effectively, adhering to deadlines
- seeks and participates in professional development opportunities, including initiating action research
- consistently keeps parents informed and works with them in a collaborative manner, establishing and maintaining respectful, authentic relationships
- actively participates in the whole organization and its development
- maintains appropriate boundaries among students, families, and colleagues in a fair, firm, and friendly fashion
- collaborates with administrators and colleagues to set and adhere consistently to boundaries and enforce school safety rules
- communicates directly and respectfully when there is a question or a concern with a colleague or an administrator

### ***Procurement and Sustainability Guidelines***

YES believes deeply in walking the talk and creating the change we want to see in the world. We demonstrate that as individuals and as a community through;

- purchasing local, sustainable products
- purchasing quality made materials, equipment and products that last vs disposable low quality options
- using as few resources as possible including copy paper, while still maintaining learning best practices and outcomes
- reusing and reducing waste whenever possible prior to buying new products
- recycling in school and at all school sponsored functions
- using low-emissions transportation as much as possible
- purchasing local food as much as possible
- purchasing only 100% recycled paper, toilet paper, paper towels and other paper products

### ***Student/Teacher Relationship***

The teacher student relationship is unique to each individual. Connection, respect and understanding foster learning, creativity, and the safety to grow and develop to one's full capacity.

As educators we care for students and form connections and relationships. A healthy relationship dynamic between students and teachers is built upon the premise that teachers are friendly but not friends. This can be explained by demonstrating the difference between private and public relationships. Private relationships usually encompass our family and friends, where our imperfections tend to be

accepted. We generally have these relationships on an “as is” basis. We expect not to be judged, and we expect loyalty—love in a broad sense is the “currency.” Public relationships, on the other hand, encompass everyone else. In public relationships, reciprocity is the “currency.” We expect respect and gain it by being accountable for our actions. At all times, the teacher/student relationship is a caring one, a relationship that requires great patience and understanding, yet public and based on mutual respect.

It is also important to note that in adult friendships, age differences do not matter. Adult friends have equal power to retain personal identity and shape the course of the friendship, including its dissolution, if necessary.

School children, however, do not have that equal influence on growing relationships, and they are vulnerable. Adults are in positions of authority, and this creates greater influence on children than it does on other adults.

We need to maintain balance and boundaries with students to support their growth and development but not use the relationship to support our needs as adults. It is critical that teachers understand the distinction between private and public relationships and act accordingly for the betterment of the students, parents, and community they serve.

### ***Parent Communication***

Regular, positive communication with parents is essential to building a partnership together in support of student learning, well-being, and community. This includes exchange of information regarding logistics, academic and social emotional growth areas and successes, and appropriate teacher-parent relationship building to get to know backgrounds, interests and values.

### **Platforms**

Communication best practice is in person or via email. Personal phones need not be used except in emergencies.

### **Frequency**

Weekly and quarterly updates pertaining to ILP goals and progress. Daily greetings.

### **Teacher-Parent Conflict Resolution Procedure**

The staff at YES recognize the desire of the parent body to have a voice in the educational process of their children. The following procedure is to help facilitate a positive learning environment in which good problem solving skills are utilized and modeled for our students. When a conflict arises between a parent and a staff member of YES, the following steps should be taken; the issue must not be discussed with other parents or staff in the school, but should be dealt with one on one. Most problems can be resolved in this manner.

1. The parent should arrange a meeting with the staff member to discuss their concerns and attempt to come to a mutually agreed upon solution.
2. If mutually agreed closure is not reached, the parent may arrange a meeting with the School Director of YES. In this meeting the parent should discuss the attempts that have been made to settle the problem with the staff member. The School Director, at their discretion, may invite the staff member to be present.

3. If there is still no closure, the parent may request a meeting with the School Director. The School Director, staff member, and parent may be present at this meeting. The Executive Direction has three options:
  - Remand the conflict back to the School Director, with a directive to find a reasonable and quick resolution.
  - Remand the conflict back to the two parties, with the School Director mediating the conflict.
  - Mediate the conflict and render a decision to resolve the conflict.

If any conflict involves individual safety, a threat to the preservation or security of YES's facilities, or a direct or blatant violation of school policies or procedures, the board shall be notified immediately by the school School Director, school personnel, or member.

### **Custody Disputes**

Co-Parenting is challenging and is often emotional where conflicts arise and subjective information is provided by each parent.

We want to provide kids with a safe, neutral learning environment. Educators will document in writing any relevant information about physical or emotional experiences shared by parents that may inform understanding of a student's well-being and mindset at school. Teachers are not responsible for the safety and well-being of students that originates from the home or neighborhood. We support safety and well-being as much as possible through communication and healthy modeling while at school, but this is ultimately the responsibility of parents and the state, outside of the classroom.

Intake of information about first person experiences should be encouraged with parents. If a parent communicates concerns about another parent, they should be encouraged to talk to child protective services or an attorney. Teachers should avoid becoming involved in family disputes and act as a neutral champion for the academic and healthy emotional development for the student while at school bearing in mind the distinction between private and public relationships.

### **Communication of Records**

It is the policy of YES that the school presumes that the person(s) who enrolls a student in school and who is listed on the enrollment application and contract is/ are the residential parent/guardian(s) of the student and that the residential parent/guardian(s) is responsible for decisions regarding the day-to-day care and control of the student.

The school, unless informed otherwise, assumes that (1) there are no restrictions regarding the nonresidential parent's/guardian's right to be kept informed of the student's school progress and activities; (2) the residential parent and nonresidential parent have the right to make joint decisions about the YESn of the student; and (3) either parent may make emergency decisions affecting the health or safety of the student. If restrictions are made relative to the above rights, the residential parent/guardian needs to submit a signed copy of the court order which curtails these right(s) to the School Director.

Unless there are court-imposed restrictions, the nonresidential parent/guardian, upon request, will be given educational records, including but not limited to, academic reports, notices of school activities, reports of disciplinary actions, or notices of teacher or administrator conferences or summaries.

If there is a court order and/or parenting plan on file with the school that restricts and/or prohibits a student's contact with any parent or other person, or allocates decision-making authority between parents, the school will abide by the terms of that court order and/or parenting plan.

### ***Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) - Learning Metrics***

YES uses Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) as roadmaps for each student's YESn plan. They document student learning, stakeholder observations and priorities, and social, emotional, and academic goals. ILPs are created in partnership with students, parents, and teachers and are a structure to document planned action to achieve goals, and measure growth and proficiency. ILPs are developed during conferences prior to each learning arc and are used to revise goals and measure growth throughout the year with students, parents, and educators. Their intention is to capture each student's unique learning needs and interests, strengths and opportunities for growth so that students, parents and teachers are clear and invested in academic and social-emotional goals with a place where proficiency and growth can be measured.

### ***Supervision, Evaluation, and Professional Growth***

Reflective practice is a hallmark of YES . In keeping with this core value shared by faculty and staff, the formal system of evaluation used to support employees in their professional growth is reviewed annually and adjusted according to the needs of individual members of the faculty and with the School Director.

Evaluations are conducted to assess an employee's contribution towards meeting the mission of the school; including student academic learning outcomes, student social and emotional growth and development, and community engagement and impact. To measure and reflect upon contributions and opportunities for growth, administration will use a qualitative assessment of curriculum taught, academic and well-being proficiencies and learning outcomes gained, effective teaching strategies, and community project engagement and outcomes. The system of supervision, evaluation, and professional growth for faculty members will be conducted at least once per academic year per person and includes classroom observations, written self-reflection, and discussion of successes/challenges/recommendations for support based on expectations delineated within this Handbook.

### ***Work Week and Hours***

The teacher work week is Monday through Friday. Fridays are reserved for planning and meeting days. The academic day for students begins at 8:30 am and ends at 4:00 pm, Monday-Thursday. Students may arrive at 8:30 am while educators are preparing for the day and use designated facilities or participate in undistruptive activities. Fridays are planning and meeting days for all staff.

Full time educators must arrive no later than 8am and leave once all students are gone and space is cleaned and organized Monday through Thursday. Full time educators should be available for meetings, trainings, and communication via email and Slack from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm on Fridays, unless given written permission by the School Director ahead of time. Other temporary employees or contracted employees must arrive prepared prior to work time with students and leave when all necessary process and conclusion of work is complete. This time should be budgeted in paid planning time allocation.

### ***Calendar***

The academic school year for 2024/25 begins August 21 2024 and ends June 5th 2025. Teachers are contracted to begin work on August 21st and end work June 11th in order to include beginning of the year training, set-up, and planning and end of the year reflection and clean up. A master calendar will be provided.

### ***Paychecks***

Paychecks are issued monthly on the 15th of each month and will be direct deposited. If an employee is terminated for any reason, the employee's final wages (including discretionary time off and sick time off, where applicable), such employee's wages will be paid on the next regular payday, or within fifteen days of the employee's separation from YES, whichever occurs first.

### ***Employment of Substitutes***

Substitute teachers must be interviewed, background checked, and pre-approved by the School Director or their designee prior to their first day of substitution. Upon approval by administrators, administration and educators will provide necessary training and information to begin employment at YES .

### ***Personnel Records and Employee References***

Employees have a right to inspect certain documents in their own personnel file, as provided by law, in the presence of a YES representative at a mutually convenient time. No copies of documents in the personnel file may be made, with the exception of documents that have been previously signed. An employee may add comments to any disputed item in their file.

YES will restrict disclosure of personnel files to authorized individuals within YES . Any request for information from personnel files must be directed to the School Director. All inquiries regarding employees who are currently employed or who have been previously employed by YES are to be referred to the School Director or School Director. Frequently, an employer will inquire about an employer's character or abilities. This information is considered confidential and will not be released. The School Director or School Director will only provide confirmation of information provided by the employee or former employee to a third party. That information is limited to dates of employment and job title. The only exception to the above statement is that YES may release salary information to credit institutions when such information will assist the employee in securing credit, provided the request for salary information is made in writing and the employee authorizes the release of the information.

### ***Termination of Employment***

Unless subject to a contract for a specific term, employees are hired for an indefinite tenure. YES expects that an employee wishing to resign shall give two weeks advance notice to YES . Following completion of an employee's probationary period, the employee may be terminated for any reasonable, job-related ground, including without limitation, the employee's material or repeated violations of the express provisions of YES policies (including this handbook), a failure to satisfactorily perform the employee's job duties, the employee's disruption of YES 's operations, or other legitimate business reasons as determined by YES , as determined by YES while exercising its reasonable business judgment. Discharged employees shall be notified, either electronically or in writing, of the grievance procedure described above no later than fourteen (14) days after their termination.

### ***Grounds for Termination without Notice***

YES reserves the right to immediately terminate an employee without notice in the following, non-exclusive list of situations:

1. Falsification of employment records, employment information or other YES records
2. Theft, deliberate or careless damage or destruction of any YES property or the property of any employee, student or visitor
3. Removing or borrowing YES property without prior authorization
4. Unauthorized use of YES equipment, time, materials, or facilities
5. Provoking a fight or fighting during working hours or on YES property
6. Participating in inappropriate horseplay or practical jokes on YES time or on YES premises
7. Carrying firearms or any other dangerous weapons on YES premises at any time
8. Engaging in criminal conduct whether or not related to job performance
9. Causing, creating or participating in a disruption of any kind during working hours on YES property
10. Insubordination, including, but not limited to, failure or refusal to follow the instructions of an administrator, or the use of abusive or threatening language toward an administrator
11. Using abusive language at any time on YES premises
12. Inappropriate or unprofessional communications with students or parents or YES employees
13. Failure to notify an administrator when unable to report to work
14. Unreported absence of two (2) consecutive scheduled workdays
15. Failure to obtain permission to leave work for any reason during normal working hours
16. Failure to observe working schedules, including rest and lunch periods
17. Failure to provide a physician's certificate when requested or required to do so
18. Sleeping or malingering on the job
19. Working overtime without authorization or refusing to work assigned overtime
20. Wearing extreme, unprofessional or inappropriate styles of dress while working - for further clarification regarding appropriate dress, see below or speak with the School Director
21. Violation of any safety, health, security or YES policies, rules or procedures
22. Committing a fraudulent act or a breach of trust under any circumstances
23. Unlawful harassment
24. Inappropriate touching of any student or faculty

YES may discipline employee by oral reprimand, written reprimand, discipline:

1. Carelessness or negligence in the performance of an assigned duty or in the care and use of YES property;
2. Failure to report an absence in accordance with the attendance and leave policies;
3. Absenteeism or tardiness in reporting to work or returning from rest periods or meal periods;
4. Inefficient, substandard or negligent performance of an assigned duty or responsibility;
5. Smoking in prohibited areas;
6. Impermissible gambling on YES's premises;
7. Using offensive language or indulging in malicious gossip;
8. Leaving the YES's premises during work hours without permission;

9. Unauthorized absence;
10. Collection of funds or solicitation for any purpose whatsoever on working time unless expressly authorized by YES 's School Director or School Director;
11. Distribution of literature, leaflets, notices, petitions of any outside organization during work hours or in work areas unless authorized by YES 's School Director or School Director;
12. Disregard of safety rules;
13. Discourtesy to one's fellow employees or to the public in any manner;
14. Unauthorized release of YES information;
15. Participation in, or silence regarding any illegal activities connected with the workplace.  
Knowledge of any activities should be reported to employee's supervisor or the next management level;
16. Indulging in any behavior either on or off the job that has a negative impact on YES 's image, business goals or programs;
17. Failure to immediately report any work related injury, disease or accident to the Employer; or
18. Violation of YES 's work rules, policies or procedures.

## **Workplace Safety**

### ***Background Information***

Each prospective employee must undergo a background investigation prior to beginning employment. In addition, all employees should inform YES of all convictions that have not been annulled.

The background investigation may also include other investigatory tools. These may include but shall not be limited to formal and informal investigations of references, motor vehicle histories, credit histories, etc., as may be relevant to the job position held.

The fees and associated costs for background investigations shall be paid by YES .

### **Consent and Confidentiality**

Background investigations will be conducted upon receipt of a signed consent form. Records and information received shall be held in the strictest of confidence on a need-to-know basis.

### **Conditional Employment**

Offers of employment are conditional, pending a successful completion of the background investigation process.

Like existing employees, all persons employed under a conditional offer of employment will be eligible for coverage based on the terms and conditions of the relevant health and other insurance programs. Any such coverage will immediately cease, and will not be subject to extension under COBRA, if the conditional offer does not become a final offer of employment by reason of application of this policy.

**Ongoing Duty to Report**

As a condition of continued employment, all employees must report to the School Director or School Director if any such employee or any resident is convicted of a crime. Failure to make such a disclosure shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal in the sole discretion of the School. Reports of any convictions will not necessarily result in automatic suspension or termination of employment and/or residency; however, YES shall take such action it deems necessary to safeguard the well-being of its students and employees.

**Questions**

Any questions about this Criminal Background Investigation Policy should be directed to the School Director or School Director.

***Public Health Policy***

Parents, educators and staff should notify the School Director with any development of infectious symptoms to discuss risk to others, direction to avoid contact, and should stay home while sick to prevent the spread of infection to others. Masks must be worn if collectively decided amongst staff and School Director to reduce risk of infection through pandemics or flu season.

In addition, educators and staff should wash hands regularly and cover and treat any open wounds accordingly.

***Smoke-free Workplace***

YES will comply with all state and city smoking regulations. Employees may not smoke on campus.

***Building Guidelines***

In the school's ongoing attempt to provide and maintain safe working conditions for all employees, YES strives to comply with all applicable health and safety laws and regulations. All employees are responsible for practicing safe work habits to assure the safety of themselves and their fellow employees, to report immediately any health or safety hazards to the School Director, and to keep their work area free of dirt, paper or other material which could create a health or safety hazard.

All employees will encourage, and assist as needed, all students to practice health and safety habits as appropriate.

***Floor and Walkway Care***

After breaks and lunch times all food droppings, wrappers, and spills must be cleaned up. Spills on carpet areas must be cleaned immediately. Use a sponge to clean as much as possible and contact the facilities director to coordinate final clean-up. Do not use markers or paint to write on floors.

***Open Flames***

Safety codes prohibit burning open flames or incense in any school buildings except for science labs with adequate exhaust systems.

**Restroom Use**

Always wash your hands after each visit. Place paper towels in trash cans only; do not place paper towels in toilets.

**Power Tool Use**

Any use of power tools must be used in accordance with manufacturers instructions and recommendations and returned to its proper location.

**Serving of Alcohol for Campus Events**

As an educational organization, we do not promote drugs or alcohol and can celebrate events and learning without. The school recognizes that there are certain small to moderate sized administrative and trustee-organized social events for parents on campus for which the serving of beer or wine is desired. Our policy is that these events be for less than 100 people, that no students be on campus during the events, and that all bottles or cans be recycled immediately off campus.

The request for the serving of beer or wine must be approved well in advance by the School Director.

**Recycling**

The school recycles all mixed papers, cardboard, plastic bottles and aluminum. Recycle bins are located throughout the building. Please support this practice with designating students to help and keep receptacles clean and emptied. We want to practice awareness of and responsibility for our waste and look for ways to create a closed loop resource use system.

**Security**

The following security considerations are offered to help maintain a secure workplace:

- Be sure to inform School Director, Head of Student Support, team members of any changes in class schedule or location.
- Be aware of persons loitering for no apparent reason (e.g., in parking areas, walkways, entrances/exits and service areas), and report any suspicious persons or activities.
- Electronics should be secure at the end of the day or when an employee is not present in the work area for an extended length of time. Do not leave valuable and/or personal articles in or around work stations that may be accessible.
- The buildings may have cameras installed to monitor activity.

**Emergency Procedure**

See [Emergency Procedure Document](#).

**Illegal Activity**

YES is committed to conducting its academic and administrative responsibilities in an ethical and lawful manner and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. YES depends on its faculty, academic

professionals and staff to share in this responsibility through the timely reporting of suspected illegal activity.

“Illegal activity” ranges from conduct commonly and clearly understood to be criminal in nature and potentially punishable by imprisonment, such as burglary and assault, to acts which may more likely result in fines or penalties under federal, state or local law, such as possession or use of alcohol or controlled substances.

**While faculty and staff should report any potentially illegal activity, such activity which poses a threat to the safety of anyone is of particular concern and should be reported immediately to the School Director.**

### ***Substance Misuse***

YES is concerned about the use of alcohol, marijuana, illegal drugs or controlled substances as it affects the workplace and because it is a symptom of ill-health for team members we care about. Use of these substances whether on or off the job can adversely affect an employee’s mental and physical health, relationships, work performance, efficiency, safety and health and therefore seriously impair an employee’s value to YES . In addition, the use or possession of these substances on the job constitutes a potential danger to the welfare and safety of other employees and the students and exposes YES to the risks of property loss or damage, or injury to other persons. Furthermore, the use of prescription drugs and/or over-the-counter drugs also may affect an employee’s job performance and seriously impair the employee’s value to YES .

The following rules and standards of conduct apply to all employees either on YES property or during the workday (including meals and rest periods) and are strictly prohibited by YES :

- i. Possession or use of drugs or alcohol, or being under the influence of alcohol while on the job
- ii. Driving a vehicle in the service of YES while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- iii. Distribution, sale or purchase of an illegal or controlled substance while on the job
- iv. Possession or use of an illegal or controlled substance, or being under the influence of an illegal or controlled substance while on the job

Violation of the above rules and standards of conduct will not be tolerated. YES also may bring infractions to the attention of appropriate law enforcement authorities.

In order to enforce this policy, YES reserves the right to conduct searches of YES property or employees and/or their personal property while on the work site, and to implement other measures necessary to deter and detect abuse of this policy.

An employee’s conviction on a charge of illegal sale or possession of any controlled substance while off YES property will not be tolerated because such conduct, even though off duty, reflects adversely on YES . In addition, YES must keep people who sell or possess controlled substances off YES ’s premises in order to keep the controlled substances themselves off the premises.

Any employee who is using prescription or over-the-counter drugs that may impair the employee's ability to safely perform the job, or affect the safety or well-being of others, must notify an administrator of such use immediately before starting or resuming work.

YES will encourage and reasonably accommodate employees with chemical dependencies (alcohol or drug) to seek treatment and/or rehabilitation. To this end, employees desiring such assistance should request a treatment or rehabilitation leave. YES is not obligated, however, to continue to employ any person whose performance of essential job duties is impaired because of drug or alcohol use, nor is YES obligated to re-employ any person who has participated in treatment and/or rehabilitation if that person's job performance remains impaired as a result of dependency. Additionally, employees who are given the opportunity to seek treatment and/or rehabilitation but fail to successfully overcome their dependency or problem will not automatically be given a second opportunity to seek treatment and/or rehabilitation. This policy on treatment and rehabilitation is not intended to affect YES's treatment of employees who violate the regulations described above. Rather, rehabilitation is an option for an employee who acknowledges a chemical dependency and voluntarily seeks treatment to end that dependency.

### ***Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect***

Montana law mandates that every employee who works directly with children has a legal duty to understand the requirements to report suspected child abuse:

Educators should understand and follow [MT DPHHS School Child Abuse and Neglect Guidelines](#).

An employee who suspects child abuse must also speak with the School Director or Head of Student Support, who can make the report on behalf of the employee and the school, or who can assist the employee on the procedures in making a report to the authorities. Any employee who makes a report of suspected abuse must also advise the School Director. By reporting the suspicion or knowledge of child abuse quickly to the administration and the appropriate authorities, the child is protected from further injury and our school and the employee are protected against civil and criminal liability for failing to report such instances. Two (2) or more employees who have a duty to report can agree that one (1) of them shall report the suspicion or knowledge. Verification of this agreement should be in writing designating the person who is to report. Reports of suspected child abuse must remain confidential. Each employee will be required to fill out [required documentation](#) about the child abuse.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CBdSZUCjNgbFCZ0Ca95DWdwj7plx7-siBx1X2Gwsg2M/prefill>

If you suspect abuse or neglect or if you are in receipt of information regarding child abuse/neglect or suspected abuse/neglect please follow these steps:

- i. Contact the School Director or Head of Student Support directly.
- ii. Gather all relevant and available information from individuals\* involved in bringing this information forward in addition to consulting with professional organizations

*\*if information is brought to you by a teacher or staff member advise them to keep this information confidential and because it is confidential they will not be privy to any further information.*

- iii. Make the report to the state of Montana. There is no legal requirement or expectation that the mandated reporter notify parents that a report has been filed. In some cases notifying parents could be counterproductive, thus we do not expect or require that parents be informed. However, depending on the circumstances parents MAY be notified if we ascertain that notification is in the best interest of the child.
- iv. Those who have knowledge of the report having been made should be as few in number as possible on a need to know basis to support students. Ideally, at a maximum, those involved should be the educator witness or reporter and the School Director.

