



# Bighorn Tracks

## Summer Update



### Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year at Bellinghurst Middle School!

As we prepare for the new school year, this newsletter confirms your enrollment at Bellinghurst Middle School and provides you with some helpful information to complete before the first day of school. While summer break is a time for students to recharge, the new school year is quickly approaching, and the important work of learning, growing, and connecting is just about to begin. We hope you're having a fun and relaxing summer, but we are getting excited to welcome everyone back!

### Bellinghurst is now fully online:

In the past, we held in-person fee and photo days before school started, but this year, you're fully in control thanks to Infinite Campus and other online platforms! From home, you can pay fees, print class schedules, complete athletic packets, register as a district volunteer, and order a yearbook.

For step-by-step guidance, please refer to our Back-to-School Checklist on page 4. We strongly encourage all families to set up and complete each step online for a smooth start to the school year. If you need assistance or prefer in-person support, our office staff will be available August 4th and 5th from 10 AM to 1 PM to help or collect cash/check payments.

In addition, our Bellinghurst district page has been outfitted with an online student store, updated class supply lists, sports try out and game dates, music class concert dates and so much more. You can find our page at [www.washoechoools.net/billinghurst](http://www.washoechoools.net/billinghurst) Be sure to favorite it and check back throughout the year for helpful information all year long.

### What to expect on the first day of school: Monday August 11<sup>th</sup>:

Our school welcomes students inside the cafeteria area beginning at 7am. On arrival on the first few days of school traffic can be a little thicker than normal so please plan accordingly to ensure your student is in class before the tardy bell at 7:30am.

Help your student come back prepared with pencils, paper, and a bag lunch or money for hot lunch. Cellphones and backpacks are not allowed at BDB (see our updated policy on page 3) and students will be asked to place these items in their lockers before school and for the duration of the school day, including lunch. Historically, lines for hot lunch take some time the first weeks of school, so you may prefer to have your student bring cold lunch until they are settled in.

At the 7:23 am bell all 6<sup>th</sup> graders will report to the "Thunderdome" (Gym) through the front entrance of the school. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will already know where to go and will go directly to their Advisory classes. Students will spend the first half of the day with their Advisory teacher reviewing procedures and having orientation. After that, students will meet briefly with each of their 6 scheduled classroom teachers before being released at 2:00pm. Traditionally our busses depart quickly after school so students should be aware to head straight to their busses after school.

## A Message from the Principal:

Dear Parents and Families,

I'm excited to be entering my second year as principal of Billingshurst Middle School! Last year was an incredible journey; we learned together, grew together, and upheld the strong Bighorn traditions that make our school community so special. As we look ahead to this year, my focus is on being more intentional in celebrating what makes Billingshurst great while also continuing to raise the bar for academic success.

This year, we're continuing with the same message as last year: *Embracing Challenges Head On*. We've chosen to carry this theme forward because it continues to reflect the heart of the middle school journey. Every day, our students are learning to take initiative, grow in confidence, and lead with purpose. Whether in the classroom, on the field, or among peers, they are developing grit, focus, and resilience. Embracing challenges also means working together by leaning into collaboration, supporting one another, and pushing through difficulties with determination. These are the habits that build strong learners and even stronger individuals, and we're excited to keep that spirit alive this year.

We are continuing the implementation of *iReady* through our Bighorn Excel class. iReady provides an adaptive learning platform that assesses students' individual skill levels in reading and math and offers personalized instruction tailored to their specific needs. Last year, we saw strong success when students regularly accessed the platform and had the opportunity to check in with their Excel teacher for additional support including grade checks, small group instruction, and whole-class social-emotional learning (SEL) lessons.

In addition, Billingshurst Middle School is aligning with WCSD in implementing *Teacher Clarity*, a framework that ensures learning intentions and success criteria are clearly communicated to students throughout each class period. In other words, students will know *what* they're learning and *how* they're learning it which is a key part of helping them take ownership of their education. To support this initiative, our school-wide instructional focus will be on increasing student engagement through more focused academic conversations in every discipline. Academic discourse is especially important in middle school as students learn to think critically, collaborate effectively, and articulate their understanding, all essential skills for high school, college, and beyond.

To support learning and student engagement, we've updated our policy to prohibit cell phone use during the entire school day, including lunch. This change builds on our previous policy and aligns with WCSD's *Phone Away and Learn Today* initiative. Based on strong parent and staff support from last spring's surveys, we're confident this update will continue to improve academic focus and social interactions. See the attached policy for details.

Parent and community involvement plays a key role in our school's success. Your engagement helps create a positive, supportive environment for all students. I encourage you to join the Billingshurst Parent Club; check out the "Parent Club Corner" in this newsletter for details. We also invite you to kick off the year with us at our *Snow Cone Social* on August 6th from 6:00–7:30 PM!

As we begin a new school year, I'm proud to continue serving the Bighorn community and excited for what lies ahead. I welcome conversations about your child's experience, and together, let's make 2025-2026 a great year!

Enjoy the rest of the summer and we will see you in August.

Take care,

Kevin T. Arnold  
Principal

## Phone Policy Update:

As we continue to prioritize student well-being, academic focus, and a positive school climate, Billingshurst Middle School is updating its phone and personal device policy beginning in the 2025–2026 school year. This shift reflects both stakeholder feedback from our recent family and staff survey and a broader national movement to reduce screen dependency in schools.

This policy supports the WCSD *Phone Away and Learn Today* initiative and reflects a districtwide effort to minimize distractions and maximize learning. It aligns with expectations already in place at other WCSD middle schools and builds on the positive progress we've made in reducing phone-related disruptions over the past year.

