

The Alkali Creek News

Alkali Creek Elementary School

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Greg Senitte, Principal

"Together we create a positive, high performing, learning community for all."

May, 2017

May:

1-4-----Teacher Appreciation Week
1-11----Smarter Balanced Test Window (3rd-5th)
1-19-----FASTBridge Test Window (K-5th)
4-----4th Gr. Arbor Day field trip
5-----Vacation Day, No School
8-----5th Gr. Parent Planning Mtg., 6pm
10-----KC Club Mtg.
12-----Author Birthday Club
19-----Music Concerts
23-----1st; 2nd; and 5th Gr. field trips
24-----Kindergarten; and 4th-5th Gr. field trips
24-----KC Club Mtg.
26-----3rd Gr. field trip
26-----5th Gr. celebration
29-----Memorial Day, No School
30-----Awards Assembly
31-----Field Day

June:

1-----5th Gr. Graduation, 2pm in gym
2-----Last Day, Students dismiss 11:45am

Music Concerts, May 19th!

8:45am: Kindergarten, First, and Second Grade General Music Concert
9:45am: Third and Fourth Grade General Music concert
2:35pm: Fifth Grade Band & Orchestra Concert

All concerts will be performed in the Alkali Creek Gym.

Finishing the year, STRONG!

We have had a great 2016-2017 school year. With one month left in our school calendar, I encourage all students to "Finish Strong!". We have important assessments (SBAC and FASTBridge) in reading and math these next few weeks, and there are still many concepts to learn. I encourage parents to continue to make attendance a priority, and knowing that students have almost three months off of school coming up, please keep absences to a minimum this last month of school. Thank you for all of your help and support in educating today's youth.

Corner Book Shelf

The last day to checkout library books is Friday, May 19th.... Therefore, ALL Library Books are DUE in the library by Friday, May 26th. Please adhere to these dates, as it takes many hours to inventory our library books each year.

Changes coming in 2017-2018

Beginning next year for the 2017-2018 school year, Billings Public Schools will undergo a few changes. They are:

1. Instead of reporting progress once every 4 quarters, our district K-5 elementary will go to 3 trimesters. Report cards will be sent home 3 times per year instead of 4.
2. Our district is going to a K-12 PLC (Professional Learning Communities) model, where each Wednesday, students will be released approximately 1 hour early. Details on exact times will be distributed at a later time, but plan on K-3 students dismissing on Wednesdays around 1:20pm, and 4-5 students dismissing on Wednesdays around 2:05pm. All other days (Mon, Tue, Thr, and Fri) will keep the same dismissal times of 2:20pm and 3:05pm.
3. Our 4th and 5th grade students' report cards will be changing to reflect a standards-based grading, similar to students' report cards in grades K-3rd. This way, all students in elementary school (K-5th) will align to standards-based reporting. Again, details on this will be coming at a later time.

Kindergarten Registration...SIGN UP NOW!

Do you have a little one that will be starting Kindergarten at Alkali Creek this upcoming August? If so, we are now accepting registrations for the **2017-2018 school year**. We have registration forms here at the Alkali Creek School office, or you can download it at www.billingschools.org, hover over the "Parents Tab", then click on "Enrollment and Registration". On that page, you will find information regarding ALL of the necessary immunizations that will be required of students entering Kindergarten. The enrollment form to be completed is three pages. You will need to turn into our school office the registration form, a certified copy of his/her birth certificate, and current immunizations. State law requires the necessary immunizations by August, before s/he can start school.

If you, or anyone you know, will have a kindergarten student starting in August, 2017, we appreciate you registering with us before the end of the school year. Thank you! ☺

Class Placements for 2017-2018

As the end of the year approaches, we are beginning to make plans for the 2017-2018 school year. Part of this preparation is grouping students into 1st-5th grade classes for next year. At this time, we have a plan of the number of classrooms needed in each grade level, but staffing at those grade levels is not 100% certain. Teaching students six hours each day gives us, as educators, wonderful insights into the way children learn, interact with their peers, behave, and achieve while here at school.