### ***Workplace Guidelines***

#### ***Parking***

YES locations in Livingston have no assigned parking at this time. All employees must find parking and be responsible to move vehicles every two hours to avoid a parking ticket if parking in the immediate downtown vicinity. Out of respect for our business neighbors, employees should park in residential or public parking lots.

#### ***Dress Code***

YES 's goal with regard to workplace appearance is to present, at all times, a professional, clean, self-respecting, mature demeanor to our students, our parents, and the public. All employees are expected to reflect these values in their attire. Clothing should also be appropriate for the activity whether it is a meeting with parents or field study. Garments displaying politically charged themes, questionable language or images are prohibited. Faculty is expected to dress appropriate to the occasion and the specifics of their daily duties in the school. The School Director reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of professional dress attire at YES .

#### ***Attendance***

Faculty attendance is expected for each scheduled student school day throughout the September through June academic year as well as scheduled collaborative work days before and after the academic year to prepare and conclude business.

#### ***Communication Policies***

YES provides access to the internet and a school-issued email account to its employees. Employees are to maintain a professional manner while using their school-provided access to the internet, keep to an absolute minimum the amount of time spent on personal matters while at work, and avoid visiting websites that are inappropriate for viewing in the workplace. Unless written approval is received, do not refer to the school or any of its students, families, or employees outside the realm of school business.

#### ***Email/Voicemail/Mail***

All employees should check their YES email, and at least bi-weekly during the summer for faculty. All school employees are expected to return calls and respond to email within two business days, and

preferably sooner (for example: an email sent on Thursday morning should be responded to by the end of day on Friday. An email received on Friday morning should be responded to by end of day on Monday). Some communiques will warrant an immediate response, even as a placeholder that a more considered response will be forthcoming. In the case of planned absences, employees should use the “out of office” feature on their email and change their voicemail to indicate whom to contact in their absence and the date of their return.

There are times when a parent, student, or colleague might leave a message or send an email that is unsettling. In those cases, employees should be sure to pause to reflect before responding in a way that might inaccurately—or accurately—reflect their frustration or offense. Additionally, it is generally wise to confer with the School Director or School Director before responding to an email that has been upsetting, as a terse or offensive response, no matter how warranted it might seem, will usually result in the School Director’s involvement in succeeding conversations.

### **YES.life Email Accounts**

YES.life emails are the property of the school and are not an employee’s private property. Emails may be opened, read, and/or copied by an authorized administrator. YES hosts email accounts for active employees of the school only. Upon termination of employment with the school, the email accounts and all emails and information in the accounts will no longer be available to past employees.

### **Inquiries from the Media**

If any employee is contacted by a member of the media to speak on behalf of the school for an article or news piece, refer the individual to the school’s School Director or use best judgment. If pushed for a comment or response, answer honestly and respond that you will return their call or email when you have accurate information.

### **Social Media**

Blogs, podcasts, and social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn offer members of the YES community an opportunity to connect, communicate, and extend learning. However, use of online tools requires diligence and responsibility. We seek to reinforce these ideals through age-appropriate curriculum that focuses on developing ethical behavior, building empathy, understanding privacy, and establishing a tone of decency in all communications. Any misuse of social media, including cyberbullying, compromises these goals and can result in disciplinary action.

Publishing work, photos, or ideas on the Internet is a very public activity. All members of the community—including faculty, staff, students, families, and other members of the YES community—should carefully consider the unintended consequences of anything published. If it would be uncomfortable to have an employer, parent, or college admission officer view the material, don’t publish it. Even if something is deleted after publishing, it could be found on the web years later. Additionally,

anyone can access the Internet and view a blog, wiki, or social media page. Even if the page is “protected,” there is nothing to stop others from copying the material and placing it on other web pages.

Faculty members who film, photograph, or record school events must exercise caution when posting images or clips; some YES families have explicitly requested privacy and are listed on the annual “Do Not Photograph” (DNP) list. Please only use first names and last initials to identify YES students who are cleared to photograph or film.

#### **Social media policies:**

- Faculty and staff cannot “friend” or accept as “friends” current students
- Faculty and staff must first obtain permission from the appropriate school director before posting or sharing photos, videos, or information that identifies YES, its students, faculty, or staff on any website outside of the school-maintained website, including teacher pages that are hosted on non-YES servers, or as an electronic file for others to reuse
- Students that are on the annual “Do Not Photograph” (DNP) list should never be photographed or videotaped for public use, even if they would like to allow it
- When creating a podcast, do not record anyone without his or her consent or awareness

#### **Additional Social Media Guidelines:**

As an educator you are a public figure in the community and may be held to different standards. Be mindful that what you share publicly can be perceived as representative of YES.

Use restraint and discretion when interacting with families via social media. Faculty and staff are not obligated or encouraged to accept “friend” requests from parents.

#### **School Computers**

YES strives to offer full-time teachers excellent resources, and foremost among these is a school-owned computer. The following are expected norms when using a school issued computer or laptop:

- i. The computer or laptop is provided solely for school-related work, and will only be supported as such.
- ii. All files and data on the computer are the responsibility of the employee. Computers do crash and data can be erased. Please be responsible about backing up data.
- iii. iii. As the computer is school-owned, it may periodically be monitored or taken for maintenance. While we will absolutely try to work within teacher’s schedules, please do not do anything to interfere with these operations. This includes deleting the Admin account on the computer or changing the account password.
- iv. iv. Please keep computers and laptops clean. Any stickers/labels etc. placed on the computer must be **completely** removed at the end of the year.
- v. v. Employees are welcome to take the computer to or from YES, but please keep in mind that you are wholly responsible for the computer. You will be held accountable for damages and lost parts—including chargers and LCD adapters. You are provided with one (1) charger and one (1) LCD adapter. Should these be lost or stolen, you will be responsible for replacing them. The approximate cost for a charger is \$80 and LCD adapter is \$30. Both are available at any local

Apple Store. If your computer is damaged and requires repair, you will be held responsible for the cost of the repair. This includes repairs for drops, dents, spills or other accidents. A serious repair will cost approximately \$1200.

- vi. Employees are required to return laptop computers, peripherals, and any other equipment that is the property of YES upon termination of employment.

### ***Student Fundraising***

Students are supported in developing their social consciousness and responsibility as active citizens. To monitor the number of fundraising activities by students, individual fundraising or collections is not allowed.

Students with specific ideas are asked to discuss their plan with their teacher and work with their class to develop the idea. Fundraisers should align with aesthetic, environmental, and social values of the school.

### ***Expense and Reimbursement Policies***

YES will pay all budgeted and approved school-related expenses incurred by employees in the performance of their job responsibilities. Employees must obtain authorization for all such expenses before they will be paid by YES.

### ***Maintaining Professionalism***

Maintaining professionalism in our community is critical to success as an employee at YES. To maintain that professionalism, we ask that all employees avoid crossing boundaries that might compromise their professional objectivity and send confusing messages to parents, students, and other school constituents. Restraint and discretion should be the norm and any employee should consult with his or her direct supervisor prior to contact of this nature.

Listed below are some examples of activities that YES considers inappropriate for a professional and which are not sanctioned by the school:

- Spending time or contacting one's students outside of school without the parents' permission
- Representing the school or using the school logo without permission
- Soliciting parents or students for gifts, gratuities, or special favors
- "Cyberbullying" any parent, student, employee, or affiliate of YES, which is defined as willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices.

### ***Benefits***

#### ***Health Care***

Health Care benefits are included as a benefit to all full-time employees. An organization health plan is offered as an opt-in benefit. YES will pay up to \$500 for a low-deductible health care plan. No health care stipend will be paid in lieu of a plan if staff choose to opt out. Staff spouses and kids may also use the plan but must pay for the policy.

#### ***Life Insurance***

A life insurance plan is optional and staff may opt in and contribute through payroll.

**Retirement**

YES staff have access to setting up a retirement plan and may contribute through payroll.

**Vacation and Time off**

During the teaching year, the school will be closed during the scheduled winter break, spring break, and any other school holidays as determined by the School Master Calendar, and faculty are not expected on campus. Faculty members who have completed all expected and/or assigned work may begin summer break after the last scheduled meeting in June, returning to campus for the first scheduled meeting in August. Requests for additional time off must be approved in advance by the school director and fit within the policies outlined in this handbook.

The School will be closed to observe the following holidays and breaks:

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Break

Winter Break

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

President's Day

Spring Break

Memorial Day

Independence Day

During the twelve (12) month fiscal year, September to August, all administrative staff members receive the scheduled winter break, the scheduled spring break, and any other school holidays as determined by the School Master Calendar.

Please note: any celebrations, training, or self-improvement activities of a personal, rather than professional, nature should occur during the weeks when school is not in session.

**Religious Holidays**

An employee may request time off to attend religious services and/or observe religious holidays. YES will attempt to make reasonable accommodations of the requests of faculty and staff based upon the needs of the school. Employees must notify the School Director at least two (2) weeks in advance of such holiday. Employees requesting time off for a religious service or observance may be requested to work on a non-religious holiday.

**Time Off Around Holidays and Vacations**

Faculty are expected to work their last scheduled workday preceding a holiday or start of a vacation period and also work their first scheduled workday following the holiday or completion of vacation period unless prior approval has been granted based on a verified illness or emergency that prevented the employee from working the full scheduled workday(s). "Vacation Period" includes Thanksgiving vacation, Winter Break, Spring Break, and Summer Break. "Summer Break" is defined as beginning on the first day after the last scheduled faculty meeting in June and ending on the day of the first scheduled faculty

meeting in August. Faculty who take time off preceding or following a holiday or start of a vacation period for personal reasons without prior approval will not be paid and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Non-teaching, administrative staff members are also generally expected to work on the days immediately prior to and following scheduled school breaks. Because office work, specifically, sometimes requires non-teaching staff members to be present and/or working during winter, spring, or other breaks, they may at times allow for more flexibility. All offices must be staffed appropriately on days when school is in session.

### **Sick Leave**

Employees of YES are eligible for five (5) paid sick days if leave is unforeseeable due to illness. The employee must provide notice of illness as soon as practicable, either verbally or in writing. YES may require verification of illness such as a doctor's release to work or receipts of hospital stays or other documents.

Any extended time off (i.e. more than five days) required for illness is unpaid leave. If time off for illness is extended beyond five consecutive days, YES will require verification of illness such as a doctor's release to work or receipts of hospital stays or other documents that demonstrate verification for absences lasting five consecutive work days or more. Sick time beyond the 5 days will be treated as unpaid leave.

### **Discretionary Time Off**

The school's policies relating to time away from work are based on a basic belief in the professionalism of educators and with the expectation that a teacher's primary concern is the YESn of the students with whom he or she works.

YES pays for 2 discretionary days off for personal use. Please request days off in writing from the School Director as soon as possible.

### **Accrued and Unused Time Off**

If an employee's employment with YES is terminated for any reason, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, and the employee has accrued but unused time off, the employee will be paid for those days on their final paycheck.

### ***Workers' Compensation Insurance***

YES, in accordance with state law, provides insurance coverage for employees in case of work-related injury. The workers' compensation benefits provided to injured employees may include:

- i. Medical care
- ii. Cash benefits, tax free, to replace lost wages
- iii. Vocational rehabilitation to help qualified injured employees return to suitable employment

To ensure an employee receives any workers' compensation benefits to which he or she may be entitled, the employee will need to:

- i. immediately report any work-related injury to his or her administrator and the human resources manager;
- ii. seek medical treatment and follow-up care if required;
- iii. complete a written Employee's Claim Form for Workers Compensation Benefits and return it to the human resources manager;
- iv. provide YES with a certification from a health care provider regarding the need for workers' compensation disability leave and the employee's ability to eventually return to work from the leave.

Under most circumstances, upon submission of a medical certification that an employee is able to return to work from a workers' compensation leave, the employee will be reinstated to his or her same position held at the time the leave began, or to an equivalent position, if available. An employee returning from a workers' compensation leave has no greater right to reinstatement than if the employee had been continuously employed rather than on leave. For example, if the employee on workers' compensation leave would have been laid off had he or she not gone on leave, or if the employee's position has been eliminated or filled in order to avoid undermining YES's ability to operate safely and efficiently during the leave, and there are no equivalent or comparable positions available, then the employee would not be entitled to reinstatement.

**Employee Handbook Receipt and  
Acknowledgement**

YES is committed to creating and sustaining an inclusive, multicultural community that fosters a deliberate respect for all. All community members are responsible for ensuring a tone of decency and trust.

**By signing below, we acknowledge that we have read, understand, and agree to all terms within this Employee Handbook.**

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Employee Name

---

Employee Signature

---

Date

---

School Director Name

---

School Director Signature

---

Date

---

School Director Name

---

School Director Signature

---

Date

## **APPENDIX B: Bylaws**

### Yellowstone Experiential School Public Charter Bylaws

#### ARTICLE I Purposes

#### ARTICLE II Offices

Section I. Principal Office

Section 2. Other Offices

#### ARTICLE III Membership

Section 1. Sole Statutory Member

Section 2. Associates

#### ARTICLE IV Board of Trustees

Section 1. Powers

Section 2. Number of Trustees

Section 3. Appointment and Term of Office

Section 4. Resignation and Removal

Section 5. Vacancies

Section 6. Place of Meeting 4

Section 7. Annual Meeting 4

Section 8. Regular Meetings 4

Section 9. Special Meetings 4

Section 10. Notice of Special Meetings 5

Section 11. Quorum 5

Section 12. Consent to Meetings 6

Section 13. Action Without Meeting..... Error! Bookmark not defined.

Section 14. Telephonic and Electronic Video Meetings 5

Section 15. Adjournment. 6

Section 16. Rights of Inspection 6

Section 17. Board Committees 6

Section 18. Other Committees 7

Section 19. Fees and Compensation8

Section 20. Non-liability of Trustees 9

Section 21. Restriction on Board Authority 9

Section 22. Interested Persons 9

Section 24. Self-Dealing Transactions 10

Section 25. Interested Trustee's Vote	11
Section 26. Persons Liable and Extent of Liability	11
Section 27. Contracts or Transactions With Mutual Trustees	12
Section 28. Corporate Loans and Advances	12
Section 29. Annual Report	12
Section 30. Annual Statement of Certain Transactions and Indemnifications	12
 ARTICLE V Officers	13
Section 1. Officers.....,	13
Section 2. Appointment of Officers	13
Section 3. Subordinate Officers	14
Section 4. Chainnan of the Board	14
Section 5. President/Chief Executive Officer.....,	14
Section 6. Vice President.	14
Section 7. Secretary.....,	14
Section 8. Chief Financial Officer.	15
Section 9. Removal and Resignation	15
Section 10. Vacancies	15
 ARTICLE VI Indemnification.,,,	15
Section 1. Definitions	15
Section 2. Indemnification in Actions by Third Parties	16
Section 3. Indemnification in Actions by or in the Right of the Corporation	16
Section 4. Indemnification Against Expenses	17
Section 5. Required Determinations	17
Section 6. Advance ofExpenses.....,	17
Section 7. Other Indemnification	17
Section 8. Forms of Indemnification Not Permitted	18
Section 9. Insurance	18
Section 10. Non-applicability to Fiduciaries of Employee Benefit Plans	18
 ARTICLE VII Miscellaneous .....,	18
Section 1. Fiscal Year	18
Section 2. Inspection of Corporate Records	19
Section 3. Voting Shares	19
Section 4. Checks, Drafts, Etc.....,	19
Section 5. Endorsement or Execution of Documents and Contracts	19

ARTICLE VIII Effective Date and Amendments 20

Section 1. Effective Date 20

Section 2. Amendments 20

BYLAWS OF

A MONTANA NONPROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION

ARTICLE I

Purposes

The corporation is a nonprofit public benefit corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person. It is organized for the public and educational purposes specified in its Articles of incorporation.

ARTICLE II

Offices

Section 1. Principal Office.

The corporation's principal office shall be 129 S Main Street, Livingston, MT 59047, The Board of Trustees ("Board") is granted full power and authority to change the principal office from one location to another within Montana.

Section 2. Other Offices.

Branch or subordinate offices may at any time be established by the Board at any place or places where the corporation is qualified to do business.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Section 1. Sole Statutory Member.

Unless and until these bylaws are amended to provide otherwise, Yellowstone Experiential School Public Charter, a Montana nonprofit public benefit corporation, shall be the sole statutory member of this corporation (the "Statutory Member") as the term "member" is defined in MCA Title 35 Chapter 2 of Montana Nonprofit Corporation Law. The membership of the Statutory Member in the corporation is not transferable.

Section 2. Associates.

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to limit the corporation's right to refer to persons associated with it as "members" even though such persons are not members, and no such reference by the corporation shall render anyone a member within the meaning of Montana Nonprofit Corporation Law. Such individuals may originate and take part in the discussion of any subject that may properly come before any meeting of the Board, but may not vote. The corporation may confer, by amendment of its Articles of Incorporation or of these Bylaws, some or all of a member's rights, set forth in the Montana Nonprofit Corporation Law, upon any person who does not have the right to vote for the election of trustees/directors, on a disposition of substantially all of the assets of the corporation, on a merger, on a dissolution, or on changes to the corporation's Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws, but no such person shall be a member within the meaning of said Section 5056.

#### ARTICLE IV

##### Board of Trustees

##### Section I. Powers.

Subject to the limitations of the Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, the corporation's Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws, the activities and affairs of the corporation shall be conducted and all corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board. The Board may delegate the management of the corporation's activities to any person(s), management company or committees, however composed, provided that the activities and affairs of the corporation shall be managed and all corporate powers shall be exercised under the ultimate direction of the Board. No assignment, referral or delegation of authority by the Board or anyone acting under such delegation shall preclude the Board from exercising full authority over the conduct of the corporation's activities, and the Board may rescind any such assignment, referral or delegation at any time.

Without prejudice to its general powers, but subject to the same limitations set forth above, the Board shall have the following powers in addition to any other powers enumerated in these Bylaws and permitted by law:

- i. To select and remove all of the officers, agents and employees of the corporation; to prescribe powers and duties for them which are not inconsistent with law, the corporation's Articles of incorporation or these Bylaws; to fix their compensation; and to require security from them for faithful service;

- ii. To conduct, manage and control the affairs and activities of the corporation and to make such rules and regulations therefore which are not inconsistent with law, the corporation's Articles of Incorporation, or these Bylaws;
- iii. To adopt, make and use a corporate seal and to alter the form of the seal over time-;
- 1v. To borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purposes of the corporation, and to cause to be executed and delivered therefor, in the corporate name, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations and other evidences of debt and securities therefor;
- v. To carry on a business and apply any revenues in excess of expenses that results from the business activity to any activity in which it may lawfully engage; To act as trustee under any trust incidental to the principal object of the corporation, and receive, hold, administer, exchange and expend funds and property subject to such trust; To acquire by purchase, exchange, lease, gift, devise, bequest, or otherwise, and to hold, improve, lease, sublease, mortgage, transfer in trust, encumber, convey or otherwise dispose of real and personal property; and do any and all purpose.
- viii. To assume any obligations, enter into any contracts or other instruments, other things incidental or expedient to the attainment of any corporate

Additionally, the YES Board has the following additional powers:

1. A public charter school is subject to all federal laws and authorities as provided in [sections 1 through 14] of HB549 or arranged by charter contract with the board of public education consistent with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

Except as provided in [sections 1 through 14] and in the public charter school's charter contract, a public charter school is subject to the provisions of Title 20 and any state or local rule, regulation, policy, or procedure relating to noncharter public schools within the located school district.

A single governing board may hold one or more charter contracts. A charter contract may consist of one or more schools, to the extent approved by the board of public education and consistent with applicable law. Each public charter school that is part of a charter school district must be under the supervision and control of the governing board of the charter school district.

2. A public charter school district or public charter school may not be created within the geographical boundaries of a third-class elementary district, as defined in 20-6-201, or a

third-class high school district, as defined in 20-6-301, unless the applicant is the local school board.

3. The governing board of a public charter school shall function as a local educational agency. A public charter school is responsible for meeting the requirements of a local educational agency under applicable federal, state, and local laws, including those relating to special education.

4. The governing board of a public charter school is responsible for special education at the school, including identification and service provisions, and is responsible for meeting the needs of enrolled students with disabilities.

The governing board of a public charter school district has all the powers necessary for carrying out the

terms of its charter contract, including the following powers:

- (a) to receive and disburse funds for school purposes;
- (b) To secure appropriate insurance and to enter into contracts and leases, free from prevailing wage laws;
- (c) to incur debt in reasonable anticipation of the receipt of public or private funds;
- (d) to pledge, assign, or encumber its assets to be used as collateral for loans or extensions of
- (e) to solicit and accept gifts or grants for school purposes subject to applicable laws and the terms of its charter contract;
- (f) to acquire real property, for use as its facility or facilities, from public or private sources; and
- (g) to sue and be sued in its own name.

(6) (a) A public charter school may not engage in any sectarian practices in its educational program, admissions policies, employment policies or practices, or operations.

(b) The powers, obligations, and responsibilities set forth in the charter contract may not be delegated or assigned by either party except as otherwise specifically provided in [sections 1 through 14].

(7) (a) A public charter school is subject to the same civil rights, health, and safety requirements applicable to other public schools in the state except as otherwise specifically provided in [sections 1 through 14].

(b) The governing board shall establish graduation requirements and may award degrees

and issue diplomas.

(c) A governing board is subject to and shall comply with state open meeting and public records laws pursuant to Title 2, chapters 3 and 6.

(d) A public charter school shall establish purchasing procedures that include a competitive bidding process for purchases or contracts exceeding \$80,000.

## Section 2. Number of Trustees.

The governing board of the public charter school district must be composed of 7 members. The boundaries of the charter school district consist of the legal description of the campus of the charter school. A majority of the governing board members must be qualified electors of the county in which the public charter school is located. Members must:

(a) be qualified electors in the county in which the public charter school is located or a contiguous county but need not be qualified electors of the located school district; and

(b) possess documented knowledge or experience in the mission or focus of the public charter school.

An applicant for a proposed public charter school shall identify the members of the initial governing board of the charter school district of which the charter school is a part in the proposal submitted to the board of public education. The initial governing board is responsible for pre-operation of and initial operation of the public charter school.

## Section 3. Election and Term of Office.

At the regular school election in the first year of operation of a public charter school, members must be elected by the qualified electors of the located school district in the same manner as local school boards, except as provided in subsections (2) and (5), in an election conducted by the local school board in the school district in which the public charter school is located. Any elector qualified to vote in the located school district under the provisions of 20-20-301 may vote.

Members of governing boards serve for terms of 5 years, and the terms of members must be staggered to ensure continuity on the governing board.