## Phone & Device Expectations:

Phones and personal electronic devices must be turned off and stored out of sight for the entire school day, from 7:30 AM to 2:00 PM.

This rule applies during: Class time, passing periods, lunch/recess, any on-campus setting during the instructional day.

Use of phones or smartwatches for texting, calling, photos, videos, or social media is strictly prohibited during school hours. Devices may only be used under administrative supervision in the office in the case of an emergency.

## Progressive Discipline Structure

- 1st Offense:
  - Verbal reminder
  - Phone confiscated for the class period and returned to the student at the end of class
  - Parent contacted by the teacher
- 2nd Offense:
  - Phone held in the front office until the end of the day
  - Parent contact by administration
- 3rd Offense:
  - Phone held in the office; parent must retrieve the device
  - Lunch detention assigned
- 4<sup>th</sup>+ Offense:
  - Progressive Discipline Meeting with parent.
  - Behavioral contract may be implemented
  - Student loses phone privilege for a designated period (e.g., two weeks)
  - Student may be placed on a daily check-in/check-out system for their phone
  - Parent meeting required

## Additional Information:

Smartwatches used for communication (texting, calling, notifications, etc.) will be treated the same as phones and subject to the same consequences. Non-compliance, such as refusing to surrender a device when asked, may result in disciplinary action for defiance. In emergencies, parents should contact the main office directly, as students will not be permitted to use their phones during the school day. Families needing special accommodations for documented health or accessibility reasons should contact school administration.

| Back to School Checklist:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Links                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Pay Student fees through Infinite Campus:</b> Credit card and ECH Payments can now be made directly through your students' Infinite Campus Portal. Should you require cash/check payments please include a fee sheet with your payment submission and make all checks payable to Billingshurst Middle School with your students' ID numbers clearly in the memo.                     |    |
| <b>See your students Schedule with Infinite Campus:</b><br>Schedules will be released into Infinite campus on Friday <i>August 1st</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |    |
| <b>Online Registration:</b> Be sure to complete <b>Online Registration</b> to update your student's information and parent contact details. This ensures we have accurate records for communication, emergency contacts, and important school updates. You can access registration at <a href="https://www.washoeschools.net/enrolltoday">https://www.washoeschools.net/enrolltoday</a> |    |
| <b>Athletics with Aktivate:</b> To try out for any of our sport teams this year please complete an online athletic packet at <a href="https://www.registermyathlete.com/login/">https://www.registermyathlete.com/login/</a>                                                                                                                                                            |    |
| <b>Set up My School Bucks Lunch Account:</b> Set up a new account or reload your students lunch account balances at <a href="http://www.myschoolbucks.com">www.myschoolbucks.com</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                    |   |
| <b>Free or Reduced Lunch Application:</b> Complete an updated 25/26 Free and Reduced Lunch Application at <a href="https://rocket.washoeschools.net/">https://rocket.washoeschools.net/</a>                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
| <b>Become a WCSSD Volunteer/Chaperone:</b> WCSSD now requires all volunteers and chaperones to register through Raptor Management—paper applications are no longer accepted. Create or log in to your account <a href="https://www.washoeschools.net/Page/20535">https://www.washoeschools.net/Page/20535</a> .                                                                         |  |
| <b>Find your Students Bus Stop:</b> Ensure you know your pickup and drop off times with WCSSD Transportation. Stops and routes can be found at <a href="https://www.washoeschools.net/Domain/73">https://www.washoeschools.net/Domain/73</a>                                                                                                                                            |  |
| <b>Shop for Class Supplies:</b> Once you have your students' class schedule you can check their class supply request lists at <a href="https://www.washoeschools.net/Page/20742">https://www.washoeschools.net/Page/20742</a> . Additional information will be provided in the first week of school. Some classes may have additional fees at that time.                                |  |
| <b>Join the Billingshurst Parent Group:</b> Interested in supporting our school community? Join the Billingshurst Parent Group; membership is free! Connect with us on Facebook at "Billingshurst Parent Group" or scan the QR code to get involved.                                                                                                                                    |  |

## Important upcoming Dates and Events:

- Back to School Snow Cone Social: August 6<sup>th</sup> 6-7:30pm
  - Students can come by to pick up schedule w/locker information, tour campus, enjoy a free snow cone and socialize with family, friends and staff.
    - 6<sup>th</sup> grade: 6:00pm-7:00pm
    - 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade: 7:00pm-7:30pm
- First Day of School: Monday August 11<sup>th</sup>
  - School hours are 7:30am-2:00pm with early release Wednesdays at 1:15pm. Students are welcome to be in the cafeteria by 7am but the first bell to release to their lockers/classes is 7:23am. Students are marked tardy at 7:30am
- School Photo Days: August 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Pictures will be taken during English Class this year and not before the start of school.
    - August 14<sup>th</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> graders and Team Legacy Rising
    - August 15<sup>th</sup>- 7<sup>th</sup> graders and Team Perpetual Motion
- Parent/Guardian Back to School Night: September 4<sup>th</sup> 6:00-8:00pm
  - A traditional open house night. Come meet teachers, learn about your students' classes and more.

## Follow us on Social Media:



<https://www.facebook.com/billinghurstmiddleschool>



<https://www.washoeschools.net/Page/1507>



<https://www.instagram.com/billinghurstms/>

## MISSION STATEMENT

We are **BOLD** students, educators, families, and leaders that embrace each other by cultivating a welcoming, safe, and respectful environment that prioritizes building positive relationships.

We are **DEDICATED** to providing rigorous instruction and maintaining high expectations in order to empower all students with the knowledge, resilience, integrity, and confidence to be successful leaders of the future.

We are **BIGHORNS!**