



**Early Childhood Literacy (TK)
Through 7th Grade**

Handbook

2025-2026

*Every student that graduates from Darby Public Schools is
college/career and community ready.*

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**Welcome to Darby Elementary/Middle School
Early Childhood Literacy (TK)-7th Grade
2025-2026**

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students:

We are all looking forward to a successful 2025-2026 school year. Our professional staff is excited to work with your child and help them achieve their educational goals.

We urge you to keep this handbook and use it as a reference guide throughout the school year. To assure that each child and his or her family have received this resource, we ask you to sign and return the form indicating your reception of the handbook. We request that you read, and discuss with your child the behavioral expectations that are included in the handbook. Additionally, you will find several other important forms along with this handbook which we would like you to complete and return as soon as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please call.

You are always welcome to visit our school, communicate with your student's teachers as well as myself, and be an active part of your child's educational experiences here at Darby Elementary. Please be sure to visit our website and download our App for important information and events. All of us are here to help your child reach his or her full potential and we look forward to working with each of you throughout the school year.

Sincerely,

TK-7 Principal
504 Coordinator
Title 9 Coordinator

Contact Information

Elementary Office 821-3643
Fax Number 821-4977
Darby Website: www.darby.k12.mt.us

Emails:

elemsec@darby.k12.mt.us

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Registration

Please come to the TK-7 Office for registration. You will need your child's:

- 1) Birth certificate and social security card if registering for the first time.
- 2) Documentation of your child's immunization records.
- 3) Brief description of the location of your home.
- 4) Name and telephone number of your doctor.
- 5) Two telephone numbers, in case of an emergency. Please update if numbers should change.

*Your child's legal name must be used on all school documents and records.

*You must fill out an individualized health care plan for any special medical concerns your child may have.

Immunization Records

According to Montana State Law, "No child shall be allowed to enter school without providing acceptable documentation of adequate immunization status or meeting the requirements for exemption. This includes the Varicella vaccination and a second dose of MMR as required by state law." No child may attend school without documentation of adequate immunization on file in our office.

Age of Admittance

Your child must be four years old on or before **September tenth (10th)** to be eligible for Transitional Kindergarten. Your child must be five years old on or before **September tenth (10th)** of the year you plan to enroll him/her in kindergarten. Your child's birth certificate is required at this time.

Early Childhood Literacy (TK) and Kindergarten Screening

Due to the approval of House Bill 352 in the last legislative session, Darby school has an Early Childhood Literacy and Kindergarten screening program. This screening is **not** an entrance prerequisite for Early Childhood Literacy and Kindergarten. This process is used to ensure that your child is developmentally ready for school.

As part of the Montana Hearing Conservation Program, during the months of September and October, hearing screening will be conducted for all Kindergarten, First Grade, freshmen, and new students to the school district. Other students can receive a hearing screening at any

time during the school year upon request of the parent or teacher. Screenings are conducted under the direction of the Speech/Language Pathologist.

The Speech and Language Program provides evaluation and therapy for students with speech, language, or hearing problems. The Speech Language Pathologist is provided through the Bitterroot Valley Educational Cooperative (BVEC).

Speech-Language screenings are conducted in the fall for all ECL and Kindergarten students. Screenings for students in other grade levels may be done upon teacher or parent request with signed permission from the parents.

Please watch the local papers and/or winter school newsletters for exact dates and times of the screening.

Transfers and New Students

Students who are transferring from another district or home school will not start on the day they register. Our school wishes to determine proper placement and therefore will need to contact the previous school and/or administer placement tests prior to classroom assignment. Additionally, we want the student to feel welcome and need time to arrange for desks and/or classroom supplies. Whenever possible the student will meet the teacher prior to arriving at school for the first full day. Usually, these arrangements can be made quite rapidly and the student can begin attendance within two school days. Special needs students may require additional time and meetings prior to placement.

Board Policy:

1. Any student moving into the Darby School District, who, for any reason, is under suspension or expulsion from another school system, shall not be admitted until this term of suspension has ended, or he/she has been carefully reviewed by the Darby School District.
2. All new students enrolling at Darby must have their parent, guardian or legal custodian present proof of identity and up to date immunization records prior to beginning school.
3. To insure proper course placement, new students should request school and health records be sent to Darby School prior to their arrival. If this is not feasible, the placement of new students will not be considered final until all proper records arrive.
4. A student transferring into the District will be admitted and placed subject to observation by appropriate teachers and a building principal during a probation period of two (2) weeks. Thereafter, should doubt arise as to the initial grade and level placement of a student, school personnel will conduct an educational assessment to determine appropriate grade and level placement.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Darby Schools admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights and privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of color, sex, marital status, religion, or handicapping condition, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, athletic programs, or other school programs.