## Section 4. Resignation and Removal.

- i. Subject to the provisions in Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, any trustee may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Chairman, the Secretary, or the Board, unless the notice specifies a later effective time. If the resignation is effective at a future time, a successor may be selected before such time, to take office when the resignation becomes effective. Except on notice to the Montana Attorney General, no trustee may resign if the corporation would be left without a duly elected trustee or trustees.
- ii. A trustee may be removed only by the Statutory Member. Any vacancy caused by the removal of a director shall be filled as provided in Section 5.

#### Section 5. Vacancies.

- i. A Board vacancy or vacancies shall be deemed to exist if any trustee dies, resigns, or is removed, or if the authorized number of trustees is increased.
  - ii. Notwithstanding Section 4, the Board may declare vacant the office of any trustee who has been convicted of a felony, or has been found to have breached any duty arising under Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law or to be of unsound mind by any court of competent jurisdiction.
  - iii. A vacancy on the Board shall be filled only by the Statutory Member. Each trustee so elected, appointed, or designated shall hold office until the expiration of the term of the replaced trustee and continue to hold office until a qualified successor has been elected, appointed, or designated.
- 1v. No reduction of the authorized number of trustees shall have the effect of removing any trustee prior to the expiration of the trustee's term of office.

#### Section 6. Place of Meeting and Notice.

- i. Meetings of the Board shall be held at the principal office of the corporation or at any other place within the State of Montana that has been designated in the notice of the meeting.
- ii. The Board shall conduct all meetings and business in respect to the operation of the corporation's public charter schools in accordance with the applicable requirements of the Montana Office of Public Instruction Public Charter MCA law.

#### Section 7. Regular Meetings.

Regular meetings of the Board, including annual meetings, shall be held at such times and places as may, from time to time, be fixed by the Board in accordance with these Bylaws.

#### Section 8. Annual Meeting.

Annually the Board shall meet for the purpose of organization, appointment of officers and the transaction of such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting. This meeting shall be held at a time, date and place as may be specified and noticed by the Statutory Member or by resolution by the board.

#### Section 9. Special Meetings.

Special meetings of the Board for any purpose may be called at any time by the chairman of the Board, if there is such an officer, the President/Chief Executive Officer, the secretary or any two trustees. The party calling such a special meeting shall determine the place, date, and time thereof in accordance with these Bylaws.

#### Section 10. Notice of Special Meetings.

- i. Special meetings of the Board may be held only after each trustee has received four (4) days' prior notice by first-class mail or twenty-four (24) hours' notice given personally or by telephone, email or other similar means of communication.
- ii. Any such notice shall be addressed or delivered to each trustee at the trustee's address as it is shown on the records of the corporation or as may have been given to the corporation by the trustee for purposes of notice or, if an address is not shown on the corporation's records or is not readily ascertainable, at the place at which the meetings of the trustees are regularly held.
- iii. The notice of special meeting shall state the time of the meeting, and the place if the place is other than the principal office of the corporation, and the general nature of the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting. No business, other than the business the general nature of which was set forth in the notice of the meeting, may be transacted at a special meeting.

#### Section 11. Emergency Meetings.

Emergency meetings of the Board may be called at any time by a majority of the Board if the Board so determines that an emergency situation exists outlined in MCA Title 35, Chapter 2.

#### Section 12. Closed Sessions.

Closed sessions of the Board may be held as authorized under the applicable terms of the MCA Title 35, Chapter 2.

#### Section 13. Telephone and Electronic Video Meetings.

i. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, members of the Board may participate in a meeting through the use of conference telephone, electronic video screen communication, or other communications equipment for the benefit of the public and the Board in connection with any meeting or proceeding authorized by law. The teleconferenced meeting or proceeding shall comply with the applicable requirements of the MCA Title 35, Chapter 2. and all otherwise applicable provisions of law.

#### Section 14. Quorum.

A majority of the trustees then in office shall constitute a quorum. Every act or decision done or made by a majority of the trustees present at a meeting duly held at which a quorum is present is an act of the Board. A meeting at which a quorum is initially present may continue to transact business notwithstanding the withdrawal of trustees, if any action taken is approved by at least a majority of the required quorum for such meeting. Trustees may not vote by proxy.

#### Section 15. Consent to Meetings.

The transactions of the Board at any meeting, however called and noticed or wherever held, shall be as valid as though done at a meeting duly held after regular call and notice if a quorum be present, and if, either before or after the meeting, each trustee entitled to vote, not present in person signs a written waiver of notice, or a consent to the holding of such meeting, or approval of the minutes thereof. All such waivers, consents or approvals shall be filed with the corporate records and made a part of the minutes of the meeting. Notice of a meeting need not be given to any trustee who attends the meeting without protesting prior to or at the commencement of the meeting, the lack of notice to such trustee.

#### Section 16. Adjournment.

A majority of the trustees present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any trustee's meeting to another time or place. If a meeting is adjourned for more than twenty-four (24) hours, notice of such adjournment to another time or place shall be given, prior to the time schedule for the continuation of the meeting, to the trustees who were not present at the time of the adjournment.

#### Section 17. Rights of inspection.

Every trustee has the right at any reasonable time to inspect and copy all books, records and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of the corporation, to the full extent permitted under applicable federal and state laws regarding pupil confidentiality.

#### Section 18. Board Committees.

The Board may appoint an executive committee and one or more other committees each consisting of two (2) or more trustees to serve at the pleasure of the Board, and delegate to such committee any of the authority of the Board, except with respect to:

- i. The approval of any action for which the Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law requires the approval of the Statutory Member; The filling of vacancies on the Board or on any committee which has the authority of the Board;
- iii. The amendment or repeal of bylaws or the adoption of new bylaws;
- iv. The amendment or repeal of any resolution of the Board which by its express terms is not so amendable or repealable;
- v. The appointment of other committees having the authority of the Board; or,
- vi. The approval of any self-dealing transaction as such transactions are defined MCA Title 35, Chapter 2. Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, except as permitted under Section 24 of this Article.

Any such committee must be created, and the members thereof appointed, by resolution adopted by a majority of the number of trustees then in office, and any such committee may be designated as an executive committee or by such other name as the Board shall specify. The Board may appoint, in the same manner, alternate members to a committee who may replace any absent member at any meeting of the committee. The Board shall have the power to prescribe the manner in which proceedings of any such committee shall be conducted. In the absence of any such prescription, such committee shall have the power to prescribe the manner in which its proceedings shall be conducted. Unless the Board, such committee, or these bylaws shall otherwise provide, the regular and special meetings and other actions of any such committee shall be governed by the provisions of this Article applicable to meetings and actions of the Board. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of each committee.

#### Section 19. Other Committees.

- i. The chairman of the Board or the President/Chief Executive Officer, subject to the limitations imposed by the Board, or the Board, may create other committees, ad hoc, standing or special, to serve the Board which do not have the powers of the Board. The President/Chief Executive Officer, with the approval of the Board, shall appoint members to serve on such committees, and shall designate the committee chairman. If a trustee is on a committee, he or she shall be the chairman. Each member of a committee shall continue as such until the next annual election of officers and until his or her successor is appointed, unless the member sooner resigns or is removed from the committee.

- ii. Meetings of a committee may be called by the chairman of the Board (if there is such a position), the chairman of the committee or a majority of the committee's voting members. Each committee shall meet as often as is necessary to perform its duties. Notice of a meeting of a committee may be given at any time and in any manner reasonably designed to inform the committee members of the time and place of the meeting and, insofar as is required by law, in accordance with MCA Title 35, Chapter 2. A majority of the voting members of a committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the committee. Each committee may keep minutes of its proceedings and shall report periodically to the Board. A committee may take action by majority vote.
- iii. Any member of a committee may resign at any time by giving written notice to the chairman of the committee or to the President/Chief Executive Officer. Such resignation, which may or may not be made contingent upon formal acceptance, shall take effect upon the date of receipt or at any later time specified in the notice. The chairman may, with prior approval of the Board, remove any appointed member of a committee. The President/Chief Executive Officer, with the Board's approval, shall appoint a member to fill a vacancy in any committee or any position created by an increase in the membership for the unexpired portion of the term.

#### Section 20. Audit Committee.

At all times that this Corporation is required by applicable law to have an independent audit, or at any time the Corporation voluntarily chooses to do so, the Board shall do so through the Sole Statutory Member's Audit Committee which shall provide independent audit services for this Corporation ("Audit Committee"). The Board shall designate one Trustee as its representative to serve on the Audit Committee. Trustees who are employees of the Corporation or who receive, directly or indirectly, any consulting, advisory, or other compensatory fees from the Corporation may not serve on the Audit Committee. The President/Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer, if also Trustees, may serve on the Audit Committee only if such persons are volunteers and are not compensated by this Corporation. The Audit Committee shall perform its work pursuant to applicable and the guidelines set forth in its charter. Duties performed by the Audit Committee shall include, but are not limited to:

- i. Assisting the Board in choosing an independent auditor and recommending termination of the auditor, if necessary;
- ii. Negotiating the auditor's compensation;
- iii. Conferring with the auditor regarding the Corporation's financial affairs, and
- iv. Reviewing and accepting or rejecting the audit.

Members of the Audit Committee shall not receive compensation for their service on the Audit Committee. If the Corporation has a Finance Committee, a majority of the members of the Audit Committee may not concurrently serve as members of the Finance Committee, and the Chair of the Audit Committee may not serve on the Finance Committee.

#### Section 21. Fees and Compensation.

Trustees and members of committees shall not receive any compensation for their services; however, the Board may approve reimbursement of a trustee's actual and necessary expenses incurred in the conduct of the corporation's business.

#### Section 22. Non-liability of Trustees.

No trustee shall be personally liable for the debts, liabilities or other obligations of this corporation.

#### Section 23. Restriction on Board Authority.

The Board shall not, without the prior written approval of the Statutory Member, authorize or direct any officer of the corporation to perform or commit any of the following acts:

- i. Borrow money in the name of the corporation for corporate purposes in excess of \$1 million, or utilize property (real or personal) owned by the corporation as security for loans in excess of \$1 million;
- ii. Make, execute or deliver any assignment for the benefit of creditors, or any bond, confession of judgment, chattel mortgage, security agreement, deed, guaranty, indemnity bond, surety bond, or contract to sell or bill of sale of the property of the corporation;
- iii. Acquire, purchase, develop, improve, sell, lease or mortgage any corporate real estate or any interest therein or enter into any contract for any such purposes;
- iv. Make any loan or investment of any assets of the corporation, or enter into any contract or incur any liabilities on behalf of the corporation other than for fair consideration or in the ordinary course of business relating to its normal daily operation; or
- v. Make any loan of money or property to or guarantee the obligation of any trustee or officer, except as is expressly permitted under MCA Title 35, Chapter 2. Of Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law.

#### Section 24. Interested Persons.

Not more than forty-nine percent (49%) of the trustees serving on the Board may be "interested persons." An "interested person" is (i) any person compensated by the

Corporation for services rendered to it whether-as-a-full or part-time employee, independent contractor, or otherwise, excluding any reasonable compensation paid to a trustee as trustee, and (ii) any brother, sister, ancestor, descendant, spouse, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law or father-in-law of any such person. However, any violation of the provisions of this Section shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any transaction entered into by the corporation.

#### Section 25. Standard of Care.

A trustee shall perform the duties of a trustee, including duties as a member of any committee of the Board upon which the trustee may serve, in good faith, in a manner such trustee believes to be in the best interests of the corporation and with such care, including reasonable inquiry, as an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances. In performing the duties of a trustee, a trustee shall be entitled to rely on information, opinions, reports or statements, including financial statements and other financial data, in each case prepared or presented by:

- i. One or more officers or employees of the corporation whom the trustee believes to be reliable and competent in the matters presented;
- ii. Counsel, independent accountants or other persons as to matters which the trustee believes to be within such person's professional or expert competence; or
- iii. A committee of the Board upon which the trustee does not serve as to matters within its designated authority, provided the trustee believes merits confidence and the trustee acts in good faith, after reasonable inquiry when the need therefor is indicated by the circumstances and without knowledge that would cause such reliance to be unwarranted.

#### Section 26. Self-Dealing Transactions.

Self-dealing transactions means transactions to which the corporation is a party and in which one or more of the trustees ("interested trustee(s)") has a material financial interest. Notwithstanding this definition of self-dealing transaction, the following transactions do not constitute self-dealing transactions:

- i. An action by the Board fixing the compensation of a trustee as a trustee or officer of the corporation;
- ii. A transaction which is part of a public or charitable program of the corporation if the transaction is (1) approved or authorized by the corporation in good faith and without unjustified favoritism, and (2) results in a benefit to one or more trustees or their families because they are in a class of persons intended to be benefited by the public or charitable program;

iii. A transaction of which the interested trustees have no actual knowledge, and which does not exceed the lesser of one percent (1%) of the corporation's gross receipts for the fiscal year immediately preceding the year in which such transaction occurs or One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000).

1v. A transaction the Attorney General has approved either before or after it was consummated.

v. A transaction with respect to which the following facts are established:

1. The corporation entered into the transaction for its own benefit;
2. The transaction was fair and reasonable as to the corporation at the time the corporation entered into the transaction;
3. Prior to consummating the transaction or any part thereof, the Board authorized or approved the transaction in good faith by vote of a majority of the trustees then in office excluding the vote of the interested trustee(s) and with knowledge of the material facts concerning the transaction and the interested trustee's interest in it. Except as provided in paragraph (5) of this subsection, action by a committee of the Board will not satisfy this requirement; and
4. Prior to authorizing or approving the transaction, the Board considered and in good faith determined after reasonable investigation under the circumstances that the corporation could not have obtained a more advantageous arrangement with reasonable effort under the circumstances, or the corporation in fact could not have obtained a more advantageous arrangement with reasonable effort under the circumstances; or
5. A committee or person authorized by the Board approved the transaction in a manner consistent with the standards prescribed for approval by the Board under this subsection; it was not reasonably practical to obtain approval of the Board prior to entering into the transaction; and the Board, after determining in good faith that the conditions set forth in this paragraph (5) were satisfied, ratified the transaction at its next meeting by a vote of a majority of the trustees then in office, excluding the vote of the interested trustee(s).

#### Section 27. Interested Trustee's Vote.

In determining whether the Board validly met to authorize or approve a self-dealing transaction, interested trustees may be counted to determine the presence of a quorum, but an interested trustee's vote may not be counted toward the required majority for such authorization, approval or ratification.

#### Section 28. Persons Liable and Extent of Liability.

If a self-dealing transaction has not been approved as provided in Section 24 of this Article, the interested trustee(s) may be required to do such things and pay such damages as a court may provide as an equitable and fair remedy to the corporation, considering any benefit received by it and whether or not the interested trustee(s) acted in good faith and with the intent to further the best interests of the corporation.

#### Section 29. Contracts or Transactions With Mutual Trustees.

No contract or other transaction between the corporation and any domestic or foreign corporation, firm or association of which one or more of the corporation's trustees are trustees is either void or voidable because such trustee(s) are present at the meeting of the Board or committee thereof which authorizes, approves or ratifies the contract or transaction if:

- i. The material facts as to the transaction and as to such trustee's other directorship are fully disclosed or known to the Board or committee, and the Board or committee authorizes, approves or ratifies the contract or transaction in good faith by a vote sufficient without counting the vote of the common trustee(s); or
- ii. As to contracts or transactions not approved as provided in subsection i. of this Section, the contract or transaction is just and reasonable as to the corporation at the time it is authorized, approved or ratified.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Section shall not apply to self-dealing transactions described in Section 24 of this Article above.

#### Section 30. Corporate Loans and Advances.

The corporation shall not make any loan of money or property to or guarantee the obligation of any trustee or officer, unless approved by the Attorney General; provided, however, that the corporation may advance money to a trustee or officer of the corporation or any subsidiary for expenses reasonably anticipated to be incurred in the performance of the duties of such officer or trustee, if, in the absence of such advance, such trustee or officer would be entitled to be reimbursed for such expenses by the corporation, its parent or any subsidiary.

#### Section 31. Annual Reports.

Pursuant to MCA Title 35, Chapter 2. Of Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, the Chief Financial Officer shall cause an annual report to be prepared and sent to each trustee not later than 120 days after the close of the fiscal or calendar year. Such annual

report shall be prepared in conformity with the requirements of the Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law as it may be in effect from time to time.

#### Section 32. Annual Statement of Certain Transactions and Indemnifications.

Pursuant to MCA Title 35, Chapter 2. Of Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, the corporation shall furnish an annual statement of certain transactions and indemnifications to each of the trustees no later than 120 days after the close of the fiscal year. If the corporation issues an annual report as set forth in Section 29 of this Article above, this requirement shall be satisfied by including the required information, as set forth below, in such report. Such annual statement shall describe:

- i. Any "covered transaction" (defined below) during the previous fiscal year of the corporation involving (a) more than Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) or, (b) which was one of a number of "covered transactions" in which the same "interested person" (defined below) had a direct or indirect material financial interest, and which transactions in the aggregate involved more than Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000). The statement shall describe the names of any "interested persons" involved in such covered transactions, including such "interested persons" relationship to the transaction, and, where practicable, the amount of such interest; provided, that in the case of a transaction with a partnership of which the "interested person" is only a partner, only the interest of the partnership need be stated.
- ii. For the purposes of this Section, a "covered transaction" is a transaction in which the corporation, its parent or its subsidiary, was a party, and in which either of the following had a direct or indirect material financial interest:
  - a. Any trustee or officer of the corporation, or its parent or subsidiary; or
  - b. Any holder of more than ten percent (10%) of the voting power of the corporation, its parent or its subsidiary.
- iii. The amount and circumstances of any indemnifications or advances aggregating more than Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) paid during the fiscal year of the corporation to any officer or trustee of the corporation.

For purposes of this Section, any person described in either paragraph (a) or (b) of subsection ii. above is an "interested person."

### ARTICLE V

#### Officers

##### Section 1. Officers.

The officers of this corporation shall be a President, a secretary, and a Chief Financial Officer. The corporation may also have, at the discretion of the Board, a chairman of the

Board, one or more Vice Presidents, one or more assistant secretaries, one or more assistant treasurers, and such other officers as may be elected or appointed by the Board. Any number of offices may be held by the same person, except that neither the secretary, the treasurer, nor the Chief Financial Officer may serve concurrently as the President or chairman of the Board.

#### Section 2. Appointment of Officers.

Except as otherwise specified in Sections 3 and 10 of this Article, the officers of The corporation shall be those named by the Board and each shall be in office until he or she shall resign or shall be removed or otherwise disqualified to serve, or his or her successor shall be elected and qualified.

#### Section 3. Subordinate Officers.

The Board may appoint and may empower the President/Chief Executive Officer to appoint such other officers as the business of the corporation may require, each of whom shall hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in the bylaws or as the Board may from time to time determine.

#### Section 4. Chairman of the Board.

The chairman of the Board, if there is such an officer, shall preside at all meetings of the Board and exercise and perform such other powers and duties as may from time to time be assigned by the Board.

#### Section 5. President/Chief Executive Officer.

The President/chief executive officer is the chief executive officer of the corporation and has, subject to the control of and has general supervision, direction and control of the business and affairs of the corporation. The President/Chief Executive Officer has the general management powers and duties usually vested in the office of President of a corporation, as well as such other powers and duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board.

#### Section 6. Vice President.

In the absence or disability of the President/Chief Executive Officer, a Vice President (or if more than one (1) Vice President is appointed, in order of their rank as fixed by the Board or if not ranked, the Vice President designated by the Board) shall perform all the duties of the President/Chief Executive Officer and when so acting shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all of the restrictions upon, the President/Chief Executive Officer. The Vice

Presidents shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe from time to time.

#### Section 7. Secretary.

The secretary shall keep or cause to be kept, at the principal office of the corporation the State of Montana, the original or a copy of the corporation's Articles of Incorporation and bylaws, as amended to date, and a register showing the names of all trustees and their respective addresses. The secretary shall keep the seal of the corporation and shall affix the same on such papers and instruments as may be required in the regular course of business, but failure to affix it shall not affect the validity of any instrument. The secretary also shall keep or cause to be kept at the principal office, or at such other place as the Board may order, a book of minutes of all meetings of the Board and its committees, with the time and place of holding; whether regular or special; if special how authorized; the notice thereof given; the names of those present and absent; and the proceedings thereof. The secretary shall give or cause to be given notice of all the meetings of the Board required by these bylaws or by law to be given; shall keep the seal of the corporation in safe custody; shall see that all reports, statements and other documents required by law are properly kept or filed, except to the extent the same are to be kept or filed by the treasurer; and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board.

#### Section 8. Chief Financial Officer.

The Chief Financial Officer shall keep and maintain or cause to be kept and maintained adequate and correct accounts of the properties and business transactions of the corporation, including accounts of its assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements, gains and losses. The books of account shall at all times be open to inspection by any trustee. The Chief Financial Officer shall deposit or cause to be deposited all monies and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the corporation in such depositories as may be designated by the Board. The Chief Financial Officer shall disburse the funds of the corporation as shall be ordered by the Board, shall render to the President/Chief Executive Officer and the trustees, upon request, an account of all transactions as Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer shall present an operating statement and report, since the last preceding board meeting, to the Board at all regular meetings. The Chief Financial Officer shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board.

#### Section 9. Removal and Resignation.

Any officer may be removed, either with or without cause, by the Board at any time. In the case of an officer appointed by the President/Chief Executive Officer, the President/Chief Executive Officer shall also have the power of removal. Any such removal shall be without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the officer under any contract of employment. Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the corporation, but without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the corporation under any contract to which the officer is a party. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein, and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

#### Section I 0. Vacancies.

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause, shall be filled in the manner prescribed in the bylaws for regular election or appointment to such office, provided that such vacancies shall be filled as they occur and not on an annual basis.

### Article VI

#### Indemnification

##### Section I. Definitions.

For the purposes of this Article, "agent" means any person who is or was a trustee, director, officer, or employee of this corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a trustee, director, officer, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, or was a trustee, director, officer, employee or agent of a foreign or domestic corporation which was a predecessor corporation of this corporation or of another enterprise at the request of such predecessor corporation; and "proceeding" means any threatened, pending completed action or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative; and "expenses" includes, without limitation, attorneys' fees and any expenses of establishing a right to indemnification under Sections 4 or 5.b of this Article.