While these insights are fresh, the teachers and I will spend a considerable amount of time determining the most appropriate classroom for each student. We recommend next year's placements based on many criteria, some of which include, learning style, gender, ability, social skills, individual academic needs, emotional concerns, peer relationships, multi-level grouping, teacher's style of teaching, and any other pertinent information that would be valuable. For example, sometimes we know it is in the best interest of students to be separated from a particular peer, so that both students can obtain the maximum benefit from the instruction in the classroom. We also strive to make each classroom balanced by gender and heterogeneously grouped by abilities. Each child is "hand placed" based on educational decisions.

We have a remarkable teaching staff here at Alkali Creek Elementary. I am asking that you first and foremost trust the judgment and wisdom of those who observe your child(ren) on a daily basis in the learning process. I assure you that every effort will be made to appropriately place your child. However, we accept that some parents may have specific concerns about their child's placement for the following year that they feel must be communicated with the principal. The following procedure for sharing these concerns will be used for the 2017-2018 school year. Concerns must be submitted in writing using the Parent Input Form on the following page, or another copy may be obtained at the school office. This form is to be returned to the Alkali Creek school office no later than **May 19th**. *Please understand that your input will always be considered, but not necessarily honored, as there are the many factors, as stated above. I have to determine the final decisions on all placements, so I cannot make promises about granting a request for a specific teacher.*

Because of changing enrollment and possible staff modifications, classroom placements can evolve over the summer; therefore, class lists will be posted at school by Monday, August 21st at 4:00pm. Students will not be informed of next year's teacher placement until then. If you have questions about this procedure, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

-Mr. Senitte

ALKALI CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PARENT INPUT FORM

May, 2017

Student Name _____ Current Teacher _____ Current Grade _____

Describe your child's special talents or skills and the ways in which s/he is unique.

Give five adjectives to describe your child.

List your child's strongest academic areas and describe any superior abilities.

Describe any academic problems your child has had in school, or any learning difficulties, which hinder his/her progress in school.

Describe your child's relationship with other peers and adults.

I believe my child would work best in a classroom environment that is...

Special considerations.

Include any additional information about your child that you feel is important for his/her success in school.

(Due to Mr. Senitte by: 5/19/17)

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BPS Counselors



BULLYING: Bully behavior occurs when there is deliberate intent to harm, dominate, inflict pain, exclude or otherwise cause distress to the person being targeted. The person who bullies purposefully misuses his/her power (size, age, popularity, confidence, verbal ability), usually repeatedly. The balance of power between the bully and target is NOT EQUAL.

Teaching Emotional Intelligence

“How was school today?” The question can often stir up a mix of reports and complaints. Sometimes, the helpful parent may notice pain in the day’s recollections and rush to offer solutions, perhaps even make some phone calls or send an email. Often, parental instinct kicks in and we jump to protect our children, fixing their problems for them; except, that might not be what they want at all.

Sometimes, kids just want to be heard. The act of sharing their feelings and reflections can be cathartic and healing in itself. Sometimes, they don’t want adults to solve their problems. They might just want to vent, to reflect on the day. Actively listening, empathizing, and validating their emotions is a great way to help empower your child to find their own solutions and develop their own emotional awareness.

Here are some steps parents can use when a child wants to talk about a small problem:

Step One: Listen intently, without distraction, modeling empathetic, respectful behavior.

Step Two: Repeat what was said. This doesn’t need to be exact; it just clearly shows that you were listening and validates a child’s sense of urgency.

Step Three: Label their emotion(s). This shows empathy and teaches emotional awareness.

For example, a child seems angry when discussing an argument with a friend. After listening intently, a parent might say, “I hear you saying that Jamie wasn’t being nice when you were playing tag. That must be very frustrating.” Let the conversation take its course from there. Often, the child will become de-escalated, and may be able, with some guidance, to develop his or her own positive solution to a small problem.