Sexual Harassment

The Board of Trustees recognizes its responsibility to provide an environment for employees, students, volunteers, etc. that are free from all types of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as verbal, visual, or physical advances made within the school environment and unwelcome by the person for whom they are intended.

The district prohibits sexual harassment or intimidation of its employees or students whether committed by a co-worker, supervisor, subordinate, contractor, volunteer or student and finds such behavior just cause for disciplinary action if substantiated by investigation by the Title IX Coordinator or administrator.

All formal complaints will be directed to the Title IX Coordinator for appropriate investigation. The Board and administration shall be advised of all formal complaints that are filed with the Coordinator. (See Board Policy 3225-12/07). A reporting form can be found on page 20.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Daily School Schedule

Monday-Friday

Grades TK-7 8:20 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.

Supervision

There will be **NO playground supervision before 8:00 a.m. and after 3:35 p.m. To ensure your child's safety, we ask students to arrive on the playground no earlier than 8:00 a.m. and to leave school grounds by 3:35**

Meal Cost and Charge Policy

Free and Reduced Meals:

The District participates in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program and offers students nutritionally-balanced and appealing meals daily. School breakfast and lunch are provided for students FREE OF CHARGE (seconds are \$1.00) Adult Lunch \$6.00 (\$5.50 for Staff) and Adult Breakfast \$3.00.

IMPORTANT: If your child has any known food allergies, it is vital that you fill out the school allergy form and return it to the office. These forms can be picked-up in the elementary office.

Lunchroom Behavior Expectations

Our goal is to provide every student with a nutritious meal in a positive and clean environment. We ask the students to show respect for the lunchroom expectations, workers, and the rights of others when eating. The lunchroom expectations are well posted along with the action steps that may follow inappropriate behavior.

Action Steps in the Lunchroom

1. Verbal Warning
2. Moved to an assigned seat for 1-5 school days.
3. Remain in the assigned seat for an extended period of time. Line 2, grab-n-go, and/or extra privileges may be denied.
4. Written referral form sent to the office.

Action Steps for the Lunch Line

1. Verbal warning.
2. Student will be asked to move to the end of the line.
3. Line 2 and/or extra privileges may be denied.
4. Written referral form sent to the office.

Attendance

Attendance is extremely important to a child's progress in school. We ask the cooperation of parents in the school's effort to assure the safe arrival of all children to school in the morning. Absences can be excused by using one of the following methods:

- Phone the school prior to **8:20 am**, the morning the child is absent. If you do not call the school, a school representative will try to reach you to confirm consent for your child's absence.
- Upon your child's return to school, send them with a note verifying your knowledge of the absence.

Please make every attempt to have children in school and on time. Parental cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Students with excessive absences may result in an attendance contract and be reported to the Department of Family Services for investigation. Excessive absences are defined as 10 or more absences per semester.

Health Conditions

Children will be allowed to remain in the building during recesses due to health conditions upon receipt of a note from the parent/doctor. (It is requested that this privilege not be abused.) Please remember that if your child is too sick to go out for recess, he/she should be kept at home. If your child has a contagious condition (i.e. lice, pink eye, chicken pox, etc.) please keep them at home or they will be sent home. In the event that your child will not be able to participate in the Health Enhancement class for two days or more, a doctor's note will be required. (Board Policy 3417).

Medication

Over-the-counter medication will not be issued to any student without written permission from a parent or guardian. All prescription medication and over-the counter medicines must be in a pre-filled, labeled medication bottle with your child's name on it. Most pharmacies will give you two prescription bottles if requested. All drugs must be turned into the office for dispensing except emergency drugs such as inhalers or epi-pens which may be carried by the student. All necessary forms are available at the Elementary office. (Board Policy 3416 & 3416F)

Drills

The Darby School District will participate in annual drills to prepare for natural disasters and emergency situations. All students are required to participate in these drills.

Emergency Situations

In the event of an emergency, the Superintendent or Principal acting under the Darby Board authority may close the school and arrange transportation for all bus students. Emergencies are defined in the "Emergency Procedure Handbook", available at the school office for review. If an emergency occurs and school is dismissed, all students (ECL-12) who are eligible bus riders will be transported home by bus. Non-bus riders will report to a designated area until pick up arrangements have been made.

TK-7 Closed Campus Policy

The school premises will be closed to TK-7 students leaving the campus during the school day. This will encompass from the time they arrive on the campus, until school is dismissed. It also includes the lunch break and the ride to and from school except under the following conditions:

- 1) The parent(s)/guardian(s) appear at the elementary school office to pick up their child.