##### Section 2. Indemnification in Actions by Third Parties.

This corporation may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any proceeding (other than an action by or in the right of this corporation to procure a judgment in its favor, an action brought under MCA Title 35, Chapter 2. of the Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, or an action brought by the Attorney General or a person granted relator status by the Attorney General for any breach of duty relating to assets held in charitable trust) by reason of the fact that such person is or was an

agent of this corporation, against expenses, judgments, fines, settlements and other amounts actually and reasonably incurred in connection with such proceeding if such person acted in good faith and in a manner such person reasonably believed to be in the best interests of this corporation, and, in the case of a criminal proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe the conduct of such person was unlawful. The termination of any proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner which the person reasonably believed to be in the best interests of this corporation or that the person had reasonable cause to believe that the person's conduct was unlawful.

### Section 3. Indemnification in Actions by or in the Right of the Corporation.

This corporation may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action by or in the right of this corporation, or brought under MCA Title 35, Chapter 2. Of Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, or brought by the Attorney General or a person granted relator status by the Attorney General for breach of duty relating to assets held in charitable trust, to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact that such person is or was an agent of the corporation, against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with the defense or settlement of such action if such person acted in good faith, in a manner such person believed to be in the best interests of the corporation and with such care, including reasonable inquiry, as an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances. No indemnification shall be made under this Section:

- i. In respect of any claim, issue or matter as to which such person shall have been adjudged to be liable to this corporation in the performance of such person's duty to the corporation, unless and only to the extent that the court in which such proceeding is or was pending shall determine upon application that, in view of all the circumstances of the case, such person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnity for the expenses which such court shall determine;
- ii. Of amounts paid in settling or otherwise disposing of a threatened or pending action, with or without court approval; or
- iii. Of expenses incurred in defending a threatened or pending action which is settled or otherwise disposed of without court approval, unless it is settled with the approval of the Attorney General.

### Section 4. Indemnification Against Expenses.

To the extent that an agent of this corporation has been successful on the merits in defense of any proceeding referred to in Sections 2 or 3 of this Article or in defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, the agent shall be indemnified against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by the agent in connection therewith.

#### Section 5. Required Determinations.

Except as provided in Section 4 of this Article, any indemnification under this Article shall be made by this corporation only if authorized in the specific case, upon a determination that indemnification of the agent is proper in the circumstances because the agent has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Sections 2 or 3 of this Article by:  
proceeding; or

- i. A majority vote of a quorum consisting of trustees who are not parties to such
- ii. The court in which such proceeding is or was pending upon application made by this corporation or the agent or the attorney or other person rendering services in connection with the defense, whether or not such application by the agent, attorney or other person is opposed by this corporation.

#### Section 6. Advance of Expenses.

Expenses incurred in defending any proceeding may be advanced by this corporation prior to the final disposition of such proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the agent to repay such amount unless it shall be determined ultimately that the agent is entitled to be indemnified as authorized in this Article.

#### Section 7. Other Indemnification.

No provision made by this corporation to indemnify its or its subsidiary's trustees, directors or officers for the defense of any proceeding, whether contained in the Articles of Incorporation, bylaws, a resolution of members or trustees/directors, an agreement, or otherwise, shall be valid unless consistent with this Article.

#### Section 8. Forms of indemnification Not Permitted.

No indemnification or advance shall be made under this Article, except as provided in Sections 4 or 5.b, in any circumstances where it appears:

- i. That it would be inconsistent with a provision of the Articles of Incorporation, these bylaws, or an agreement in effect at the time of the accrual of the alleged cause of action asserted in the proceeding in which the expenses were incurred or other amounts were paid, which prohibits or otherwise limits indemnification; or
- ii. That it would be inconsistent with any condition expressly imposed by a court in approving a settlement.

#### Section 9. Insurance.

The corporation shall have the power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any agent of this corporation against any liability asserted against or incurred by the agent in such capacity or arising out of the agent's status as such whether or not this corporation would have the power to indemnify the agent against such liability under the provisions of this Article; provided, however, that this corporation shall have no power to purchase and maintain such insurance to indemnify any agent of the corporation for a violation of SMCA Title 35, Chapter 2. Of Montana Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law. Non-applicability to Fiduciaries of Employee Benefit Plans.

This Article does not apply to any proceeding against any trustee, investment manager or other fiduciary of an employee benefit plan in such person's capacity as such, even though such person may also be an agent of the corporation as defined in Section I of this Article. The corporation shall have power to indemnify such trustee, investment manager or other fiduciary to the extent permitted by MCA Title 35, Chapter 2. Of Montana General Corporation Law.

### ARTICLE VII

#### Miscellaneous

##### Section I. Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of the corporation shall be the same as the fiscal year adopted by the Statutory Member, which currently is a fiscal year ending June 30.

##### Section 2. Inspection of Corporate Records.

The books of account and minutes of the proceedings of members and trustees, and of any executive committee or other committees of the trustees, shall be open to inspection at any reasonable time upon the written demand of any member. Such inspection may be made in person or by an agent or attorney, and shall include the right to make photocopies and extracts.

##### Section 3. Voting Shares.

The corporation may vote any and all shares held by it in any other corporation by such officer, agent or proxy as the Board may appoint; or in the absence of any such appointment, by the President/Chief Executive Officer, or by any Vice President, if also a trustee; and, such officers or any of them, may likewise appoint a proxy to vote such shares.

##### Section 4. Checks, Drafts, Etc.

All checks, drafts or other orders for payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of or payable to the corporation and any and all securities owned by or held by the corporation requiring signature for transfer shall be signed or endorsed by such person or persons and in such manner as from time to time shall be determined by the Board or the executive committee, if any, or by the President/Chief Executive Officer and the chairman of the Board.

#### Section 5. Endorsement or Execution of Documents and Contracts.

Subject to the provisions of applicable law, any note, mortgage, evidence of indebtedness, contract, conveyance or other instrument in writing and any assignment or endorsement thereof executed or entered into between the corporation and any other person, when signed by the chairman of the Board, the President/Chief Executive Officer, certain designated Vice-Presidents, the secretary or the Chief Financial Officer of the corporation, shall be valid and binding on the corporation in the absence of actual knowledge on the part of the other person that the signing officer(s) had no authority to execute the same. Additionally, by resolution of the Board, general signatory authority may be granted and delegated to other persons on behalf of the corporation. Any such instruments may be signed by any other person or persons and in such manner as from time to time shall be determined by the Board, or the chairman of the Board, or the President/Chief Executive Officer. Unless so authorized, no officer, agent or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the corporation to any contract or engagement or to pledge its credit or to render it liable for any purpose or amount.

### ARTICLE VIII

#### Effective Date and Amendments

##### Section I. Effective Date.

These bylaws shall become effective immediately upon their adoption. Amendments to these bylaws shall become effective immediately upon their adoption, unless the Statutory Member of the corporation in adopting them provides that they are to become effective at a later date.

##### Section 2. Amendments.

These bylaws may be amended or repealed and new bylaws adopted only with the approval of the Statutory Member.

### SECRETARY'S CERTIFICATE

I certify that I am the elected and acting Secretary of Yellowstone Experiential School Public Charter, a Montana nonprofit public benefit corporation, and that the foregoing bylaws, constitute a complete and full version of the bylaws of such corporation including all amendments thereto which have not been otherwise amended, modified, supplemented or rescinded and remain in full force and effect as of, the date hereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have executed this certificate on  
Secretary

## **APPENDIX C: 5 yr YES Budget Projections w/ Clearly-Stated Assumptions**

YES FY25-FY29 Proposed Budget Data						*3% increase in direct aid & ANB rate	*3% increase in direct aid & ANB rate	*3% increase in direct aid & ANB rate	*3% increase in direct aid & ANB rate	*3% increase in direct aid & ANB rate
				FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	
Basic Entitlement	E2	K-6	70	\$58,963.0	\$60,731.9	\$62,553.8	\$64,430.5	\$66,363.4	\$68,354.3	
	M2	7-8	20	\$114,493.0	\$117,927.8	\$121,465.6	\$125,109.6	\$128,862.9	\$132,728.8	
	HS	9-12	40	\$343,843.0	\$354,158.3	\$364,783.0	\$375,726.5	\$386,998.3	\$398,608.3	
ANB By Budget Unit	E2	K-6	70	\$5,962.00	\$6,140.9	\$6,325.1	\$6,514.8	\$6,710.3	\$6,911.6	
	M2	7-8	20	\$7,634.00	\$7,863.0	\$8,098.9	\$8,341.9	\$8,592.1	\$8,849.9	
	HS	9-12	40	\$7,634.00	\$7,863.0	\$8,098.9	\$8,341.9	\$8,592.1	\$8,849.9	
Revenues				Total Allocation	Total Allocation	Total Allocation	Total Allocation	Total Allocation	Total Allocation	
ANB K-6	decreasing at rate of .20 per ANB	5,962.00	1.00	\$422,805.0	\$429,860.2	\$885,512.0	\$1,368,116.1	\$1,878,879.4	\$2,419,057.2	
ANB7-8	decreasing at rate of .50 per ANB	7,634.00	1.00	\$540,771.5	\$157,260.4	\$323,956.4	\$500,512.7	\$687,370.7	\$884,989.8	
ANB9-12	decreasing at rate of .50 per ANB	7,634.00	1.00	\$540,771.5	\$314,520.8	\$647,912.8	\$1,001,025.4	\$1,374,741.5	\$1,769,979.7	
Direct State Aid E2	(I-A)	58,963.00	0.80	\$48,585.5	\$48,585.5	\$63,161.2	\$60,731.9	\$62,553.8	\$64,430.5	
Direct State Aid M2	(I-A)	114,493.00	0.80	\$91,594.4	\$94,342.2	\$97,172.5	\$100,087.7	\$103,090.3	\$106,183.0	
Direct State Aid HS		343,843.00	0.80	\$275,074.4	\$283,326.6	\$220,059.5	\$300,581.2	\$309,598.7	\$318,886.6	
Quality Educator	(I-C)	3,472.00	13.50	\$46,872.0	\$45,136.0	\$119,089.6	\$125,165.6	\$163,184.0	\$200,265.0	
At Risk Student	(I-D)	28.88	130.00	\$28.9	\$3,754.4	\$7,734.1	\$11,601.1	\$19,522.9	\$19,335.2	
Indian Education For All	(I-E)	24.63	130.00	\$3,201.9	\$3,201.9	\$6,595.9	\$9,893.9	\$13,191.8	\$16,489.8	
American Indian Achievement Gap	(I-F)	nodata		\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	
Data For Achievement	(I-G)	23.58	130.00	\$3,065.4	\$3,065.4	\$6,314.7	\$9,472.1	\$12,629.4	\$15,786.8	
State Special Education	(I-H)	286.00	130.00	\$37,180.0	\$37,180.0	\$76,590.8	\$114,886.2	\$153,181.6	\$191,477.0	
Grants*based on ERS FY23 numbers				\$149,000.0	\$1,250,000.0					
Individual Donations*based on ERS FY23 numbers				\$108,000.0	\$800,000.0	\$1,100,000.0	\$850,000.0	\$850,000.0	\$500,000.0	
				\$672,254.3	\$2,476,254.4	\$3,554,099.6	\$4,452,073.7	\$5,627,944.2	\$6,506,880.5	
Expenditures	FY23 ERS Expenditures w/ 37 students	% of total budget			\$3,470,233.5					
Salaries and Wages 3% increase per year	\$435,591.0	0.81			\$1,864,250.0	\$2,867,625.0	\$3,783,750.0	\$4,830,750.0	\$5,616,000.0	
Program Expenses 3% increase per year	\$13,231.3	0.02		\$50,000.0	\$51,500.0	\$53,045.0	\$54,636.4	\$56,275.4	\$57,963.7	
Transportation 1st 4 yrs purchase vans, this line item includes maintenance and fuel	\$658.8			\$100,000.0	\$100,000.0	\$103,000.0		\$0.0	\$0.0	
Communication/ Software 3% increase per year	\$5,791.7	0.01		\$5,600.0	\$5,768.0	\$5,941.0	\$6,119.3	\$6,302.8	\$6,491.9	
Rental space	\$40,453.8	0.08		\$30,000.0	\$30,900.0	\$31,827.0	\$32,781.8	\$33,765.3	\$34,778.2	
Occupancy 3% increase per year	\$21,063.5	0.04		\$42,000.0	\$43,260.0	\$44,557.8	\$45,894.5	\$47,271.4	\$48,689.5	
Repairs & maintenance 3% increase per year	\$518.2	0.00		\$10,000.0	\$10,300.0	\$10,609.0	\$10,927.3	\$11,255.1	\$11,592.7	
Insurance 3% increase per year	\$1,692.6	0.00		\$5,000.0	\$5,150.0	\$5,304.5	\$5,463.6	\$5,627.5	\$5,796.4	
Office expenses, software 3% increase per year	\$4,570.5	0.01		\$10,000.0	\$10,300.0	\$10,609.0	\$10,927.3	\$11,255.1	\$11,592.7	
Technology fee	\$0.0			\$50,000.0	\$50,000.0	\$51,500.0	\$53,045.0	\$54,636.4	\$56,275.4	
Travel/ Professional Development 3% increase per year	\$12,396.0	0.02		\$37,188.0	\$38,303.6	\$39,452.7	\$40,636.3	\$41,855.4	\$43,111.1	
Reserve/ contingency	0			\$332,466.3	\$266,522.7	\$330,628.5	\$407,892.3	\$520,357.6	\$605,738.9	
Total Expenditures	\$535,967.4			\$339,788.0	\$2,209,731.6	\$3,223,471.1	\$4,044,181.5	\$5,107,586.6	\$5,901,141.6	

## Appendix D: Community Needs Reports



2022

# Community Health Needs Assessment

Park County, MT

A collaboration between  
Livingston HealthCare and the  
Park City County Health Department

September 2022

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## Table of Contents:

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
About this assessment	3
Methodology	4
<b>IRS Form 990</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Data Charts and Key Informant Input</b>	
CASPER Survey Infographic	7
Demographics	9
Montana Students and Mental Health	10
2021 Park County Youth Risk Behavior Survey	11
Leading Cause of Death Park County 2020	12
Community Feedback on Prioritization of Health Needs	13
<b>Local Resources Available to Address the Significant Health Needs</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix A: CASPER Survey Results</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Appendix B: Evaluation of Past Work from Livingston HealthCare's Community Health Improvement Plan</b>	<b>38</b>

## Introduction

Livingston HealthCare (LHC) is in the City of Livingston, the county seat for Park County, MT. Livingston HealthCare is comprised of a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital, which includes: 24-hour emergency surgical services, short-term inpatient rehabilitation and hospital outpatient services for diagnostics and treatment. The medical center also includes a Rural Health Clinic with a multi-specialty physician practice offering a variety of services, a range of outpatient rehabilitation therapy, home-based services, integrated behavioral health and visiting specialists. The organization offers healthcare services to the residents and visitors of Park County and the surrounding area with its Urgent Care center and locations in Livingston, Shields Valley and Gardiner. The Ranger Clinic is Livingston HealthCare's school-based clinic located within Park High School and is staffed with a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner and Clinical Psychologist service youth grades 6-12 enrolled in Livingston Public Schools. Governed by a volunteer Board of Director, Livingston HealthCare (LHC) is a community not-for-profit healthcare organization.



**Our mission** is excellence in patient-centered care.

**Our vision** is to be the best Critical Access Hospital in the nation by providing the highest quality care to all whom we serve.

LHC's **Standards of Excellence** guide each and every employee, including leadership, medical staff, and managers, in achieving and sustaining the goals defined by our mission, vision, and values.

### About this assessment:

Livingston HealthCare partnered with the Park County Health Department in creating its Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The CHNA is comprised of the May 2022 CASPER survey as well as supplemental primary and secondary data related to Park County.

CASPER is a type of Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) that provides household-level information to public health leaders and emergency managers. The information generated can be used to initiate public health action, identify information gaps; facilitate disaster planning, response, and recovery activities; allocate resources, and assess new or changing needs in the community. It is a cross-sectional epidemiologic design; it is not surveillance.

## Methodology:

CASPER is conducted through face-to-face interviews in the field. There are several advantages to conducting face-to-face interviews; these include a high response rate and the ability to distribute health information or other materials (such as resource lists) to the community. Face-to-face interviews have the additional benefit of directly connecting the community to local staff, increasing the visibility of and trust in the health department. Interview teams can also provide anecdotal information (e.g., direct visual inspection of a disaster-affected area, common concerns overheard in the community not captured in the questionnaire) that can help guide response and recovery efforts, implementation of any recommendations, and future plans.

CASPER uses a two-stage cluster sampling methodology. In the first stage, clusters (traditionally 30) are selected with a probability proportional to the estimated number of households in the clusters. A cluster is a non-overlapping section in a geographic area with a known number of households. For this reason, U.S. Census blocks are most used. Using GIS software rather than the U.S. Census website provides more flexibility in the selection of the sampling frame by allowing the user to select portions of a county, city, or other available geopolitical areas. Clusters were identified through the Montana State Library GIS Team.

In the second stage, seven Housing Units (HUs) are randomly selected in each of the 30 clusters by the field teams for the purpose of conducting the interviews with the goal of 210 completed interviews. Eighty percent completion rates allows population needs to be estimated from the sample and the estimates are usually within 10 percent. To account for a low density of HUs in remote areas, adaptations to sampling methodologies were made to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended methodology found in the CASPER toolkit. Park County Health Department (PCHD) worked with local stakeholders to develop a survey instrument to collect local health data for the CHA. (Courtesy of Kerry Pride, DVM, Systems Improvement Division of MT DPHHS).



Data from the questionnaire was entered into any statistical software package that allows for multistage sample design weighting. Data entry, cleaning, and processing are necessary to ensure the highest quality data for analysis. Once data are merged and cleaned each household for whom an interview is completed is assigned a weight that is based on the household's probability of selection to obtain population estimates. All HU data collected



## IRS Form 990, Schedule H Compliance

For non-profit hospitals, a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) also serves to satisfy certain requirements of tax reporting, pursuant to provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. To Understand which elements of this report relate to those requested as part of the hospitals' reporting on IRS Schedule H (Form 990), the following table cross references related sections.

<b>Part V Section B Line 3a</b> <i>A definition of the community served by the hospital.</i>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Part V Section B Line 3b</b> <i>Demographics of the community.</i>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>Part V Section B Line 3c</b> <i>Existing health care facilities and resources within the community that are available to respond to the health needs of the community</i>	<b>Page 14</b>
<b>Part V Section B Line 3d</b> <i>How data was obtained</i>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Part V Section B Line 3e</b> <i>The significant health needs of the community</i>	<b>Throughout</b>
<b>Part V Section B Line 3f</b> <i>Primary and chronic disease needs and other health issues of uninsured persons, low-income persons and minority groups</i>	<b>Throughout</b>
<b>Part V Section B Line 3g</b> <i>The process of identifying and prioritizing the health needs and services to meet community needs</i>	<b>Page 13</b>
<b>Part V Section B Line 3h</b> <i>The process for consulting with persons representing the community's interests</i>	<b>Page 13</b>
<b>Part V Section B Line 3i</b> <i>The impact of any actions taken to address the significant health needs identified in the hospital facility's prior CHNA(s)</i>	<b>Page 38</b>

# Park County CASPER Survey

## May 2022



93% of households surveyed live in Park County full time



27% of households currently rent

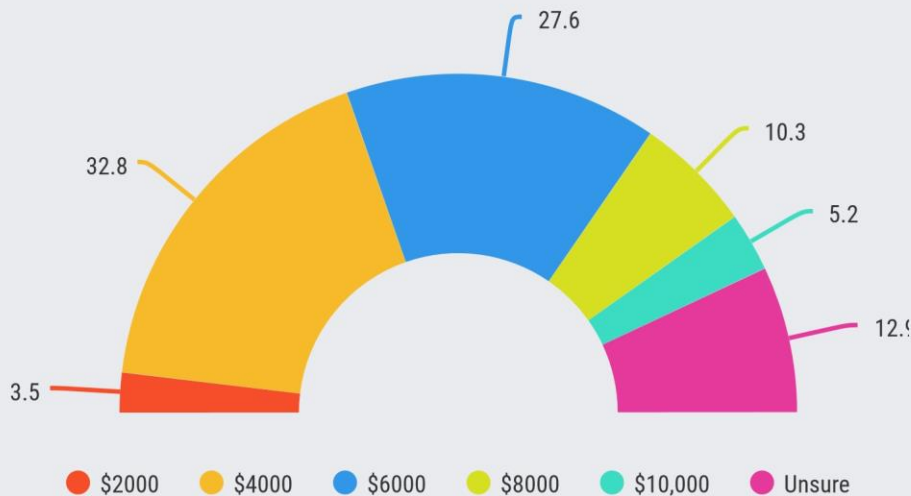


21% of households have lived in Park County less than 3 years

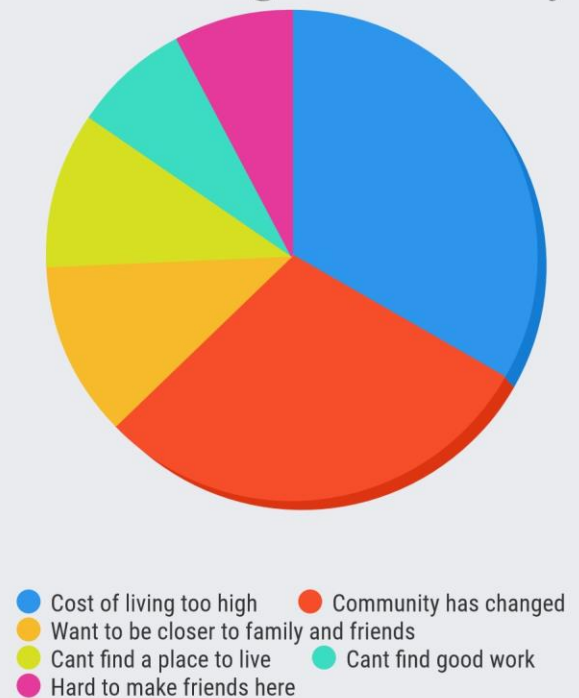


36.4% have considered moving out of Park County in the last year

I believe a person can live comfortably in Park County earning the following take home monthly wage