Students will not be released to go to the downtown area unsupervised during the lunch period under any circumstances. Any transgression of the above conditions will be treated as a violation of the truancy policy in the Darby School Student Handbook and will be dealt with as outlined in the policy.

Communications from School to Home

Educating a child is a team effort. We try to keep you informed and involved in many ways. We ask that you check your child's backpack daily and visit our Facebook page often. Annually we have book fairs, concerts, open house, family nights and parent-teacher conferences.

You will be notified if your student is not meeting expectations. Report cards will keep you informed; mid-quarter as well as quarterly. If you have questions or concerns about your child's classroom please follow the chain of command, (Teacher, Principal, Superintendent, and then School Board). The most accurate information is found at the source.

Retention Policy

Three sources will be used for retention decisions:

1. The parent.
2. The classroom teacher.
3. The Teacher Assistance Team.

A child will be retained if two of the three sources recommend retention. The following information will be considered when making the decision. They are in no particular order of preference.

1. Academic performance
2. Age
3. Previous retention
4. Learning disabilities/Spec. Ed. testing
5. Attendance
6. Standardized testing
7. Curriculum testing
8. Behavior/maturity
9. Physical size

Student Records

Parents may request a copy of or may review student records at any time. A copy of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is available at each administrative office.

Visitors

Visitors are always welcome and we encourage the community to be a part of the Darby ECL-7 School. We do ask that all visitors report to the front office to sign the visitor book and receive a visitor's pass.

Family Night

Wednesday evening is to be set aside for family activities. If possible, school activities will not be scheduled after 6:30 PM on Wednesday.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Our school wide behavior expectations consist of four main objectives. We call these objectives the Darby Tiger P.R.R.S. and ask that our students strive to be:

POSITIVE, RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE, and SAFE

SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

All discipline actions are dealt with under the discrepancy of the building administrator.

Major and Minor Referral System

Major infractions include but are not limited to:

1. Disrespect, insubordinations, and/or defiance towards staff and others.
2. Use of disrespectful or offensive language and/or gestures.
3. Bullying behavior, Physical and/or Verbal Aggression, Fighting, Intimidating, Threats or Harassment of any kind.
4. Pornography.
5. Use or possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and e-cigs.
6. Cheating and/or plagiarizing.
7. Theft.
8. Failure to serve detention.
9. Truancy
10. Vandalism on or off school property or facilities.
11. Obvious displays of affection (kissing, embracing, fondling).

Referrals that are sent to the office by a Teacher will be assessed by the Principal and treated as a tracking or Major referral.

A major referral is subject to but not limited to the following procedures. Steps may be skipped, depending on the severity of the infraction

Level	Infraction	ECL – 7 th
1	1 st Major	Conference with student Parent/Guardian contact Loss of Privilege or Detention
2	2 nd Major	Conference with student Parent/Guardian contact Loss of Privilege or Detention In-School Suspension for 1-3 days
3	3 rd Major	Conference with student Parent/Guardian contact In-School Suspension for 1-4 day Referred to School MTSS Team

4	4 th Major	Conference with student Parent/Guardian contact Out of School Suspension for 1-3 days Parent Conference and Behavior Contract Signed
5	5 th Major	Conference with student Parent/Guardian contact Out of-School Suspension for 1-5 days. School Board Hearing

A minor infraction is considered any incident that is handled by the teacher or supervisor and warrants a warning, minor consequence, and or tracking. Three minor referrals may result in a major referral. **Minor infractions** include but are not limited to:

1. Consuming drinks or food in the academic halls or classroom.
2. Tardiness.
3. Dress code violations.
4. Noncompliance to classroom expectations.
5. Throwing objects, including snowballs.
6. Wearing a hat, cap, or head covering of any kind anywhere in the **school building**.
7. The use of cellular devices during school hours.

Truancy Policy

Truancy is described as being off school grounds without prior authorized consent from a school official. The first truancy shall result in one day in-school suspension. Following two truancies, the student is placed on attendance probation. No make-up work will be allowed for truancies. Additional unexcused absences following attendance probation will result in a suspension.

AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

Detention will be monitored by classroom teachers on a rotational basis. Parents will be notified at least one day in advance. Parents are asked to arrange for transportation or supervision upon their release. After school detention may not be substituted with in-school detention. Any student being disruptive/ uncooperative during detention will earn additional detention time. Failure to serve after school detention in a timely manner will result in additional detention or in-school suspension (ISS).

Playground Expectations

Breaks

Recess Schedule: TK-4 students will have a 15 minute morning recess and a 20 minute lunch break. TK-3 students will also have a 15 minute recess in the afternoon.

Students also have playground opportunities before and after school. However, there will be **NO playground supervision before 8:00 a.m. and after 3:35 p.m. To insure your child's safety we ask students to arrive on the playground no earlier than 8:00 a.m. and to leave school grounds by 3:35**

Designated Play Areas

Darby Elementary has designated areas to play. One area will be used by TK-3 and the other area by 4-7 to help create a safe and fun environment for all students. These boundaries will be enforced by the playground supervisors. Students are to follow the Darby School-wide expectations of being Positive, Respectful, Responsible and Safe.

Be Positive

- Encourage your peers to do their best and follow the expectations.
- Include others in the game you are playing when asked.

Be Respectful

- Students are expected to follow playground supervisor's instructions at all times.
- Take turns, one way across bars and down slide (on bottom)

Be Responsible

- Enter the building promptly and walk quietly into the building after the bell rings.
- Return playground equipment to the room if you take it outside.
- Report possible problems to playground supervisors.

Be Safe

- Stay off top of apparatus
- No flips or jumps off apparatus
- Sliding on the ice is not permitted under any circumstances.
- Use appropriate toys for playing.
- Flag/touch football is allowed. No tackling.

Discipline of Special Education Students

- 1) All special education pupils are subject to discipline and suspension on the same grounds as are regular education pupils.
- 2) A special education pupil may be expelled from school in the same manner as prescribed for regular education pupils, provided that the misbehavior is not a direct manifestation of his/her handicapping condition. A child study team will make this determination.
- 3) Specific guidelines for the suspension and /or expulsion of special education students can be found in the Special Education Program Narrative for Darby, Section 18.22.

In School Suspension/Out of School Suspension/ Expulsion

The Board of Trustee, to avoid violation of school policy and to protect the best interest of the students, has the power to review the suspension of any student and to increase, decrease, and establish stipulations or to set aside any such suspension.

The Board of Trustees has the sole power of exclusion or expulsion and may exclude or expel a student for a complete school calendar year and withhold all credits earned in the current year which the Board may deem proper and appropriate.

Appeals

- 1) In all cases of discipline, the student shall be given every opportunity to prove his/her innocence.
- 2) Matters of discipline may first be appealed to the principal, then to the superintendent, and then finally to the Board of Trustees.
- 3) Appeals may be made by the parents/guardians and the student to the superintendent. The superintendent will conduct whatever investigation he/she deems necessary in upholding or altering the action of the principal.
- 4) The decisions of the superintendent may be appealed to the Board of Trustees, which shall conduct a hearing to determine the innocence or guilt of the student. The student shall be entitled to legal counsel of his/her choice, if such is desired. In all cases, the Board of Trustees has the power to take such action, as they deem appropriate, including exclusion or expulsion for the remainder of the school term and loss of all credits earned for the then current semester.

Substance Abuse

Alcohol, tobacco, E-Cigarettes, Vaporizers, Nicotine Delivery Devices, drugs or other controlled substances in school building, busses or property are prohibited. Students in possession of or under the influence of these substances on school property whether during school hours or at school functions may face suspension or expulsion. Law enforcement may be called. School Board policy #3210 states that students may be asked to have drug or alcohol testing. No drugs of any kind are to be in the possession of students which includes aspirin and other over-the-counter drugs. (Exceptions will be made for students who need emergency drugs on their persons such as an emergency inhaler or epi-pens for life-threatening allergies). All

prescription drugs and over-the-counter drugs must be administered through the elementary office. Please note that the elementary office will no longer buy and supply students with aspirin or similar drugs.

Weapons

Knives, weapons, or look-alikes of any kind are prohibited on campus. Any knife, weapon, or look-alikes in the possession of a student will be confiscated. A Disciplinary Referral will be completed and sent to the principal with the student. Parents may claim such items. Having firearms on school grounds will result in immediate suspension and a referral to the School Board for expulsion. Law enforcement may be called. See Board Policy #3270.

School Bus Conduct

The driver of the bus has complete responsibility for the bus and students. The students should obey the driver at all times. The bus drivers are to be treated with the respect due any member of the school staff. School wide expectations pertain to all bus activities. Bus safety procedures are specifically taught at the kindergarten and first grade levels. They are also revisited by each bus driver.

Students who ride buses to and from school are under the school jurisdiction from the time they step on the bus in the morning until the time they step off the bus in the afternoon. Any misconduct will be reported to the office of the student's principal and treated as a disciplinary referral. Consequences will be given depending on the appropriate step of the discipline plan. In addition, students may lose bus privileges from three to fifteen days, or more, or be recommended for expulsion from the bus for the remainder of the school year.