Reasons People Consider Leaving Park County



### Household Concerns



Paying for gas and vehicle maintenance

36.7%



Paying for healthcare, insurance, medications

27.5%



Change in stock market investments

26.7%



Paying for groceries and meals

23.3%



Paying rent or mortgage

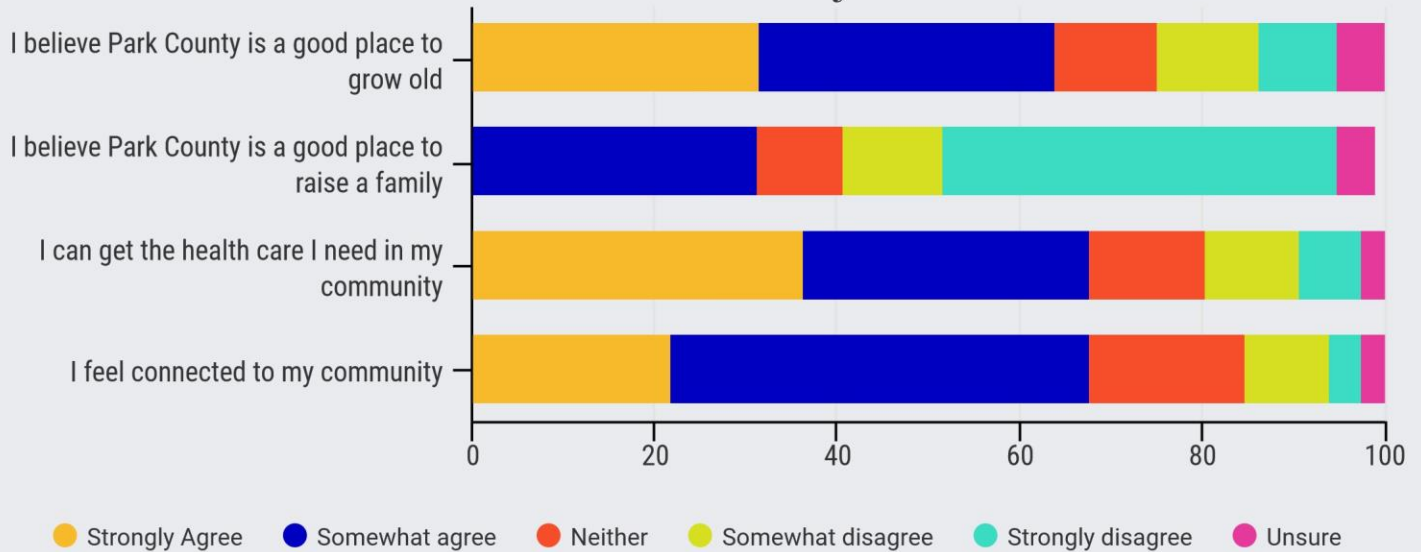
21.7%



**20%** of households are concerned about depression and anxiety in themselves or other adults in the home

**10%** households are concerned about depression and anxiety in the children or young adults in the home

## Community Life



**51.9%** currently working for an employer based in Park County

**1 in 3** households **DO NOT** think their income has kept up with expenses in the past year



**40%** receive health benefits from their employer



**48%** receive retirement benefits from their employer



**37.1%** receive social benefits such as social security or disability



**57.5%** worry about climate, wildfires, smoke and drought



**50%** worry about national or international news events



**40.8%** worry about change in community character



**24.2%** worry about traffic

# 2022 Demographics-Park County, MT

## Population



Population in 2020:

**17,191**

an increase of

**9.9%**

from 2010

**23.7%**

of Park County residents  
are over 65



The US average is 16%

**17.4%**

of Park County residents  
are under 18



The US average is 22.1%

**37%**

of Park County  
residents are on  
Medicare or Medicaid



## Children

There are childcare spots  
available for only

**39.6%**

of children under 6 in  
Park County



**45.6%**

of 3rd Grade  
students in  
Park County  
are "proficient"  
at reading



**47.8%**

of children in Park County  
are enrolled in the Healthy  
Montana Kids free or low-  
cost healthcare plan

**37.9%**

of Park County children  
are enrolled in the free or  
reduced-priced lunch  
program



## Housing and Economics

**\$324.47**

Average nightly rate for  
a vacation rental in Park  
County March 2022



**52.7%**

of land in Park County is  
federally owned



**56.7%**

of income in Park County is unearned income

**32.6%**

from pensions, stock  
dividends and rent payments



**24%**

from direct government  
assistance like Social  
Security or Disability



The median wage in Park County is  
**\$2,662/mo**

Average Rent in  
Park County

**\$1,565**

Average mortgage in  
Park County

**>\$3,000**



The bottom 40%  
of households  
earn 10% of Park  
County income

The top 10% of  
households earn  
56.6% of Park  
County income

6.6% agriculture jobs



30.5% travel and  
tourism jobs





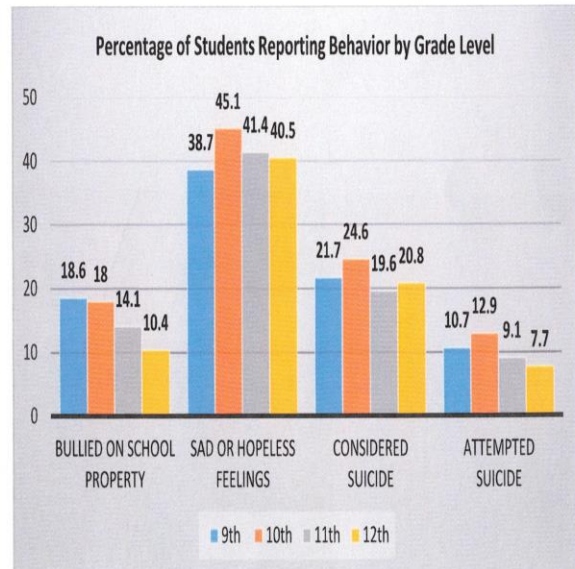
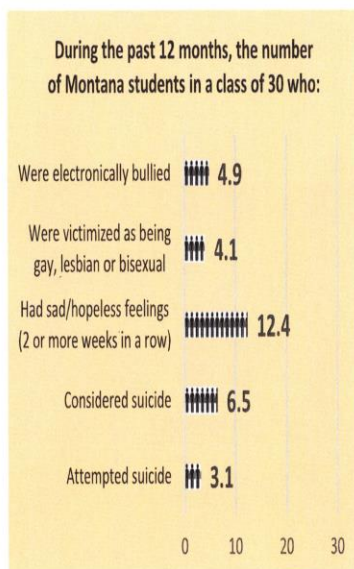
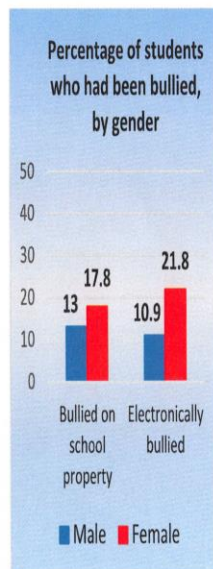
7.7% government jobs



# Montana Students and Mental Health

2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey  
Montana Office of Public Instruction, Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent

Bullying	Depression	Suicide Ideation
<p>16% of high school students had been bullied on school property during the past 12 months</p> <p>16% had been electronically bullied (texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media) during the past 12 months</p> <p>14% of students had been the victim of teasing or name calling because someone thought they were gay, lesbian or bisexual (GLB)</p>	<p>41% of students felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing usual activities</p> 	<p>22% of students seriously considered attempting suicide during the past 12 months</p> <p>18% of students made a plan about how they would attempt suicide</p> <p>10% of students actually attempted suicide</p> <p>Among students who attempted suicide, 32% had a suicide attempt that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse</p> 



2021 Park County Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Middle School and High School, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent

During the past 12 months have been bullied on school property.

Middle School, 19.17%      High School, 12.12%

During the past 12 months have been bullied electronically (including texting, Instagram, Facebook or other social media)

Middle School, 19.17%      High School, 10.53%

During the past 12 months have been the victim of teasing or name calling because someone thought you were gay, lesbian or bisexual.

Middle School, 15.98%      High School, 8.27%

During the past 12 months, felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that they stopped doing some usual activities.

Middle School, 30.41%      High School, 39.85%

During the past 12 months, seriously considered attempting suicide

Middle School, 14.06%      High School, 18.05%

During the past 12 months, made a plan about how they would attempt suicide.

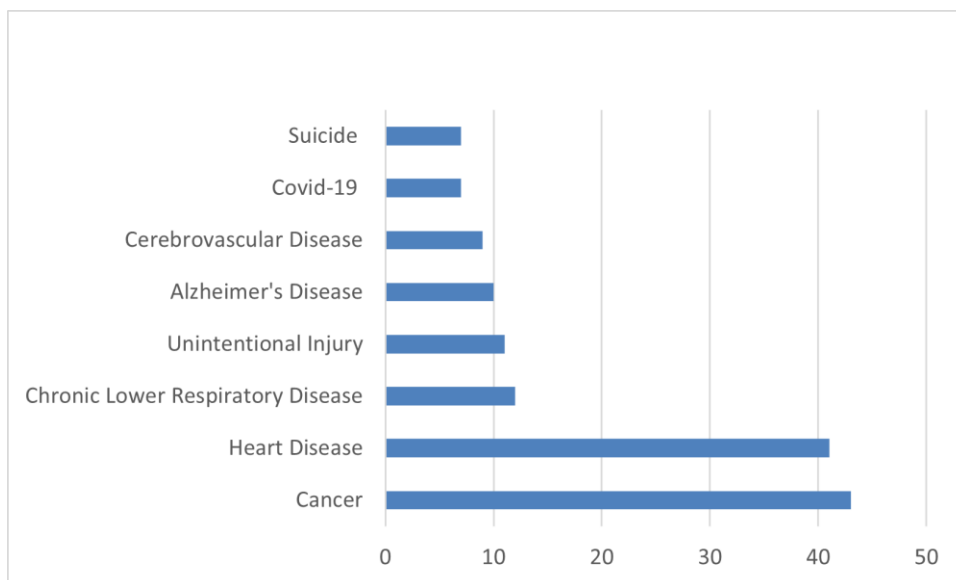
Middle School, 15.10%      High School, 16.54%

During the past 12 months, actually attempted suicide.

Middle School, 7.2%      High School, 9.85%

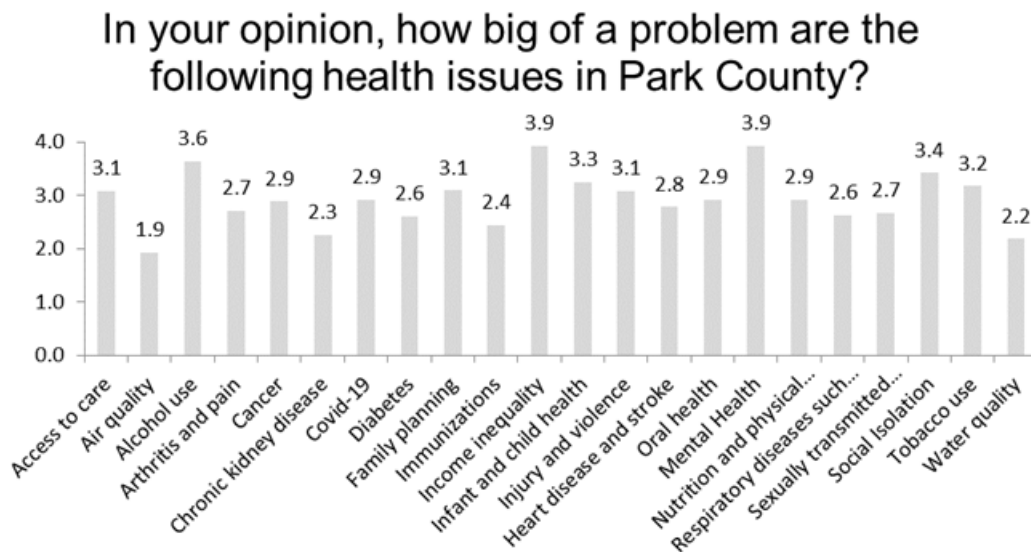


**Leading Causes of Death, Park County, 2020, published by Montana Office of Epidemiology and Scientific Support, 2/2022.**



## Community Feedback on Prioritization of Health Needs

Community stakeholders were asked to rate the degree to which each of 22 health issues is a problem in their own community, using a scale of 1-5, 5 being a “major problem” to 1 being a “minor problem,” or zero “no problem at all.” (Note that these ratings alone do not establish priorities for this assessment; rather, they are one of several data inputs considered in the priority areas of the Community Health Improvement Plan.



Park City County Health Department convened professionally facilitated community working groups over the summer of 2022 which produced the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for 2022-2025. See appendix for full CHIP.



## **Local Resources Available to Address the Significant Health Needs**

The following represent potential measures and resources (such as programs, organizations, and facilities in the community) identified by key informants as available to address the significant health needs identified in this report. This list only reflects input at the time of the survey and should not be considered an exhaustive nor an all-inclusive list of available resources:

### **Adult Services**

#### **Adult Protective Services**

Adult Protective Service Specialists, help protect vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, by working closely with the courts, law enforcement, public health services, mental health services, and other community groups.

#### **To make a report of suspected elder abuse, neglect or exploitation call:**

1 (844) 277-9300 or make a report online by visiting:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/sltc/aps>

#### **Angel Line**

Provides transportation services to seniors (over 60), disabled people of all ages, and people who are assisting senior citizens or other persons requiring special care. Angel Line transports for medical appointments, recreation, etc. Monday - Friday 8:00-4:30pm.

Angel Line  
206 W. Main St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-4668

**Caslen Assisted Living Center**

Assisted Living Facility and supportive services for seniors that require assistance with everyday activities including meals, medication management, bathing, transportation.

Caslen Living Center, Inc.  
1301 & 1303 Wineglass Ln.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
Phone: (406) 222-0797  
<http://www.caslenlc.com/facility/livingston>

**Community First Choice/ Personal Assistance Programs**

The Community First Choice and Personal Assistance Services Programs through Montana Medicaid, are programs designed to provide long term supportive care in a home setting. Enabling Montana's senior and disabled citizens to remain in their homes. Services are tailored to meet the individual needs of the person, depending on their living situation, and the availability of caregivers. For information on eligibility and services go to <https://dphhs.mt.gov/MontanaHealthcarePrograms>

For more information please contact: Abby Holm, Program Manager  
Montana Senior and Long Term Care  
Community Services Division  
(406) 444-4564

**Livingston Health & Rehabilitation Center**

Nursing home providing short-term and long-term care services, including Memory Care Services, Rehabilitation Therapy, Post-Acute care services, Respite, Hospice, and skilled nursing services.  
510 South 14th St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-0672  
[www.livingstonhealthandrehab.com](http://www.livingstonhealthandrehab.com)

**Frontier Assisted Living Facility**

Frontier Assisted Living offers activities at their location for residents. These activities generally allow residents to maintain healthy lifestyles by encouraging movement and socializing with their peers. Diabetic care services, hospice, memory care, incontinence care, and non-ambulatory care are just a few of the other services provided.

**Frontier Assisted Living Facility**

121 S. 3rd St.  
Livingston, MT 59407  
(406) 222-6102  
[https://wellnessmt.com/frontier-assisted-living/?fbclid=IwAR3SBXOXoK\\_DfRXyW3Mm1NCKxijqoGOGzJ0Xh5ZQipEyWfTPd65tNWnEA58](https://wellnessmt.com/frontier-assisted-living/?fbclid=IwAR3SBXOXoK_DfRXyW3Mm1NCKxijqoGOGzJ0Xh5ZQipEyWfTPd65tNWnEA58)

**HRDC Homemaker Program**

The Homemaker Program is a free service that allows primarily low-income seniors to maintain their independence by providing assistance with daily living such as light housekeeping, running errands, allowing seniors to remain in their home as long as possible.

Homemaker Program  
111 South 2nd St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 333-2883

**Livingston Adult Community Education (ACE)**

Livingston School District's Adult Community Education program. The program focuses on helping adults in Livingston and beyond discover and enrich their passions and professions. Some classes include writing, art, woodworking, pottery, gardening, and yoga. Click on the link below to view current offerings and to get information.

Livingston ACE  
132 South B Street  
Livingston MT 59047  
(406) 671-5446  
<http://livingstonace.org/>

**Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP)**

Volunteers, age 55 and older, focus on meeting local community needs through meaningful volunteer service. RSVP can offer a variety of volunteer opportunities with dozens of local organizations. Volunteers choose how much time and where you want to volunteer. Volunteering helps others but just as important it also helps you, the volunteer.

Program Coordinator  
P: (406) 222-2281  
[rsvp@thehrdc.org](mailto:rsvp@thehrdc.org)

**Behavioral & Mental Health****Alcoholics Anonymous**

A group of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

Alcoholics Anonymous  
(406) 222-1922  
(406) 223-3438 Hotline  
<https://www.aa-montana.org/meetings.php?city=Livingston>

**Community Health Partners**

[Providing behavioral health support to community members.](#)

112 West Lewis St. Livingston, MT  
406-222-1111

**L'esprit Behavioral Health Center**

L'esprit is a mental health center that offers support for youth, families, and adults. L'esprit has wrap around services that include Counseling, Case Management, Mentoring, Crisis Support, School-Based Support, Youth Day Treatment, Home Support Services, Psychiatric Services and Medication Management. L'esprit has substance abuse treatment services for both adults and adolescents that include: Addictions Counseling, Counseling, Groups, Family Counseling, Case Management, Mentoring, Crisis Support, Peer Support, Drug Testing, Psychiatric Services and Medication Management. L'esprit offers monthly Prime For Life classes.

L'esprit  
120 S. Main St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-7641  
<http://lespritmt.com/>

**Livingston HealthCare**

Livingston HealthCare offers full-service Behavioral Health Services focused on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders.

Livingston HealthCare

320 Alpenglow Ln.

Livingston, MT 59047

(406) 222-3541

<https://www.livingstonhealthcare.org/Services/Psychiatry.aspx>

**Southwest Chemical Dependency Center Program**

Southwest Chemical Dependency Center provides individuals and family counseling for individuals struggling with substance abuse and sobriety issues. Sober living, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Group meetings and co-dependency meetings are offered weekly. Drug testing services available for those seeking Commercial Drivers Licensing.

Southwest Chemical Dependency Center

430 E. Park St.

Livingston, MT 59047

(406) 222-2812

email: swcdp@aol.com

**Montana Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

If you are in crisis, help is available. Call the Montana Suicide Prevention Lifeline, anytime 24/7, or go to your nearest emergency medical center.

Montana Suicide Prevention Lifeline

988 National suicide and crisis lifeline

1 (800) 273 TALK

(1 (800) 273-8255

or text "MT" to 741-741

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

**Rise**

Crisis line for youth 24/7, group supports for grief and suicide for youth and adults. The Cool Café after school program offering a free hangout with free snacks and meals.

**Youth Dynamics**

Youth Dynamics provides a wide range of strength-based, client-centered, supportive mental health services to children and families.

Youth Dynamics

817 W. Park St.

Livingston, MT 59047

(406) 548-6607

<http://www.youthdynamics.org/>

## **Children and Family Services**

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Park & Sweet Grass Counties**

It provides children facing adversity with strong professionally supported one-on-one relationships, to help the children to achieve success in life. BBBS partners with parents, volunteers, and other programs in the community.

Big Brothers Big Sisters  
105 South 2nd St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-1930  
<https://www.bbbsparkcounty.org/>

### **Childcare Connections**

A resource and referral agency that helps make childcare affordable and available for working families.

Child Care Connections  
1143 Stoneridge Dr.  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
(406) 587-7786  
<http://www.childcareconnections.info/>

### **HRDC-Head Start**

A free preschool program for children 3-5 years old. Eligibility is based on income, needs of the family.

HRDC- Head Start  
201 South F St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
<https://thehrdc.org/how-we-help/children/head-start-preschool/>

### **Learning Partners, Parents as Teachers Program**

Parents as Teacher's home visiting educational program. This program is designed to promote optimal early development, learning, and health of young children by engaging their parents/caregivers, which empowers parents/caregivers to become self-reliant.

Parents as Teachers Program  
Learning Partners  
112 W. Lewis St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 823-6356  
<http://www.chphealthmt.org/cl-lp.html>

### **Montana DPHHS Child and Family Services Division**

Federally mandated protective services for children who have been or are at substantial risk of abuse, neglect or abandonment. Investigates allegations of abuse or neglect. Works closely with the court, law enforcement, and other community service providers to obtain services for youth. Recognizes the protective capacities of families and incorporates them in assessments, decision making and actions with the goal of improving safety, permanency and well being for children.

Encourages communities to strengthen their prevention efforts and to share responsibility for the safety of their children and families. Foster parent training and licensing, home studies, resource, and referrals.

To report suspected abuse or neglect call:

1 (866) 820-5734

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/cfsd>

## **Energy Assistance**

### **Energy Share of Montana**

The primary purpose is to help Montanans faced with energy emergencies meet their needs and move towards self-reliance. Offers referrals for Furnace & Water Heater Safety & Efficiency Programs, Weatherization Programs.

### **Energy Share of Montana**

1-888-779-7589

<https://www.energysharemt.com/>

### **HRDC- Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)**

Provides help to eligible households during the winter months by paying a portion of their winter heating cost (October-April). May also include help with households that heat their home with wood.

### **HRDC Livingston**

111 S. 2nd St.

Livingston, MT 59047

(406) 333-2537

<https://thehrdc.org/how-we-help/energy/heat-bill-assistance/>

## **Health Care**

### **Community Health Partners**

Community Health Partners (CHP) medical clinic provides primary care services to adults and pediatric patients on chronic and acute illness, wellness exams and prevention strategies, family planning, and many other services. CHP also offers dental services, behavioral health, and medication management.

CHP accepts all forms of insurance, including Medicaid and Medicare, Healthy Montana Kids, private insurance as well as a sliding fee scale for patients not currently served by insurance.

Mon., Wed., Fri: 8 AM-5 PM

Tue, Thur.: 8 AM-7 PM

Saturday: 8 AM-NOON

Sunday: CLOSED

### **Community Health Partners**

112 W. Lewis St.

Livingston, MT 59047

(406) 222-1111 CHP

(406) 946-4291 Dental Clinic

<http://www.chphealthmt.org/index.html>

### **Livingston HealthCare**

Livingston HealthCare is a full-service medical center, providing critical services and rated as a level 4 trauma center. Livingston HealthCare provides a variety of community benefit programs such as Athlete Wellness, Diabetes Education, Family-Centered Prenatal Education and much more!

Livingston HealthCare

320 Alpenglow Lane  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-3541  
<https://www.livingstonhealthcare.org/>

## **Housing**

### **Family Promise**

Family Promise provides shelter assistance and full-time case management services to Gallatin County families experiencing homelessness and helps empower homeless families with children to achieve self-sufficiency through partnerships, services, and advocacy. They coordinate an Interfaith Hospitality Network made up of faith-based communities throughout the Gallatin Valley.

Family Promise  
429 East Story Street  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
(406) 582-7388  
<http://www.familypromisegv.org/>

### **HRDC- Warming Center Livingston, open November through March only**

Important Information:

1. The Warming Center is a low barrier, warm and safe place to sleep at night
2. Check-in is 7pm - 11pm
3. Check-out is 7 am
4. Entrance is via the alley at 119 S. 2nd St
5. There are overnight staff and volunteers
6. Separate rooms for men, women, and families
7. Common area with TV/DVD player, books, games, puzzles
8. Heavy snacks (soup, cereal), hot drinks available

### **HRDC- Livingston**

111 S. 2nd St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
333-2537  
[https://hrdc9.galaxydigital.com/agency/detail/?agency\\_id=94431](https://hrdc9.galaxydigital.com/agency/detail/?agency_id=94431)

### **HRDC- Warming Center- Bozeman**

The Warming Center offers seasonal shelter to anyone in need- families with children, single adults, and couples are welcome. Separate sleeping areas are provided. Trained staff and volunteers are on-site at all times during operating hours.

The Warming Center is open 7:00 pm-7:00 am 7 days a week during the winter months. HRDC offers the Streamline Bus Service from Livingston to Bozeman, free of charge. <https://streamlinebus.com/>

Warming Center  
2104 Industrial Dr.  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
(406) 585-3538  
<https://thehrdc.org/how-we-help/emergency-assistance/emergency-housing/>

### **Montana Department of Revenue**

The Montana Elderly Homeowner/Renter Credit program is a property tax relief program that provides a

refundable income tax credit of up to \$1,000. Montana homeowners or renters age 62 or older may qualify for this program even if you do not have to file an income tax return if they meet the eligibility criteria.

Montana Department of Revenue  
1201 US Hwy 10 West, Unit D2  
Livingston, MT 59047  
Phone (406) 222-4919  
[DORProp4B@mt.gov](mailto:DORProp4B@mt.gov)

## **Local Resources**

**ASPEN (Abuse Support Prevention Education Network)** Assistance for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, advocacy, safe house and prevention services and programming.

### **ASPEN**

411 East Calendar  
(406) 222-5902 main phone  
24/7 Support Line (406) 222-8154

### **Community Closet**

Local thrift store offering low-cost everyday items for individuals in need. Vouchers are given to those who cannot afford needed purchases but must meet eligibility criteria.

Community Closet  
416 E. Park St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-6200  
<https://www.communitycloset.org/community-closet>

Livingston Area Chamber of Commerce  
It offers a variety of exposure opportunities through connections with visitors, residents, and newcomers utilizing social media, web site marketing, networking events, ribbon cuttings, and more.

Livingston Area Chamber of Commerce  
303 E. Park St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-0850  
[www.livingston-chamber.com](http://www.livingston-chamber.com)

### **Livingston Food Resource Center**

Livingston Food Resource Center distributes monthly food boxes, senior commodities, students "Healthy Weekend bags", and offers a holiday food support program. Center is reliant on donations and support from the community. Fresh produce and bread may be picked up Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00-5:00 pm.

Food Distribution Hours 1:00-5:00 pm

202 South 2nd St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-5335  
<http://livingstonfrc.org/>

**Loaves and Fishes**

Provides free meals on a daily basis from 4-6 pm for families and individuals in need.

Loaves & Fishes  
301 S. Main St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-4824

**Meals in Wheels**

206 S. Main Street, Livingston  
(406) 333-2490

**Livingston Park County Public Library**

Open to all residents seeking access to information. Special items are available to seniors including large print books, unabridged audiobooks. Access to computers and the internet available. Bozeman Job Service visits the library to assist residents with building a resume, drafting a cover letter, or navigating online applications. Call for days/hours.

Livingston Park County Public Library  
225 E. Callender St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-6200  
<http://livingstonparkcountylibrary.blogspot.com/>

**Healthy Montana Kids (HMK)**

Healthy Montana Kids (HMK), Children's Health Insurance Plan offering a free or low-cost health insurance plan which provides coverage to eligible Montana children up to age 19. Benefits are administered through the Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) of Montana Provider Network, except for Federally Qualified Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics and Community Based Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Support Services. Treatments and services must be medically necessary and the member must be enrolled at the time the service is delivered. Covered services include medical, dental, eyeglasses, and other related services.

Eligibility  
Public Assistance Helpline  
[Office of Public Assistance contact information](#)  
(888) 706-1535

**Medical Benefits**

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana  
(855) 258-3489

**Pharmacy, Dental and Eyeglass Benefits**

Federally Qualified Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics and Community Based Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Support Services  
Montana Healthcare Programs, Member Helpline  
(800) 362-8312

**Montana DPHHS, Office of Public Assistance**

Montana DPHHS provides cash assistance (TANF), supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP, formerly food stamps), Medicaid, other services to those who are categorically eligible to move out of poverty and toward self-sufficiency. *This information is provided as a courtesy only.*

**Apply for assistance in person, or for questions about your case:**

Gallatin Co. Office of Public Assistance  
12 North 3rd  
Bozeman, MT 59407

[hhshcsopagallatin@mt.gov](mailto:hhshcsopagallatin@mt.gov)

**Apply by phones or for questions about your case:**

Montana Public Assistance Helpline  
1-888-706-1535

**To see if your eligible, apply for benefits online, check the status of your benefits, or report changes to your case:** <https://apply.mt.gov/>

**Montana Homeowner/Renter Credit Program**

The Montana Elderly Homeowner/Renter Credit program is a property tax relief program that provides a refundable income tax credit of up to \$1,000. Montana homeowners or renters age 62 or older may qualify for this program even if you do not have to file an income tax return if they meet the eligibility criteria.

**Montana Department of Revenue**

1201 US Hwy 10 West, Unit D2  
Livingston, MT 59047  
Phone (406) 222-4919  
[DORProp4B@mt.gov](mailto:DORProp4B@mt.gov)

**Montana Veterans Affairs**

Montana Veterans Affairs office has established a statewide network service for Montana's discharged veterans and their families. The VA office can assist with filing benefit claims, represent veterans and families in claims and appeals, obtain military service records, coordinate assistance with continuing education and more.

Belgrade Veteran Affairs Service Office  
(406) 388-4601

<http://montanadma.org/montana-veterans-affairs>

**Veteran Crisis Hotline:**

1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
[www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)

**RCS Combat Call Center:**

1-877-927-8387 (War Vets)

**Park County Senior Center**

Park County Senior Services provides a variety of programs and activities that promote the physical, intellectual and social well being of seniors 50 and older.

Park County Senior Center  
206 S. Main St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 333-2276  
<http://www.parkcountyseniorcenter.com/>

**Transportation**

**Streamline Bus**

Free transit service from Livingston to Bozeman. Has connecting service throughout the Bozeman area, Belgrade and Four Corners. Offers seasonal routes to Bridger Bowl and connects with the Skyline Bus service for travel to and from Big Sky.

Livingston Service provided Monday through Friday departing at 5:50 am and arriving at 6:45 pm. Visit the website for the current schedule.

<https://streamlinebus.com/>

### **Park County Windrider**

Windrider Transit provides a free fixed-route service delivery system to citizens and disabled persons in Livingston. All vehicles are ADA accessible and equipped with lifts. There is no fee to ride a Windrider bus., route available online.

Fixed Route Hours: Monday through Friday from 6:30 am to 5:50 pm and Saturdays from 8-noon.

Rides by appointment for medical service to Bozeman and Livingston offered. Call for information.

Ride Dispatch: (460) 922-5683

<http://www.parkcounty.org/Government-Departments/Transit/>



## Appendix A:

### CASPER Survey Results

Park County CASPER Results May 2022

Table 1. Residency

Statement	Frequency (n=120)	% Households	Projected Households	Projected %	95% CI
<b>1. Select which best describes your residency in Park County</b>					
Fulltime, 12 months a year	112	93.3	8959	93.3	92.8,93.8
Part time <12 months but >6 months	4	3.3	320	3.3	3.0,3.7
Part time <6 months	4	3.3	320	3.	3.0,3.7
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>2. I have lived at least part time in Park County for:</b>					
Less than 3 years	21	17.8	1680	17.8	17.0,18.6
More than 3 years	92	78.0	7359	78.0	77.1,78.8
Prefer not to say	1	0.9	80	0.9	0.7,1.1
Not applicable	4	3.4	320	3.4	3.0,3.8

Table 2. Basic Needs

Statement	Frequency (n=120)	% Households	Projected Households	Projected %	95% CI
<b>3. What best describes your housing situation</b>					
Own	85	72.0	6799	72.0	71.1,72.9
Rent	27	22.9	2160	22.9	22.1,23.7
Unsure/don't know	5	4.2	400	4.2	3.9,4.7

Prefer not to say	1	0.9	80	0.9	0.7,1.1
<b>4. In the past 12 months, have you been asked to move out of your home in Park County or had to move out because of rent or mortgage increases?</b>					
Yes	6	5.1	480	5.1	4.7,5.6
No	110	94.0	8799	94.0	93.5,94.5
Unsure/don't know	1	0.9	80	0.9	0.7,1.1
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>5. Do any of the following cause you/your household concern? Select all that apply.</b>					
Paying rent or mortgage	26	21.7	2080	21.7	20.9,22.5
Finding a place for your family to live	17	14.2	1360	14.2	13.5,14.9
Change in the stock market investments	32	26.7	2560	26.7	25.8,27.6
Paying for groceries/meals	28	23.3	2240	23.3	22.5,24.2
Paying for utilities	19	15.8	1520	15.8	15.1,16.6
Paying for childcare	3	2.5	240	2.5	2.2,2.8
Finding childcare	6	5.0	480	5.0	4.6,5.5
Having a reliable vehicle	13	10.8	1040	10.8	10.2,11.5
Paying for healthcare, insurance, medications	33	27.5	2640	26.6	26.6,28.4
Paying for gas and vehicle maintenance	44	36.7	3520	36.7	35.7,37.6
Paying for clothing	7	5.8	560	5.8	5.4,6.3
None are concerns	38	31.7	3040	31.7	30.7,32.6
Unsure/don't know	3	2.5	240	2.5	2.2,2.8

Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
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Table 3. Family Safety and Security

Statement	Frequency (n=120)	% Households	Projected Households	Projected %	95% CI
<b>6. Do you have family or friends to turn to if you feel lonely or face an emergency and need help?</b>					
Yes	106	89.8	8479	89.8	89.2,90.4
No	9	7.6	720	7.6	7.1,8.2
Unsure/don't know	3	2.5	240	2.5	2.2,2.9
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0

<b>7. Do you have enough savings to cover all your household expenses for up to 3 months in the case of emergency?</b>					
Yes	78	67.2	6239	67.2	66.3,68.2
No	20	17.2	1560	17.2	16.5,18.0
Unsure/don't know	9	7.8	720	7.8	7.2,8.3
Prefer not to say	9	7.8	720	7.8	7.2,8.3

<b>8. Does your household rely on any of the following programs to help with food? Select all that apply.</b>					
No/none apply	104	86.7	8319	86.7	86.0,87.3
SNAP	4	3.3	320	3.3	3.0,3.7
Free or reduced school lunch program	5	4.2	400	4.2	3.8,4.6
Weekend Backpack Program	0	0	0	0	0
Summer free lunch program	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Unsure/don't know	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Prefer not to say	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9

<b>9. Do you have children/young adults living in your household?</b>					
Yes	39	32.8	3120	32.8	31.8,33.7

No	79	66.4	6319	66.4	65.4,67.3
Prefer not to say	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
<b>10. In the last 3 months, have you been concerned about any of the following behaviors in children/young adults in your household? Select all that apply.</b>					
Frustration/anger towards others in household	4	3.3	320	3.3	3.0,3.7
Frustration/anger towards pets in household	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Prescription drug abuse	0	0	0	0	0
Marijuana use	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Alcohol use	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Tobacco use	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4, 1.9
Domestic violence	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Depression or anxiety	12	10.0	960	10.0	9.4,10.6

Poor school performance	5	4.2	400	4.2	3.8, 4.6
Difficulty in finding or keeping a job	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7, 1.0
Difficulty in building trust within the family or with friends	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Suicidal thoughts or attempts	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Illicit drug use	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
None	70	58.3	5599	58.3	57.3,59.3
Unsure/don't know	3	2.5	240	2.5	2.2,2.8
Prefer not to say	3	2.5	240	2.5	2.2,2.8
<b>11. Do you have adequate free time to spend with your family or to take care of yourself?</b>					
Yes	93	83.0	7439	83.0	82.2,83.8

No	16	14.3	1280	14.3	13.6,15.0
Unsure	1	0.9	80	0.9	0.7,1.1
Declined	2	1.8	160	1.8	1.5,2.1
<b>12. In the last 3 months have you been concerned about any of the following behaviors in yourself or other adults in your household? Select all that apply.</b>					
Frustration/anger towards others in household	7	5.8	560	5.8	5.4,6.3
Frustration/anger towards pets in household	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Prescription drug abuse	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Marijuana use	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Alcohol use	6	5.0	480	5.0	4.6,5.5
Tobacco use	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Domestic violence	0	0	0	0	0
Depression or anxiety	24	20.0	1920	20.0	19.2,20.8
Suicidal thoughts or attempts	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Difficulty in finding or keeping a job	3	2.5	240	2.5	2.2,2.8
Difficulty in building trust within the family or friends	5	4.2	400	4.2	3.8,4.6
Gambling	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Illicit drug use	0	0	0	0	0
None	82	68.3	6560	68.3	67.4,69.3
Unsure/don't know	0	0	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
<b>13. Do you know anyone who has been a victim of violence in Park County in the past year?</b>					
Yes	15	13.2	1200	13.2	12.5,13.9
No	92	80.7	7359	80.7	80.0,81.5

Unsure/don't know	6	5.3	480	5.3	4.8,5.7
Prefer not to say	1	0.9	80	0.9	0.7,1.1
<b>14. Where do you go to for information or help? Select all that apply.</b>					
Doctors office	53	44.2	4240	44.2	43.2,45.2
Hospital or ER	36	30.0	2880	30.0	29.1,30.9
Family/friends	76	63.3	6079	63.3	62.4,64.3
Internet/social media	30	25.0	2400	25.0	24.1,25.9
Counselor or psychiatrist	26	21.7	2080	21.7	20.9,22.5
School	8	6.7	640	6.7	6.2,7.2
Church or religious groups	19	15.8	1520	15.8	15.1,16.6
911 or law enforcement	36	30.0	2880	30.0	29.1,30.9
Don't know where to go for help	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Cant afford to go for help	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Don't want to go for help/nothing can help	0	0	0	0	0
Don't need any help	13	10.8	1040	10.8	10.2,11.5
Prefer not to say	3	2.5	240	2.5	2.2,2.8

Statement	Frequency (n=120)	% Households	Projected Households	Projected %	95% CI
<b>15. Do you feel any stress or worry about issues outside your home? Select all that apply.</b>					
Worry about kids not being safe in the community	18	15.0	1440	15.0	14.3,15.7
Climate, wildfires, smoke, drought	69	57.5	5519	57.5	56.5,58.5

National or international news events	60	50.0	4800	50.0	49.0,51.0
Traffic concerns	29	24.2	2320	24.2	23.3,25.0
Change in community character	49	40.8	3920	40.8	39.9,44.8
Community violence	6	5.0	480	5.0	4.6,5.5
Ability to hire workers to help with household projects	22	18.3	1760	18.3	17.6,19.1
Unsure/don't know	6	5.0	480	5.0	4.6,5.5
Prefer not to say	5	4.2	400	4.2	3.8,4.6
<b>16. Have you considered moving out of Park County in the past year?</b>					
Yes	43	36.4	3440	36.4	35.5,37.4
No	72	61.0	5759	61.0	60.0,62.0
Unsure/don't know	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.5,2.0
Prefer not to say	1	0.9	80	0.9	0.7,1.1
<b>17. If yes, why? Select all that apply. (n=43)</b>					
Cost of living too high	26	60.4	-	-	-
Cant find good work	6	14.0	-	-	-
Cant find a place to live	8	18.6	-	-	-
Want to be closer to family/friends	9	20.9	-	-	-
Hard to make friends here	6	14.0	-	-	-
Community has changed	23	53.5	-	-	-
Health reasons	1	2.3	-	-	-

Unsure/don't know	2	4.7	-	-	-
Prefer not to say	0	0	-	-	-
<b>18. Of the following, who do you feel you can trust? Select all that apply.</b>					
My local government	38	31.7	3040	31.7	30.7,32.6
Federal government	24	20.0	1920	20.0	19.2,20.8
Local schools	49	40.8	3920	40.8	39.9,41.8
Mainstream news media	17	14.2	1360	14.2	13.5,14.9
My neighbor	71	59.2	5679	59.2	58.2,60.2
My local elections	37	30.8	2960	30.8	29.9,31.8
My local law enforcement	65	54.2	5199	54.2	53.2,55.2
My local healthcare provider	63	52.5	5039	52.5	51.5,53.5
None	10	8.3	800	8.3	7.8,8.9
Unsure/don't know	6	5.0	480	5.0	4.6,5.5
Prefer not to say	5	4.2	400	4.2	3.8,4.6
<b>19. What is/are your most trusted source(s) of news and information. Select all that apply.</b>					
Schools	15	12.5	1200	12.5	11.9,13.2
Friends and family	40	33.3	3200	33.3	32.4,34.3
Livingston Enterprise	34	28.3	2720	28.3	27.4,29.2
Montana Pioneer	0	0	0	0	0
KTVQ	16	13.3	1280	13.3	12.7,14.0
KULR 8	21	17.5	1680	17.5	16.8,18.3
KISS FM	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
NPR/YPR	30	25.0	2400	25.0	24.1,25.9
KGLT	7	5.8	560	5.8	5.4,6.3
KICK County	0	0	0	0	0
Fox News	17	14.2	1360	14.2	13.5,14.9
CNN	24	20.0	1920	20.0	19.2,20.8

Billings Gazette	9	7.5	720	7.5	7.0,8.0
Bozeman Chronicle	12	10.0	960	10.0	9.4,10.6
Facebook	8	6.7	640	6.7	6.2,7.2
Community newsletter	13	10.8	1040	10.8	10.2,11.5
Twitter	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
TikTok	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Instagram	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Individual websites or community orgs	19	15.8	1520	15.8	15.1,16.6
Church	14	11.7	1120	11.7	11.0,12.3
None	8	6.7	640	6.7	6.2,7.2
Unsure/don't know	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Prefer not to say	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9

Table 5. Community Life

Statement	Frequency (n=120)	% Households	Projected Households	Projected %	95% CI
<b>20. I believe Park County is a good place to grow old.</b>					
Strongly agree	37	31.6	2960	31.6	30.7,32.6
Somewhat agree	38	32.5	3040	32.5	31.5,33.4
Neither agree nor disagree	13	11.1	1040	11.1	10.5,11.8
Somewhat disagree	13	11.1	1040	11.1	10.5,11.8
Strongly disagree	10	8.6	800	8.6	8.0,9.1
Unsure/don't know	6	5.1	480	5.1	4.7,5.6
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>21. I believe Park County is a good place to raise a family.</b>					
Strongly agree	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat agree	37	31.4	2960	31.4	30.4,32.3
Neither agree nor disagree	11	9.3	880	9.3	8.8,9.9
Somewhat disagree	13	11.0	1040	11.0	10.4,11.7

Strongly disagree	51	43.2	4080	43.2	42.2,44.2
Unsure/don't know	5	4.2	400	4.2	3.9,4.7
Prefer not to say	1	0.9	80	0.9	0.7,1.1
<b>22. I believe people of all races, ethnicities, backgrounds, economic status, and beliefs in my community are treated fairly.</b>					
Strongly agree	23	19.5	1840	19.5	18.7,20.3
Somewhat agree	40	33.9	3200	33.9	33.0,34.9
Neither agree nor disagree	14	11.9	1120	11.9	11.2,12.5
Somewhat disagree	14	11.9	1120	11.9	11.2,12.5
Strongly disagree	11	9.3	880	9.3	8.8,9.9
Unsure/don't know	16	13.6	1280	13.6	12.9,14.3
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>23. I believe I can get the healthcare I need in my community.</b>					
Strongly agree	43	36.4	3440	36.4	35.5,37.4
Somewhat agree	37	31.4	2960	31.4	30.4,32.3
Neither agree nor disagree	15	12.7	1200	12.7	12.1,13.4
Somewhat disagree	12	10.2	960	10.2	9.6,10.8
Strongly disagree	8	6.8	640	6.8	6.3,7.3
Unsure/don't know	3	2.5	240	2.5	6.3,7.3
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>24. I feel connected to my community</b>					
Strongly agree	26	22.0	2080	22.0	21.2,22.9
Somewhat agree	54	45.8	4320	45.8	44.8,46.8
Neither agree nor disagree	20	17.0	1600	17.0	16.2,17.7
Somewhat disagree	11	9.3	880	9.3	8.8,9.9
Strongly disagree	4	3.4	320	3.4	3.0,3.8
Unsure/don't know	3	2.5	240	2.5	2.2,2.9
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	
<b>25. I belong to one or more local community organizations such as a club, church, or nonprofit.</b>					
Yes	60	50.4	4800	50.4	49.4,51.4
No	49	41.2	3920	41.2	40.2,42.2
Unsure/don't know	4	3.4	320	3.4	3.0,3.7

Prefer not to say	6	5.0	480	5.0	4.6,5.5
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Table 6. Public Transportation

Statement	Frequency (n=120)	% Households	Projected Households	Projected %	95% CI
<b>26. Have you ever used the Windrider Transit bus transportation service that offers free fixed route services throughout the city of Livingston?</b>					
Yes	3	2.6	240	2.6	2.3,3.0
No	111	97.4	8879	97.4	97.0,97.7
Unsure/don't know	0	0	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>27. If no, why not? Select all that apply.</b>					
Didn't know about it	19	15.8	1520	15.8	15.1,16.6
Doesn't fit my schedule	4	3.3	320	3.3	3.0,3.7
Cant get to the bus stop	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Easier to drive	32	26.7	2560	26.7	25.8,27.6
Don't need public transportation	52	43.3	4160	43.3	42.3,44.3
Unsure/don't know	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Prefer not to say	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
<b>28. Are you aware that Windrider Transit offers fare free bus service to Bozeman for Medical/Dental/Vision/Behavioral Health appointments on Tuesday and Wednesday by appointment?</b>					
Yes	45	39.1	3600	39.1	38.1,40.1
No	65	56.5	5199	56.5	55.5,57.5
Unsure/don't know	5	4.4	400	4.4	4.0,4.8
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>29. If bus service was offered to Billings for Medical/Dental/Vision/Behavioral Health appointments two days per month, would you be interested in this type of transportation?</b>					
Yes	33	28.5	2640	28.5	27.5,29.4
No	59	50.9	4720	50.9	49.8,51.9
Unsure/don't know	21	18.1	1680	18.1	17.3,18.9
Prefer not to say	3	2.6	240	2.6	2.3,2.9