In addition to general conduct rules, the following special bus rules will be followed:

1. Do not open the emergency door, except in obvious cases of emergency.
2. Objects of any type are not to be thrown out of the window.
3. Animals and pets are not allowed on the bus.
4. All parts of the body are to be kept inside the bus at all times.
5. Any damage caused by a rider shall be paid for by the student(s) responsible.
6. No special stop requests will be honored.

Students **MUST** have a note from the parents, initialed by a school authority, to ride a different route or ride with a friend.

DARBY SCHOOLS (TK-12) BUS BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES

1. Verbal warning
2. Seating change for five (5) school days + Referral to the principal with notation of previous interventions + notification to parents indicating potential loss of bus riding privileges for the next offense.
3. Referral to principal with notation of previous interventions + loss of bus riding privileges for one (1) school day + notification of parents.

4. Referral to principal with notation of previous interventions + loss of bus riding privileges for five (5) school days + meeting with parent(s) before being allowed back on the bus.
5. Referral to principal with notation of previous interventions + loss of bus riding privileges + parent meeting with the school board prior to riding again.

Video Surveillance

The District has installed electronic surveillance devices throughout the hallways, outside areas, and parking lots of its schools [excluding bathrooms and locker rooms] and on the buses as a safety measure. Please take notice that the surveillance devices record visual images (video) and audio. Sounds, including but not limited to conversations, occurring within the scope of the device will be recorded.

Bicycles and Skate Devices

Bicycles, scooters, longboards, skateboards and all other skate devices must be walked on and off campus at all times. Carrying the device around during the day is not permitted.

Consequences:

If a student uses or displays a bicycle or skate device, the following consequence(s) will result:

1. Confiscation of the Bicycle or skate device by a staff member.
 - **FIRST OFFENSE:** The bicycle or skate device will be returned to the student after the end of the school day in the Main Office.
 - **SECOND OFFENSE:** The bicycle or skate device will not be returned to the student. It will be given to a parent/guardian or authorized adult who comes to pick it up from the school office. Students will not be authorized to pick up or receive the bicycle or skate device.
2. If a student initially refuses to surrender the bicycle or skate device to a staff member, he or she will receive one additional request. Further failures to surrender a bicycle or skate device will result in suspension for defiance of authority.

Dress Code

- 1) Student's dress should be neat, clean, and properly fitting. Student's dress shall not be offensive to others.
- 2) Footwear must be worn at all times for sanitary reasons. Appropriate heels, no higher than an inch, should be worn to allow freedom of movement to walk safely during recess and other activities.
- 3) Patches, accessories, or clothing advertising alcoholic beverages, drugs, or tobacco, or containing obscene or derogatory slogans or pictures will not be allowed.
- 4) Head coverings such as caps, hats, hoods, bandanas, and dark sun glasses will not

be worn in the school building during school hours. These items restrict vision and limit eye contact between the instructor and pupil, which is an integral part of the learning process.

- 5) Any strap-type shirt/blouse must **have straps** at least 1-½ inches wide. Transparent blouse/shirt, halter-tops, or body clinging cloth will not be allowed. Strapless shirts, crop tops, or cut shirts are not permitted.
- 6) All clothing must not be excessively tight and the bottom hem must reach the tip of the middle finger when your arms are straight down the sides of the body. No cutoffs.
- 7) Children should be dressed appropriately for weather conditions. Cold weather and or snow will require students to wear gloves, snow boots, hats, and a heavy coat. Children will be expected to play outside except during severe weather. (When the weather is severe students will be allowed to enter the building and report to their homerooms-IE 0° F with wind-chill, raining vs. sprinkling, hail, etc.)

Violation of Dress Code for TK– 7

When clothing is inappropriate or in poor taste, students will be allowed to change into their PE clothes or clothes may be lent to them. Parents will be notified if the dress code is violated more than once.

Grading System

Darby School uses the following grading scale for upper grades (3-7):

A+ = 98-100	B- = 80-82	D = 63-66
A = 93-97	C+ = 77-79	D- = 60-62
A- = 90-92	C = 73-76	F = 59- or below
B+ = 87-89	C- = 70-72	
B = 83-86	D+ = 67-69	

TK (Early Childhood Literacy), Kindergarten, First and Second grades use an independent system and a report card especially designed for their needs. Report cards are sent home each quarter. Please notify the elementary office should your child not receive his/her report card.

Report cards are for your records. It does not need to be returned. In evaluating your child's progress, we consider ability, participation, effort, as well as other factors contributing to growth and development. Mid-Quarter progress reports: Students will receive progress reports.

PROGRAMS

Multi-tier System of Supports (MTSS)

Darby School District is committed to ensuring that every student learn and grow to their full potential through high quality, scientific, evidence-based instruction. As part of this commitment, the District has implemented the Multi-tier System of Supports (MTSS) model to identify TK-7 students who are struggling learners in reading and math and intervene with research based materials and programs so that the students become proficient in these areas as quickly as possible. Their progress is consistently monitored. How the student responds to the interventions determines what next steps are taken, hence MTSS. Through the use of screening assessments, the classroom teacher, with the help of specialists, will determine additional instructional interventions to provide support for students based on their needs. Parents will be notified by the classroom teacher prior to receiving additional interventions and support. If a referral to the MTSS process is deemed necessary, parents will be notified. Parents will have the option to participate in the planning of interventions and the MTSS team meetings regarding their child.

Curriculum

Copies of the district curriculum are available for review. Individuals may obtain copies at their own expense, or review current curriculum on the district website. Curriculum is designed by educators and reviewed by a committee of school employees, parents and school board representation prior to being adopted by the Board of Trustees. Adopted materials are screened by this same committee for appropriateness. Questions may be directed to the curriculum coordinator.

Homework

Teachers may assign homework for students to complete as student and classroom needs present themselves.

Based on the professional judgment of the teacher, homework will be assigned with consideration as to time and factors of difficulty.

All assigned homework that is recorded in a student record and/or is used for grading purposes must be graded by the classroom teacher or another professional evaluator.

All assignments taken up for grading shall be returned within a reasonable time to the students, and if the material is to be used on a test, corrections will be provided for study.

Teacher Assistance Team (TAT)

The Teacher Assistance Team is an intervention team made up of educators to include primary and intermediate classroom teachers, Title I, Special Education teachers, the counselor and the principal. The purpose of this committee is to provide ideas/ assistance to teachers and/or parents whose children are not finding success or reaching their potential in the school setting.

Special Services

We are served by the Bitterroot Valley Special Services Cooperative in the area of special services. The service personnel include psychologist, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, behavioral specialist and therapist and adaptive physical education specialist. The Darby School District also provides a Gifted and Talented program, Title I, Special Education, Counseling and Self-Contained services.

Contact your child's teacher or the principal about the referral process or for further information.

Homeless Students

Every child of a homeless individual and every homeless child are entitled to equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other students. The District must assign and admit a child who is homeless to a District school regardless of residence and irrespective of whether the homeless child is able to produce records normally required for enrollment. The District may not require an out-of-District attendance agreement and tuition for a homeless child.

The Superintendent will review and revise as necessary rules or procedures that may be barriers to enrollment of homeless children and youths. In reviewing and revising such procedures, the Superintendent will consider issues of transportation, immunization, residence, birth certificates, school records, and other documentation.

Homeless students will have access to services comparable those offered to other students, including but not limited to:

1. Transportation services;
2. Educational services for which a student meets eligibility criteria (e.g., Title I);
3. Educational programs for children with disabilities and limited English proficiency;
4. Programs in vocational and technical education;
5. Programs for gifted and talented students; and
6. School nutrition program.

Counseling

Guidance Counseling is part of the Darby Schools' curriculum adopted summer of 2021 and required by state accreditation standard, ARM 10.55.110. Areas covered include: personal development, social development, educational development and career development. The goals are broken into primary, intermediate, and upper areas. Parents may request a copy of the curriculum and/or the accreditation standard.

The Darby School District currently employs one TK-12 guidance counselor. Our counselor covers the curriculum through whole class instruction, small group counseling and individual counseling. The counselor is regarded as a teacher; consequently, they are assigned regular teacher duties and interact with students in both formal and informal settings.

Parents may have concerns regarding individual counseling. It is important to note that counselors/educators have legal obligation to counsel and make referrals to outside agencies in cases of suspected abuse, neglect, or in cases of potential harm to self or others. However, it is the intent of the district to work with parents regarding these issues.

Classroom MATERIALS

The teachers at each grade level have compiled a list of supplies. The list is available at the elementary office and in the summer newsletter.

Textbooks/Workbooks TK – 7

Children are given permission to take materials home for completing unfinished work. Materials, which have been lost or damaged due to negligence, must be replaced by the student at replacement cost.

Library (Media Arts)

Grades TK-6 will have regularly scheduled library periods each week. In addition to this, students may use the library when the librarian does not have a scheduled class and the teacher gives consent. Grades 7-8 will have library time as determined by their classroom Language Arts teacher.

Books are checked out for a period of one week and may be renewed an additional two times. After a book has been held by one student for three weeks, it must be returned to the shelf for one week before the same student may check it out again unless permission from the librarian has been given.

Students may not check out additional materials until all previously due books are returned and all fines have been paid. Report cards will be held for those students who owe fines. Students will return checked out materials and no new material will be checked out the last **two** weeks of school.