Table 7. Employment

Statement	Frequency (n=120)	% Households	Projected Households	Projected %	95% CI
<b>30. What best describes your employment status?</b>					
Employed fulltime	53	44.2	5359	55.8	54.8,56.8
Employed part time	10	8.3	800	8.3	7.8,8.9
Retired	38	31.7	3040	31.7	30.7,32.6
Student	4	3.3	320	3.3	3.0,3.7
Armed forces/ military	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Self-employed	18	15.0	1440	15.0	14.3,15.7
Stay at home parent	5	4.2	400	4.2	3.8,4.6
Unable to work due to illness or injury	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
Unemployed for less than one year	0	0	0	0	0
Unemployed for more than one year	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Unsure/don't know	0	0	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.4,1.9
<b>31. Are you currently working for an employer based in Park County, including self-employment?</b>					
Yes	56	51.9	4480	51.9	50.8,52.9
No	49	45.4	3920	45.4	44.3,46.4
Unsure/don't know	3	2.8	240	2.8	2.5,3.2
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>32. Do you get healthcare benefits from your employer?</b>					
Yes	42	40.0	3360	40.0	39.0,41.1
No	59	56.2	4720	56.2	55.1,57.3
Unsure/don't know	4	3.8	320	3.8	3.4,4.2
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>33. Do you get retirement benefits from your employer?</b>					

Yes	48	48.0	3840	48.0	46.9,49.1
No	47	47.0	3760	47.0	45.9,48.1
Unsure/don't know	1	1.0	80	1.0	0.8,1.2
Prefer not to say	4	4.0	320	4.0	3.6,4.5
<b>34. Do you work remotely?</b>					
Yes	25	24.0	2000	24.0	23.1,25.0
No	76	73.1	3079	73.1	72.1,74.0
Unsure/don't know	1	1.0	80	1.0	0.8,1.2
Prefer not to say	2	1.9	160	1.9	1.7,2.2
<b>35. Do you commute to work?</b>					
Yes	32	30.8	2560	30.8	29.8,31.8
No	70	67.3	5599	67.3	66.3,68.3
Unsure/don't know	2	1.9	160	1.9	1.7,2.2
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>36. Where do you commute?</b>					
Gallatin	112	93.3	8959	93.3	92.8,93.8
Sweet Grass	1	0.8	80	0.8	0.7,1.0
Other	7	5.8	560	5.8	5.4,6.3
<b>37. Do you receive social benefits such as social security or disability?</b>					
Yes	43	37.1	3440	37.1	36.1,38.1
No	71	61.2	5679	61.2	60.2,62.2
Unsure/don't know	2	1.7	160	1.7	1.5,2.0
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0
<b>38. Has your income kept up with your expenses in the past year?</b>					
Yes	64	55.7	5119	55.7	54.6,56.7
No	38	33.0	3040	33.0	32.1,34.0
Unsure/don't know	9	7.8	720	7.8	7.3,8.4
Prefer not to say	4	3.5	320	3.5	3.1,3.9
<b>39. I believe a person can live comfortably in Park County, including all household expenses, transportation, healthcare, leisure, savings, and retirement, earning to the following take home monthly wage.</b>					
\$2000	4	3.5	320	3.5	3.1,3.8
\$4000	38	32.8	3040	32.8	31.8,33.7
\$6000	32	27.6	2560	27.6	26.7,28.5
\$8000	12	10.3	960	10.3	9.7,11.0

\$10,000	6	5.2	480	5.2	4.7,5.6
Unsure/don't know	15	12.9	1200	12.9	12.3,13.6
Prefer not to say	9	7.8	720	7.8	7.2,8.3
<b>40. Does someone in your household work more than one job to pay household bills?</b>					
Yes	19	16.8	1520	16.8	16.1,17.6
No	89	78.8	7119	78.8	77.9,79.6
Unsure/don't know	5	4.4	400	4.4	4.0,4.9
Prefer not to say	0	0	0	0	0



## Appendix B:

### Evaluation of Past Work from Livingston HealthCare's Community Health Improvement Plan (2019-2022)

The prioritized health needs as determined through the assessment which the facility will be addressing relate to the following health issues.

1. Behavioral Health
2. Community Wellness
3. Access to Care

The following planned actions were implemented successfully within LHC per the 2019 Community Health Improvement Plan.

#### Integrated Behavioral Health

<b><i>Completed Action</i></b>	<b><i>Impact</i></b>
1. Expand utilization of team-based care within the Ranger Clinic and RHC .	Added RN Care Coordinator and Medical Assistant position to Behavioral Health Team in RHC which improved coordination of care and patient outcomes.
2. Develop care pathways for Behavioral Health Services.	Increased staff and provider knowledge related to importance of screening as well as resources available to support patients and their families in a team-based approach to treatment.
3. Behavioral Health workforce training.	Certification/Training for RN/MA's in mental health first aid or fundamentals of behavioral health.
4. Evaluate Gaps in Service and Overall Strategy for Behavioral Health Services.	Behavioral Health Team went through a strategic planning process for potential expansion of services.

#### Pediatric and Adolescent Behavioral Health

<b><i>Completed Action</i></b>	<b><i>Impact</i></b>
1. Implement school- based outpatient treatment (SBOT) for behavioral health services	Improved access to BH services for students, with onsite access provided at Park High Ranger Clinic Improved communication and coordination of care for students. Expand availability of behavioral health services for adolescents in Park County.

2. Recruit and Hire clinical psychologist.	Clinical Psychologist hired and implemented into Ranger Clinic 2020, pandemic caused some challenges but fully integrated as of fall 2022.
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### Emergency Department Behavioral Health

<b><i>Completed Action</i></b>	<b><i>Impact</i></b>
1. Increase collaboration with community partners to support patient needs	Enhanced relationships with community partners to provide support services to patients. Signed Charter for Park County Behavioral Health Crisis Response Coalition

### Trauma Informed Care

<b><i>Completed Action</i></b>	<b><i>Impact</i></b>
1. Create consistent education for providers and care givers regarding Trauma, ACES, its prevalence and types.	Incorporated Adverse Childhood Experiences presentation for all new employees during bi-monthly new employee orientation
2. Use community events as avenues for education and awareness	LW49 employee's trained as youth and adult mental health first aid trainers and provides training to the LHC staff and community
3. Community wide and LHC workforce education and training on QPR	Increase awareness of suicide prevention resources and tools through the LiveWell49 Coalition. Create a community of gatekeepers for identifying individuals with mental health crisis using trained QPR employees.

### Connect Referral

<b><i>Completed Action</i></b>	<b><i>Impact</i></b>
1. Increased use of Connect Referral to connect patients with support and services they need	Increased staff and provider awareness of patients struggling with social determinants of health and connect them with resources available.

### Unintentional Injury and Violence

<b><i>Completed Action</i></b>	<b><i>Impact</i></b>
1. Trauma prevention education. Focus on bicycle safety.	Promote bicycle safety throughout the community. Partnered with the Cayden James Leonard Bike Rodeo to provide education and free bicycle helmets.

### Health Education

<b><i>Completed Action</i></b>	<b><i>Impact</i></b>
1. Continue and enhance community educational offerings	Enhance patient knowledge and improved self-management, through virtual fitness and diabetes prevention and healthy lifestyles classes.
2. Enhancement of internal education and reference materials through a healthcare best practice reference (Lippincott)	Healthcare providers have access to and expand knowledge of best practices and clinical practice evidence-based guidelines.
3. Enhanced transitions of care by improving communication and education at discharge from LHC services.	Improve patient experience and outcomes through patient engagement and education of after care and self-management through expanded care coordination efforts.

### Support Active Lifestyle and Physical Activity

<b><i>Completed Action</i></b>	<b><i>Impact</i></b>
1. Participate in and Support local 'active lifestyle' events/ programs (Night Owl Race, Moose Chase Race)	Increased participation in sponsorships and support of local events/ programs for LHC staff as well as community members
2. Sponsored 3 seasons of local Girls on the Run program in partnership local elementary schools.	Provided mentorship and encouragement for local girls using an evidence-based enrichment curriculum for 3rd, 4th, 5th grade girls that includes running.

### Substance Abuse

<b><i>Completed Action</i></b>	<b><i>Impact</i></b>
Revise and implement system-wide opioid prescribing policy, which includes patient contracts to assure patient safety, education, monitoring and compliance.	Implementation of Prescribing policy: PCMM-400 Guidelines for Chronic Controlled Substance Prescribing
Evaluate alternative treatment options to opiates for pain management.	Cultivate stronger collaboration for alternative treatment options utilizing therapy services. It is in our policy for prescribing.
Implemented electronic prescribing of controlled substances	Help prevent potential drug diversion through electronic monitoring of drug inventories, dispensing, waste etc.

# **Park County, Montana**

## **Community Resource Assessment Report**

**May 1, 2024**

Prepared by:

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CTC Coordinator:

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Our vision: Park County CTC dedicates its assets to foster and develop community resources to ensure youth and families have healthy relationships and diverse community connections.

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### Park County, Montana CTC Participants

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Park County *Communities That Care* is a collaborative project of public and private health, education, human service, and civic organizations; local businesses; and citizens. Some of those who have been represented include:

Park County Health Department  
MSU Extension  
Park County Sheriff's Office  
Livingston Food Resource Center  
Park County Special Education Cooperative  
Livingston School District  
St. Mary's School  
LiveWell 49  
Southwest MT Prevention  
Farm to School  
CASA Park County  
MT Family Services  
Educatio  
Big Brothers Big Sisters Park County

City of Livingston  
Livingston Parks and Recreation  
Youth Probation and Parole  
Community Health Partners  
Rural Resilience  
Shields Valley School District  
Gardiner Public Schools  
Livingston Healthcare  
ASPEN Outreach  
Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation  
Clyde Park City Hall  
Gardiner Chamber of Commerce  
Teslow Youth Project

# Anytown Resources Assessment Report

## Table of Contents

### I. Executive Summary

### II. Introduction

- A. The Park County *Communities That Care* effort**
  - 1. About the *Communities That Care* system
  - 2. Key accomplishments to date
- B. The resources assessment**
  - 1. How the information was collected
  - 2. How effective resources and gaps were identified
  - 3. How to use this report

### III. The Resources Assessment Information

- A. Priority risk factor #1: Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization (Community Domain)**
  - 1. Resources
  - 2. Gaps, issues and barriers
- B. Priority risk factor #2: Low Commitment to School (School Domain)**
  - 1. Resources
  - 2. Gaps, issues and barriers
- C. Priority risk factor #3: Family Conflict (Family Domain)**
  - 1. Resources
  - 2. Gaps, issues and barriers
- D. Priority risk factor #4: Perceived Risk of Drug Use (Peer and Individual Domain)**
  - 1. Resources
  - 2. Gaps, issues and barriers
- E. Priority risk factor #5: Depressive Symptoms (Peer and Individual Domain)**
  - 1. Resources
  - 2. Gaps, issues and barriers

### IV. Conclusions

- A. Tested, effective resources**
- B. Gaps, issues and barriers**
- C. Recommendations and next steps**

### V. Appendices

- A. Acknowledgments**
- B. Resource inventory**

# Anytown Resources Assessment Report

## Executive Summary

This report describes the results of the resource assessment completed as part of the Park County *Communities That Care* effort. The *Communities That Care* system is a way for members of a community to work together to promote positive youth development. The system was developed by Dr. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard Catalano and is based on their research, which has identified risk factors that predict youth problem behaviors and protective factors that buffer children from risk and help them succeed in life.

A key goal of the *Communities That Care* effort is to identify which risk factors, protective factors, and problem behaviors are prevalent in a community, and implement tested, effective programs to address the community's unique profile. To that end, the Risk and Protective Factor Assessment workgroup collected and analyzed data on Park County and, with input from the community, identified the following risk factors as priorities for community planning:

- Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization (Community Domain)
- Low Commitment to School (School Domain)
- Family Conflict (Family Domain)
- Perceived Risk of Drug Use (Peer and Individual Domain).
- Depressive Symptoms (Peer and Individual Domain).

The resource assessment was the next step in the *Communities That Care* process. In March 2024, members of the Resource Assessment and Evaluation workgroup attended the Assessing Community Resources Workshop. Using a survey refined at the workshop, workgroup members collected prevention program information from Park County to youth ages 0-18 and parents/caregivers. The assessment was completed in March 2024.

Based on the assessment information, the Resource Assessment and Evaluation workgroup suggest that:

- There are 4 tested, effective programs in Park County that address the risk factor *Low Commitment to School*. One of these tested and effective programs is more community based, and the other 3 are school based curricula. The population impact of the community-based program is minimal due to capacity, and the school-based curricula are implemented with varied fidelity and in different locations. It is a suggestion of the workgroup to determine the implementation fidelity and effectiveness of all programs to select and bolster those that demonstrate effectiveness.
- There is a lack of tested and effective programs to address Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization, Family Conflict, and Perceived Risk of

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

Drug Use that are consistently implemented and universal. The workgroup suggests identifying a more frequent program in each domain that addresses these factors.

- We have identified 3 evidence based, universal programs (PAX Tools, Signs of Suicide, and YAM) that are available but not fully utilized in our schools or across the county and are worth further discussion. The workgroup believes a county wide calendar for implementation in our schools would aid bolstering the implementation.



# Anytown Resources Assessment Report

## Introduction

### **The Park County *Communities That Care* Effort**

In the Fall of 2023 Park County Community began implementing the *Communities That Care* prevention-planning system. Developed by Dr. J. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard Catalano of the University of Washington's Social Development Research Group (SDRG) in Seattle, Washington, the *Communities That Cares* system is a way for members of a community to work together to efficiently and effectively promote positive youth development and prevent youth problem behaviors such as substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school drop-outs, and violence.

Park County *Communities That Care* Project seeks to reduce problem behaviors and promote positive behaviors by addressing risk factors that exist in the community that have been shown to increase the likelihood that children will become involved in problem behaviors in adolescence and young adulthood. Park County *Communities That Care* Project also will attempt to enhance protective factors in the community that have been shown to buffer the effects of exposure to risk factors.

Park County is using the *Communities That Care* process to achieve the community's vision of a compassionate, accepting Park County where people actively work together to create a safe and healthy environment for all.

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### Key Accomplishments in Park County

- The *MT PNA* was administered in 2020 in one school in Park County. Three school districts across the County have committed to delivering the PNA in the Spring of 2024. As of March 25, 2024, two schools have confirmed completion and one school has a projected delivery date of April 18, 2024.
- In early Summer 2023, a full-time coordinator for the Park County *Communities That Care* effort was hired.
- In August 2023, community leaders attended a Key Leader Orientation and committed to the *Communities That Care* effort.
- In October and November 2023, community members completed Community Board Orientations to learn about Communities that Care and begin the “work”.
- In Winter 2023, the Risk and Protective Factor Workgroup attended the Community Assessment Training and completed the Community Risk and Protective Factor Assessment Report. This report was presented to Key Leaders and Community Board members on January 31, 2024 in Wilsall. All members voted and approved the presented risk factors that’ll guide our work.
- Also in March 2024, members of the Resources Assessment and Evaluation workgroup attended the Assessing Community Resources Workshop. Using a survey refined at the training event, workgroup members collected prevention program information from Park County delivering programs to youth ages 0-18 and parents/caregivers. The assessment was completed in March 2024. This report details the results of that assessment.

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### The Resource Assessment

The key goal of the *Communities That Care* system is for the community to develop a profile of the risk factors, protective factors and problem behaviors in their community, and to develop a plan for addressing the risk factors that are most elevated while enhancing protective factors.

This report supports the second step in that process. The Resource Assessment and Evaluation workgroup has collected information about the resources that address Park County *Communities That Care* priority risk and protective factors. The workgroup used survey information and input from the community to identify tested, effective resources that focus on youth and families of youth as well as the gaps in those resources. Coupled with the Community Assessment Report, the information contained in this report will serve as the foundation for the Park County *Communities That Care* Community Action Plan.

### How the Information Was Collected

During the Assessing Community Resources Workshop, workgroup members created a list of agencies, organizations, and groups in the area that provide programming for children. Next, workgroup members refined a survey to gather relevant information from each resource listed in the inventory. The survey was used to confirm whether each resource addresses one or more of the Park County *Communities That Care* priority risk factors impacting our youth. Additionally, the survey questions helped workgroup members identify each resource's goals and strategies, target population, evaluation history and evidence of effectiveness, and any gaps in, issues with, or barriers to service.

Members of the Resource Assessment and Evaluation Workgroup, the community coordinator, and other community members administered the survey to all agreeable agencies, organizations, and groups on the list; the majority of the surveys were completed. As a result, workgroup members were able to identify resources available to youth across Park County that fit the criteria of tested and effective prevention strategies.

# Anytown Resources Assessment Report

## Assessment details

Members of the Resource Assessment and Evaluation workgroup analyzed the survey information to identify tested, effective youth-development and prevention resources, as well as resource gaps and areas for improvement that exist in Park County. The following criteria were established for effective resources:

- An effective resource should address research-based priority risk factors.
- An effective resource should enhance research-based protective factors.
- An effective resource should intervene at a developmentally appropriate age.
- An effective resource should have demonstrated effectiveness in a high-quality evaluation.

Gaps were identified in several ways. Survey items were used to identify resource-specific gaps, such as failure to serve a geographic area of the community. Broader gaps—such as a lack of tested, effective resources that address a particular risk or protective factor—were then identified.

## How to use this report

The Resource Assessment Report is intended to help participants at the Community Planning workshop develop the Park County *Communities That Care* Community Action Plan. Participants developing the Community Action Plan should use this report to:

- select tested, effective programs, policies and practices to fill identified gaps;
- formulate systems-change strategies to expand or enhance existing tested, effective resources; and to
- reduce overlap and duplication in existing tested, effective resources.

Additionally, we encourage community members to review Appendix A, an inventory of Park County's youth-development and prevention resources. The inventory lists all of the resources investigated during the assessment and indicates which resources are identified as tested and effective. Appendix A can help increase community members' awareness and use of these tested, effective resources.

## Report overview

The next sections of the report provide detailed information about the community's resources and gaps, organized by priority risk factor. The conclusion presents a summary of the resources and gaps, along with recommendations for future action.

# Anytown Resources Assessment Report

## Basic Definitions

**Evidence Based Program:** The program is evaluated using an experimental design. The evaluation studies are submitted to peer review by other scientists, and often are published in peer-reviewed journals. After multiple evaluations, the program is often submitted to a federal agency or another scientific organization that endorses the program as evidence-based. The program is presented in a manual so that it can be implemented locally, as close as possible to the way the program was designed. This kind of “treatment fidelity” is very important to achieve the demonstrated results of the program.

**Strategy:** methods that teachers use to deliver course material in ways that keep students engaged and practicing different skill sets. An instructor may select different teaching strategies according to unit topic, grade level, class size, and classroom resources. Many kinds of instructional strategies are employed to achieve teaching and learning goals and support different kinds of students.

**Practices:** Practices are the way things are ordinarily done in a place of business. They may include formal procedures, but often they are the result of organizational culture and habits that have accumulated over time.

**Policy:** Policies are "principles, rules, and guidelines formulated or adopted by an organization to reach its long-term goals" Policies are guiding principles about how business should be conducted, and they generally outline standards of conduct, conformity with legal responsibilities and guidelines, and consistent ways of handling situations. ([www.BusinessDictionary.com](http://www.BusinessDictionary.com)).

**Fidelity:** refers to the closeness between the formal and implemented program and is the determination of how well a curriculum is implemented in line with its original design. ([EJ1349347.pdf \(ed.gov\)](#))

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### **Risk Factor: Low Neighborhood Attachment (Community)**

Low neighborhood bonding is related to higher levels of juvenile crime and drug selling. Youth may feel fragmented from their neighborhood.

Perhaps the most significant issue affecting community attachment is whether residents feel they can make a difference in their communities. Neighborhood disorganization makes it more difficult for schools, churches, and families to promote positive social values and norms.

The *MT Prevention Needs Assessment* revealed that a majority of students in all grades surveyed are at risk for health & behavior problems based on their exposure to this risk factor. As Figure 3 indicates, students reported particularly high scores for Low Neighborhood Attachment in comparison with the average for the *Communities That Care* normative population. Additionally, at 58%, Low Neighborhood Attachment is the most elevated risk factor in the “Community” domain and exceeds the State average by 10%.

#### Relevant resources

Big Brothers Big Sisters has been present in Park County for 51 years and currently serves 30 matched pairs (30 youth, 30 Bigs). Their presence is primarily in Livingston, but does match students from Emigrant and Shields Valley when referred.

#### Gaps, issues and barriers

Big Brothers Big Sisters is primarily Livingston centric and serves 30 youth due to limited staffing capacity and “Big” availability.

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### **Risk Factor: Low Commitment to School (School)**

Lack of commitment to school means the child no longer sees the role of student as meaningful and rewarding. Young people who have lost this commitment to school are at higher risk for five of the six health & behavior problems.<sup>1</sup> Students who feel appreciated and rewarded for their involvement in school have reduced likelihood of involvement in drug use and problem behaviors. Giving students positive feedback and opportunities for participation helps create a feeling of personal investment in school and learning, reducing the likelihood that the students will become involved in problem behaviors.

#### Relevant resources

Currently there is one universal community resource that addresses the risk factor *Low Commitment to School* that is tested and proven effective. *Big Brothers/Big Sisters* provides services to youth in Park County. Although Big Brothers/Big Sisters is not as present in our rural communities, they do match youth from those communities if referred.

PAX is used sparingly in Livingston Schools and has been, in the past used in Shields Valley, but is not currently used with fidelity or consistency in either location. PAX is a tested and effective program that addresses Low Commitment to School.

Character Strong offers comprehensive guidance lessons and materials for the school counselor and all teachers. Students will contribute to a positive school community to foster a healthy learning and social environment. Character Strong is currently being utilized in Shields Valley, Gardiner, Arrowhead, and Cooke City Schools.

Conscious Discipline equips educators to integrate social-emotional learning, discipline and self-regulation so they spend less time policing behavior and more time teaching vital life skills. Conscious Discipline is implemented daily in the Livingston Schools where they have individuals trained as of 2020.

Second Step® social-emotional learning (SEL) programs empower preschoolers, teens, and all ages in between to build skills for success. Choose from a cohesive family of research-based programs that work together to provide SEL throughout students' developmental stages, and in both classroom and out-of-school time settings.