Personal Belongings

Any clothing, toys, playground equipment, and other personal belongings should have some type of identification. Valuable items such as, IPods, MP3's, video games, cell phones, smart watches, drones etc. should not be brought to school. Toy weapons are also forbidden. The school is not responsible for personal belongings. Please feel free to check for your missing items in the Lost and Found by the office or the cabinet at the bus garage. Items are removed on a monthly basis and sent to a goodwill center.

Damaged Property

(MCA 20-5-201) When any pupil defaces or damages any school building, school grounds, furniture, equipment, or book belonging to the district or harms or threatens to harm another person or his/her property, they shall be liable to punishment, suspension or expulsion under the provisions of this title. When a pupil defaces or damages school property, as defined above, his/her parent or guardian, shall be liable for the cost of repair or replacement upon the complaint of the teacher, principal superintendent or any trustee and the proof of such damage. Law enforcement may be contacted.

Telephone

The classroom and office telephones may be used with adult permission only.

CALLING 911 IN A NON-EMERGENCY IS AGAINST THE LAW.

Student Personal Electronic Devices

To increase effective instructional time and on-task behaviors, each homeroom classroom will have a “Check In Pocket Mat” where student phones, smart watches (or any other PEDs) are to go at the beginning of each day. Phones and smart watches are kept in the Pocket Mat until the conclusion of the school day.

Consequences:

If a student uses or displays a cell phone, smart watch, electronic music player, headphones, earbuds, or personal video game console, the following consequence(s) will result:

1. Confiscation of the device by a staff member.
 - **FIRST OFFENSE:** The device will be returned to the student after the end of the school day in the Main Office.
 - **SECOND OFFENSE:** The device will NOT be returned to the student. It will be given to a parent/guardian or authorized adult who comes to pick it up from the school office. Students will not be authorized to pick up or receive the device.
2. If a student initially refuses to surrender the electronic device to a staff member, he or she will receive one additional request. Further failures to surrender an electronic device will result in suspension for defiance of authority.

These guidelines and procedures will be in effect from the time students arrive at school until the final bell at the end of the day. **Since it is sometimes necessary for parents to communicate with their child during school hours, they are free to call the office and have a message sent to them.** Students are allowed (with staff permission) to use the school phones if it is necessary to contact a parent during the instructional day. Use of an electronic device during after-school activities will be at the discretion of the supervising coach/staff member.

Parties

Four TK- 4 grade parties are scheduled throughout the year: Halloween, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, and End of the Year. Room volunteers are sought and greatly appreciated. Teachers will send home information about each party at the beginning of the year. Should you not wish your child to participate in any of the scheduled parties please notify your child’s teacher in advance.

Field Trips

Darby Schools offer a number of educational opportunities through field trips. Students are expected to follow the PRRS at all times when participating in these activities. Students may need to demonstrate satisfactory academic and behavioral progress to participate in these activities.

Search and Seizure

Searches may be carried out to recover stolen property, to detect illegal substances or weapons, or to mitigate or eliminate risks to and disruption of a safe and healthy educational environment. In keeping with these goals, the Board authorizes school authorities to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects, to maintain health, safety, and security in the schools.

Chain of Command

If there is a situation that arises with your child that needs to be resolved, the district would like to make sure that parents follow the proper chain of command below.

1. Teacher
2. Principal
3. Superintendent
4. School Board

Strategic Plan

Darby Schools would like to encourage all parents to visit the district's website (www.darby.k12.mt.us) and review our Strategic Plan.

Harassment Reporting Form for Students

Darby Schools

Date

Student's name

Grade

(If you feel uncomfortable leaving your name, you may submit an anonymous report, but please understand that an anonymous report will be much more difficult to investigate. We assure you that we'll use our best efforts to keep your report confidential.)

- Who was responsible for the harassment or incident(s)?

- Describe the incident(s).

- Date(s), time(s), and place(s) the incident(s) occurred.

- Were other individuals involved in the incident(s)? yes no
If so, name the individual(s) and explain their roles.

- Did anyone witness the incident(s)? yes no
If so, name the witnesses.

- Did you take any action in response to the incident? yes no
If yes, what action did you take?

- Were there any prior incidents? yes no
If so, describe any prior incidents.

Signature of complainant: _____

Signatures of parents/legal guardians: _____

2025-2026 DARBY ECL-7 EDUCATIONAL TEAM

Transitional Kindergarten	Cheri Hollist		
Kindergarten	Megan Trowbridge		
1 st Grade	Morgan Pelkey		
2 nd Grade	Courtney Price		
3 rd Grade	Kerrie Holmes		
4 th Grade	Kaila Mendenhall		
5 th Grade HR	Emily Kiess		
6 th Grade HR 6 th 7 th ELA	Trina Harvey		
7 th Grade HR 6 th 7 th 8 th Math	Racheal Neff		
6 th -7 th Science/3 rd -7 th STEAM	Mary Blankenbaker		
ECL-4 Music	Brooke Gardner		
ECL-6 Health Enhancement	Ryan McCrossin		
7-12 Health Enhancement	John Steiner		
TK-4 th Special Education	Jennifer Sharp		
5 th -8 th Special Education	Sarah Griffin		
Title One/Gifted and Talented Specialist	Tracie McCrossin		
Title One/Gifted and Talented Specialist	Stacie Evans-Smith		
Media Arts	Ryan McCrossin		
ECL-7 Guidance Counselor	Kurt Kohn		
Athletic Director	Sarah Griffin		
Career Specialist	Courtney Bennett		
Para-Professionals	Halee Wood		
	Crystal Chaffin		
	Cheryl Woirhaye		
	Jade McBride		
TK-7 Administrative Assistant	Rita Mitchell		
Lunchroom Supervisor:	Dezzerae McCord		
Lunchroom Staff:	Mickey Perkins		
	Heather Jenkins		
Superintendent/Curriculum Director	Tony Biesiot		
ECL-7 Principal/504 Coordinator/ Title IX Coordinator	TBD		
Special Education Director	Tony Biesiot		
Clerk / Business Manager	Miranda Simmons		
Payroll/HR	TBD		
Transportation Supervisor	Joe Floystad		
Bus Drivers:	Tyler Whiting		
	Dawn Demorest		
	Lora Butler		
	Darold Morgan		
Maintenance Supervisor	Joe Floystad		
Maintenance	Derrick Riebling		
Custodial Staff:	Richard Popenoe		
	Andrew Drasch		
<u>School Board Members:</u>			
Kristie Heiland (Chair) Ashley Christopherson (Vice Chair) Pete Ehmann James Shavers Jeanne Wald			
<u>Important Phone Numbers:</u>			
Elementary: 406-821-3643	High School: 406-821-3252	Fax: 406- 821-4977	Superintendent: 406-821-3841

Darby School Calendar

2025-2026 School Year

August 25----First Day of School
August 27-September 1----No School (Fair/Labor Day)
September 25---First Mid Quarter
September 26---PIR (No School)
October 31---End of 1st Quarter
October 16-17---No School (PIR/MEA)
November 13---Parent Conferences (Early Out)
November 14---PIR (No Students)
November 26-28---Thanksgiving (No School)
December 5---Second Mid Quarter
December 22-January 2---Winter Break (No School)
January 16---End of 2nd Quarter (First Semester)
January 19--- No School (MLK Day)
February 13-16---No School (Presidents Day)
February 20--- Third Mid Quarter
February 26---Parent Teachers Conferences (Early Out)
February 27---PIR (No Students)
March 27---End of 3rd Quarter
March 30-April 6---Spring Break (No School)
May 7--- Fourth Mid Quarter
May 8---PD (No School)
May 25--- Memorial Day (No School)
June 4---End of 4th Quarter (Second Semester)
June 5---Last Day of School (Early Out)

***All dates are tentative. Please visit the DHS website for updates to the handbook and calendars.

Dear parents and/or guardians,

You have received a copy of the Darby TK-7 School Handbook. This handbook contains the basic procedures and expectations that we require our students to follow. In addition, a copy of The Darby District's Board Policies is available for you to view at the elementary office or the administration building.

We would urge you to keep this handbook as a reference when questions may arise during the school year.

If you have any concerns or need clarification about something in this handbook, contact the elementary office or your child's teacher. We are proud of our school and the young people who attend it! Our rules and expectations are designed to enhance the educational process by teaching our students consideration, respect, and pride. Although the school emphasizes academic programs, we also enrich our students emotionally and socially through a variety of school activities.

You are an important part of your student's education. We recommend that you visit our school often and communicate with your student's teachers. ***We cannot emphasize enough the need for your support and commitment.***

We look forward to a positive educational experience for your student. Please be assured that we will strive to make this school a welcoming place for you and your child.

Sincerely,
The Darby TK-7 School staff

** We kindly request that you sign below, detach, and return this slip to your child's teacher.

I have received the TK-7 student handbook and have discussed the procedures and expectations with my child.

Signature of parent/guardian

print name

Date

Signature of student

print name

Date

I would like to set up a conference with my child's teacher/principal (circle one or both) to discuss a portion of the handbook.

Teacher's initial _____ Grade _____