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<sup>1</sup> Boers, Reinecke, Seddig, & Mariotti, 2010; Catalano et al., 2011; Gottfredson, 2001; Guo, Hawkins, Hill, & Abbott, 2001; Jessor & Jessor, 1977; Kosterman et al., 2000; Najaka et al., 2001

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### Gaps, issues and barriers

At the time of our in-person interview in March 2024, there were 30 Big Brothers Big Sisters matches across Park County. Twenty-four of those matches were community matches and 6 matches are after school program matches. Two youth from Shields Valley are served and some from Emigrant. The great majority of youth matches and “bigs” mentoring are in Livingston. Big Brothers Big Sisters did not have Park County data separated from Big Sky data at the time, but was doing their best to compile. It should also be noted that in order for *Big Brothers/Big Sisters* to address the risk factor of *Low Commitment to School*, the mentors need to be trained to specifically address this factor with the students if not serving youth in the after-school programming.

PAX Good Behavior Game (GBG) is a classroom-based behavior management strategy for elementary school that teachers use along with a school's standard instructional curricula. GBG uses a classroom-wide game format with teams and rewards to socialize children to the role of student and reduce aggressive, disruptive classroom behavior, which is a risk factor for adolescent and adult illicit drug abuse, alcohol abuse, cigarette smoking, antisocial personality disorder (ASPD), and violent and criminal behavior.

Character Strong is currently being utilized in Shields Valley, Arrowhead, Gardiner, and Cooke City Schools. This curriculum focuses on developing strong character traits to help students achieve academically, socially, and emotionally. Youth will learn about and develop strong character traits such as honesty, courage, cooperation, empathy, and more.

Conscious Discipline is present in Livingston Schools and aims to help Children learn the social-emotional and communication skills necessary to manage themselves, resolve conflict, prevent bullying and develop prosocial behaviors. Although some educators were trained in 2020, there is a need for continued educator training.

Second Step is delivered to grades K-5 in weekly guidance lessons in Livingston Schools. It is a state funded program for schools, and does not require training.

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### **Risk Factor: Family Conflict (Family)**

Family conflict refers to children raised in families high in conflict, whether or not the child is directly involved in the conflict, appearing at risk for both delinquency and drug use.

#### Relevant resources

Parents as Teachers helps parents have better relationships with children which has lifelong health benefits for both the parent and child. This is achieved by increasing the knowledge of child development for the parent and healthy child development for the child. Parents as Teachers is a national program and a research-based practice that serves about 80 families per year in their homes which removes transportation as a barrier to those outside of Livingston.

Circle of Security is an international program that lasts 6 weeks and teaches parents about secure attachment. Circle of Security aims to help parents develop better and more secure attachments with children by understanding what behaviors help a child feel secure. It is open to anyone in Park County. Transportation is a barrier to those in our outlying communities. Twenty-four parents are served per year.

PAX Tools for Community Members is a collection of nine science-based strategies that can improve children's cooperation and the ability to manage one's own behaviors, as well as support social and emotional development. It is delivered to adults who work with children and/or parents. PAX Tools provides specific strategies to families to support children's behaviors in the home. It is a stand alone within the Community, but also "piggy backs" on the Good Behavior Game within the school setting with similar strategies, principles, and tools to improve youth health and happiness.

#### Gaps, issues and barriers

Parents as Teachers is offered in the homes across the County, but we do not have specific data on how many families are served in our outlying communities. Its' primary focus is on reducing family conflict and improving parental relationships with their children.

Circle of Security serves 24 parents each year. It is open to all parents across the county; however, transportation is a possible barrier to our outlying communities. This program is delivered on a monthly basis.

PAX Tools for Community Members is available and is a nice supplement to the PAX Good Behavior Game in the education setting; however, is not yet active in the community. Park County has two individuals trained in PAX Tools which provides strategies for parents in the home.

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### **Risk Factor: Perceived Risk of Drug Use (Individual)**

Perception of risk is the measure of how much the student thinks people risk harming themselves if they use the substance in question, and is an important determinant in the decision-making process young people go through when deciding whether or not to use alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. Generally, when the perceived risk of harm is high, reported frequency of use is low.

#### Relevant resources

YAM (Youth Aware of Mental Health) is a scripted 5 session program designed to educate youth about behaviors in themselves and their peers regarding mental health crises and signs of suicide. This is for 9th grade students and serves students in Shields Valley, Gardiner, and Livingston as part of their PE and Health Enhancement Curriculum. It primarily addresses substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, violence, school dropout, and anxiety/depression.

#### Gaps, issues and barriers

YAM is consistently offered to about thirty 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Shields Valley and Gardiner each year, but has been sporadic at Park High since 2012. Park High participation in the program would reach many more 9th graders, greater community/parental support would be a huge resource as well. There are 5 or 6 trained people prepared to provide the instruction in the area.

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### **Risk Factor: Depressive Symptoms (Individual)**

Young people who are depressed are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and are more likely to use drugs. Survey research and other studies have shown a link between depression and other youth problem behaviors.

#### Relevant resources

PAX is used sparingly in Livingston Schools and has been, in the past used in Shields Valley, but is not currently used with fidelity or consistency in either location. PAX is a tested and effective program that addresses Low Commitment to School.

PAX Tools for Community Members is a collection of nine science-based strategies that can improve children's cooperation and the ability to manage one's own behaviors, as well as support social and emotional development. It is delivered to adults who work with children and/or parents. PAX Tools provides specific strategies to families to support children's behaviors in the home. It is a stand alone within the Community, but also "piggybacks" on the Good Behavior Game within the school setting with similar strategies, principles, and tools to improve youth health and happiness.

Conscious Discipline equips educators to integrate social-emotional learning, discipline and self-regulation so they spend less time policing behavior and more time teaching vital life skills. Conscious Discipline is implemented daily in the Livingston Schools where they have individuals trained as of 2020.

#### Gaps, issues and barriers

PAX, PAX Tools, and Conscious Discipline are not currently being used with fidelity and consistency. There is a distinct need for training in all 3 programs and used sparingly throughout the educational environments. All 3 programs have a higher presence in Livingston Schools although some basic strategies are used in our outlying schools.

# Anytown Resources Assessment Report

## Conclusions

### Park County Community's Tested, Effective Resources

The Resources Assessment and Evaluation workgroup is pleased to report information obtained from our initial survey and follow up survey. Our workgroup prioritized interviewing programs that encapsulated more of a universal approach, instead of targeted, and are open to all youth and/or adults regardless of qualifiers.

- We have the following evidence-based programs present and implemented to varying degrees in one or more of our communities in Park County:
  - Big Brothers Big Sisters
  - Character Strong
  - Conscious Discipline\*
  - PAX Good Behavior Game\*
  - YAM (Youth Aware Mental Health)
  - Second Step

\*Implementation is low-fidelity

Available, implementation depth minimal, or not present currently:

- PRIME for Life
  - PAX Tools
  - Signs of Suicide
- Specific to adults, Park County provides the following:
    - QPR
    - Mental Health First Aid

# Anytown Resources Assessment Report

## Resource Gaps

The following gaps are present in Park County's community current youth-development and prevention efforts that focus on youth and families and should be addressed by the Community Action Plan:

### Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization

- Big Brothers Big Sisters is primarily Livingston centric and serves 30 youth due to limited staffing capacity and "Big" availability.

### Low Commitment to School

- *Big Brothers/Big Sisters* is being implemented to focus on this risk factor and is an evidence-based program. Big Brothers Big Sisters is not available to youth across the entire Park County due to lack of availability of trained mentors, and Big Brothers Big Sisters staffing capacity.
- PAX, Character Strong, and Conscious Discipline are all evidence-based programs utilized in our schools across the county at varied consistency. Character Strong is delivered weekly, Conscious Discipline daily, and PAX sparingly. We do not have a consistent curriculum across all our schools which brings to light the importance of consistency, but uniqueness of our communities.
- Low Commitment to School is impacted by a lack of programming across all age and grade levels.

### Family Conflict

- The resource assessment workgroup identified two resources, Parents as Teachers and Circle of Security, working to directly reduce this risk factor. One resource serves 80 families in their homes over a year and the other resource services 24 parents, but is based in Livingston.
- Select additional tested, effective programs, policies and practices that address the risk factor Family Conflict. PAX Tools, a 'promising' program, is available for implementation. It requires partnership from schools and community-based organizations to successfully reach parents and staff working with youth.

### Perceived Risk of Drug Use

- YAM is consistently offered to about thirty 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Shields Valley and Gardiner each year, but has been sporadic at Park High since 2012. Park High participation in the program would reach many more 9th graders, greater community/parental support would be a huge resource as well.

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

- Supplement resources that address the risk factor Perceived Risk of Drug Use with tested, effective programs, policies and practices, recognizing that there are limited tested, effective resource options available in Park County and schools.

### Depressive Symptoms

- There are 3 available programs, one evidence based, with trained educators and community collaborators. These programs are not being implemented with fidelity or consistency in any schools across the County.

### **Summary**

The next step in the *Communities That Care* process is to create a Community Action Plan. This report offers the following assessment of gaps and opportunities across the county to be used in the Park County *Communities That Care* Community Action Plan:

- When considering any programs for implementation in Park County, special consideration should be given to those that increase recognition for prosocial behavior and that increase school opportunities for prosocial involvement.
- As a countywide effort, ensure programs bolstered or purchased are universal, not targeted, meet the needs of all communities, and uniqueness of communities are kept intact.
- Consider a peer-to-peer evidence-based program across Park County. Currently, we have varied adult to peer and adult to adult models, but lack peer to peer. One possible, state-recommended 'innovative' program is Hope Squad. It would require both a financial investment and school commitments (middle and high schools).
- Current programs used to fidelity are serving a small population of youth across the county. Saturation of programming is important.

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

### Appendix A: Programs in Park County Community that Address the *Communities That Care* Priority Risk Factors

Program Name	Organization	Name of Participant	Person Completing the Survey, Title, Phone and Email	Please describe this program.
<b>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Big Sky Country</b>	Big Brothers Big Sisters	Lydia Islas, Program Manager, 570-506-4919	Billi Taylor	A one to one mentorship program that pairs adults in the community with youth that share similar interests and life experiences. We call these pairings matches. Here in Park County we have Community Based and School Based. Community based matches get together when they want and do what they want (fishing, skiing, board games) to provide extra stability and support. For School based - high school students are paired with elementary students in Links, once a week on Wednesdays in partnership with Links, and they get together after school to play games and homework. New this year, up and running before COVID, just started up this year.
<b>YAM</b>	Extension Office	Veronica Baca	JB	A scripted 5 session program designed to educate youth about behaviors in themselves and their peers regarding mental health crises and signs of suicide. This is for 9th grade students.
<b>Parents As Teachers</b>	Community Health Partners	John Gregory	John Gregory, Director of Parents/Career Support Programs, gregoryj@chphealth.org	PAT is a parent support program for families with 0-5 kids. They connect the family to resources and talk about development, literacy, appropriate activities. It all happens in the home 2x/month for 2 years.
<b>Circle of Security</b>	CHP	John Gregory	John Gregory, Director of Parent/Career Support Programs, (406)823-6356, gregoryj@chphealth.org	COC is an international program that lasts 6 weeks and teaches parents about secure attachment.
<b>Character Strong</b>	Arrowhead School District	Jimmy Leblow	Jimmy, School Counselor, 9708223334, jleblow@arrowheadk8.org	Character Strong offers comprehensive guidance lessons and materials for the school counselor and all teachers. This curriculum focuses on developing strong character traits to help students achieve academically, socially, and emotionally.
<b>PAX Good Behavior</b>	East Side & Winans Schools	Leah Shannon & Jason Karls/Patti Durgan & Anne Penn Cox	Laurie Bishop	The PAX Good Behavior Game® is an evidence-based universal preventive intervention applied by teachers in the classroom. This evidence-based practice consists of a set of research-based strategies with origins in behavioral science, neuroscience, and cultural wisdom that operate together to improve children's self-regulation.
<b>Conscious Discipline</b>	East Side & Winans Schools	Leah Shannon & Jason Karls/Patti	Laurie Bishop	Equip educators to integrate social-emotional learning, discipline and self-regulation so they

## Anytown Resources Assessment Report

		Durgan & Anne Penn Cox		spend less time policing behavior and more time teaching vital life skills.
<b>PAX Tools</b>	Park County Prevention	Justin Matthews	Laurie Bishop	PAX Tools is a collection of nine science-based strategies that can improve children's cooperation and the ability to manage one's own behaviors, as well as support social and emotional development. It is delivered to adults who work with children and/or parents.

### Park County Resources

The degree to which risk factors were a focus of the program was rated by respondents on a scale of 1 (not a focus) to 5 (major focus).

Program		For Students							For Parents	
		Big Brothers Big Sisters	YA M	Character Strong	PAX Tools	Good Behavior Game	Conscious Discipline	Signs of Suicide	Parents as Teachers	Circle of Security
Risk Factor	Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization	4	4	4	3	3	3	1	3	2
	Low Commitment to School	5	3	5	3	5	5	1	4	2
	Family Conflict	5	5	3	5	3	3	1	5	5
	Perceived Risk of Drug Use	5	5	2	3	2	3	1	4	2
	Depressive Symptoms	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4
Protective Factors	Healthy Beliefs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Bonding	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



# Anytown Resources Assessment Report

**APPENDIX E: Emails as Evidence of District Denial of Alternative Programming  
Partnership**

August 26th, 2021 Emily Post emailed Lynne Scalia, former Livingston Superintendent, to follow up about a meeting Lynne called to invite Educatio Students to participate in online classes. At the meeting Emily proposed that a partnership between the district and Educatio could benefit students to have a hands-on component to the online programming. Lynne forwarded the email and no follow-up from the district was ever received.

August 23rd, 2022 Emily Post emailed Todd Wester, Livingston Middle School Principal, regarding how Educatio students could enroll in district extracurriculars. Todd responded. July 21, 2023 Emily Post reached out to Todd Wester to schedule a meeting to discuss your elective schedule so that we can be flexible and supportive of accommodating your resources and schedule. Todd responded that he was available to meet. Emily responded several times to schedule a date. Todd Wester did not respond. No meeting was scheduled.

April 4th, 2023 Emily Post emailed Lynne Scalia to inquire about the closed Washington School space. Lynne Scalia responded that there was a process to follow. April 7th, 2023 Emily Post followed up in the email string that she would like to talk to Lynne about partnership for programming with the district. Lynne declined a meeting and stated that Emily should meet with Chad Johnson, incoming superintendent.

May 22, 2023 Emily Post emailed Signe Lahren, Livingston School Board Chair, outlining a proposal on how to partner. Signe scheduled a tentative meeting in mid-June 2023. Her final follow up was in July where she stated that it wasn't a good time to discuss due to many internal issues.

July 7, 2023 Emily Post emailed new county superintendent to propose a partnership. Either a contracted relationship to provide applied learning programming to students or to propose a charter school. Chad Johnson and Emily Post met at Educatio,

July 21st, 2023 Chad provided comments in acknowledgement of his experience as superintendent in another district in Montana that kids attended many programs for K-8th but they all came back to the public high school, that they were all district kids. Chad said this was not a good year to start the conversation and they agreed to follow up in August.

Feb 13, 2024 Meeting Chad Johnson and Emily Post to discuss charter partnership.

April 23, 2024 Meeting Chad Johnson and Emily Post to discuss charter process and partnership

May 8th, 2024 Meeting with Chad Johnson, Emily Post, Leslie Kennedy to discuss charter application

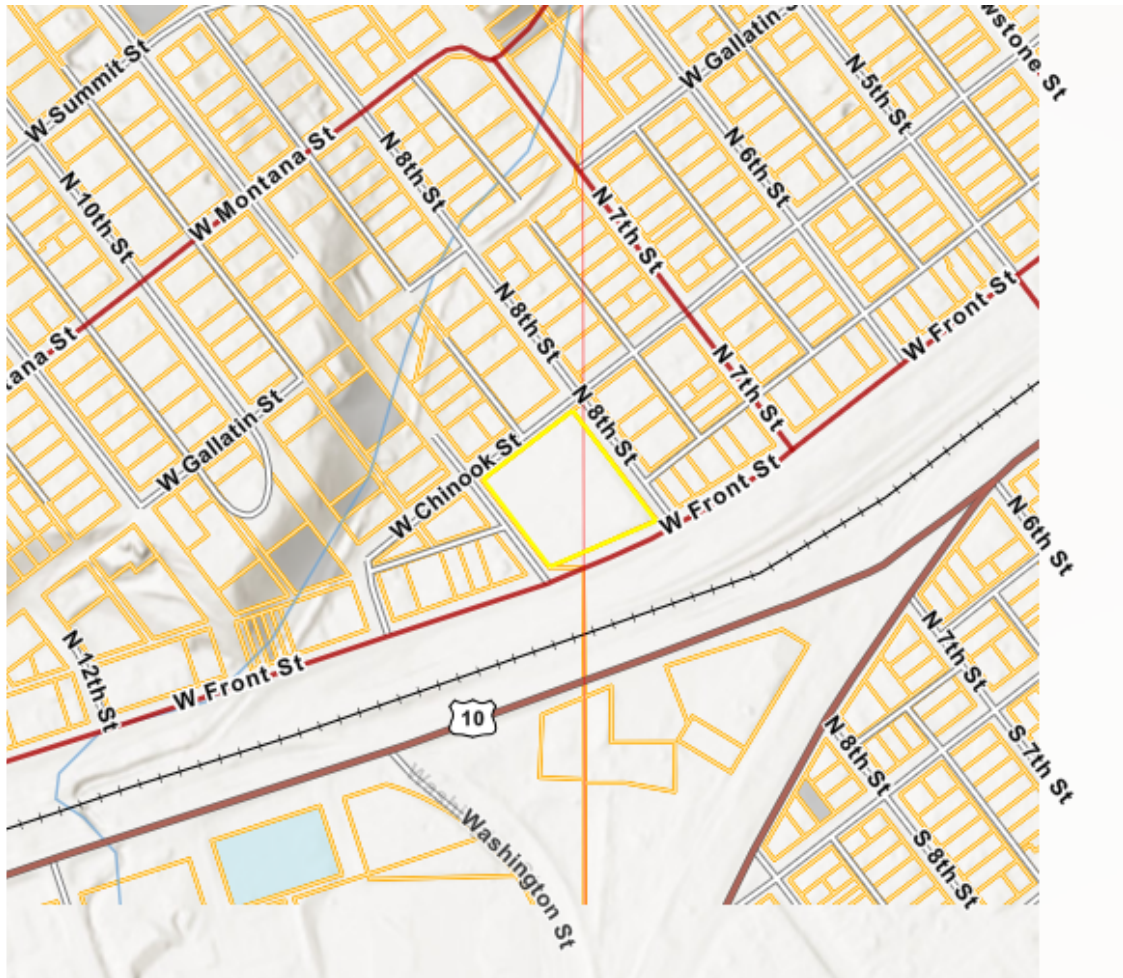
June 6th, 2024 Email from Chad Johnson that he can't meet until early July, response back to set up meeting in July

August 14th, 2024 YES charter proposal to Livingston School Board

September 4th, 2024 Meeting with Chad Johnson, Bailey Goodwine, Leslie Kennedy, Emily Post to discuss proposed charter application

## **Appendix F: District Map**

Scale: 1:8367.14 Basemap: Cadastral Application Base Map



1

Geocode: [49-0802-14-4-14-01-0000](#)

Property Address: N/A

Property Type: N/A

## Disclaimer

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## **APPENDIX G: Board Bios**

Emily Post, most recently worked with consultants, parents, and teachers to develop and launch a project-based learning school for kids ages 4-14 in Livingston, Montana in 2019. Educatio's mission is providing equal access to world-class education through an applied/ project-based approach to: STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math); Social-Emotional Learning and Leadership; and Community Impact. Our most recent learning focus was how to help Montana wildlife thrive. Through this interdisciplinary learning topic, students researched the biology and population of MT wildlife species, dove into the concept and importance of biodiversity, designed innovations inspired by biomimicry, restored a section of public land with native plants for pollinators, researched and interviewed community agencies and organizations working to help wildlife thrive, and developed a public outreach campaign and learning exhibit which is on display in downtown Livingston to educate and inspire wildlife knowledge and conservation. In addition, we worked together with farmers and ranchers to discuss and further our understanding of how to live with wildlife while living and working within agricultural fields. Our students also developed a Montana-sourced ingredient ice cream brand, innovating and refining value-added ag products. This learning included graphic design, budgets, recipes, and business plans. In 2018, I worked with board members, community members, teachers, school administrators, parents and most importantly students to develop an experience-based workshop program for middle school students in Livingston. The intention of this partnership was to connect adults from the community with students to share their skills, passions and character to raise the ceiling for kids about what is possible and help them develop their interests and strengths. We developed every aspect of this new program from content, to student connection and engagement with workshop leaders, recruitment and volunteer training, evaluation metrics, fundraising, and public outreach. The entire community embraced the program and so many people showed up to help and share ideas and create learning experiences for students. Amongst my favorite workshops were those that invited students to learn alongside workshop leaders to explore their curiosity and find creative solutions for a common goal.

Baily Goodwine, a lifelong Livingston resident, is dedicated to expanding educational opportunities in Park County. As the school board president of Elevate Montessori and the broker-owner of Maverick Realty, Baily combines her business acumen with her passion for accessible, high-quality alternative education. With two young children of her own, she understands the importance of cultivating engaging, student-centered learning environments. Baily is also active in the community, leading the marketing and communications committee for Yellowstone Experience School, where she leverages her expertise to strengthen community awareness and support for educational initiatives. Her strong local connections and commitment to serving Livingston families make her an invaluable advocate for the Montessori approach and innovative education in the region.

Kate Bower, As a registered nurse in the neuroscience field and a proud parent, I have seen firsthand the importance of a strong educational foundation. My family has called Livingston home for the past eight years, and I believe that YES' vision of nurturing life skills alongside traditional academics, combined with hands-on learning and community outreach, is exactly what our children need to thrive.

Christy May, LCSW, LAC is a psychotherapist and addictions counselor. She has experience working as a home educator for Parents as Teachers (prenatal-5 yrs) and has worked with families with adolescents through juvenile probation. She has also taught various art and PE classes as a substitute teacher in her children's school.

Her own 4 children had an eclectic academic experience--including homeschooling, overseas international school, private and public schools. She lived in Livingston for 20 years and is excited to be a part of what the school offers her "home" community. She believes that educating our children is the MOST important job and is married to a teacher!

Wendy Brodhead grew up in the countryside of Kansas City. She worked in Alaska as a sea kayaking guide before settling down with an amazing husband and two off-the-hook sharp, courageous, and joyful boys. Her sons attend the Montessori public charter school in Paonia, CO.

Wendy is a fine artist and owner operator of Filana Beeswax Crayons. Wendy graduated from the University of Kansas with a fine arts degree.

Kenna StormoGibson has twelve years of experience teaching in both elementary and high schools, in alternative and traditional public school models. Kenna holds degrees from Brown University and currently works in policy development for the state of Hawaii.