

COMMUNITY HANDBOOK 2017-2018

BITNEY PREP HIGH SCHOOL



A BIG PICTURE LEARNING SCHOOL.

135 Joerschke Dr. | Grass Valley, CA 95945

530.477.1235 | bitneyprep.net

1 Welcome from the Director

Greetings!

It's such a pleasure to welcome you to Bitney Prep High School. As you will quickly learn, this is a very special place where learning happens in a variety of ways and in a variety of settings. Students are at the center of all that we do here and, as a result, we have a very unique, diverse, friendly, and supportive school culture.

Like all schools however, there are policies and procedures necessary to ensure the smooth running of our school and the optimal delivery of our educational program. This handbook contains a wealth of information for your review. There is a signature page at the end of the book which we would like to have students and parents sign and return to the school indicating that you understand and agree to the rules and structures that we follow.

Working together, we are confident that students will have a rewarding and enriching school experience at Bitney.

With best wishes for a great school year,

Russ Jones
Director

2 General Information

2.1 Contacting the School

Our school is located on Joerschke Drive, just off East Main Street and Maltman. Please visit our web site, which contains all important school documents (e.g., this handbook), contact information for all of the faculty and staff, the complete school calendar, and more.

Bitney Prep High School

135 Joerschke Drive
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 477-1235 (Voice)
(530) 272-1091 (Fax)
Info@BitneyPrep.net
<http://www.BitneyPrep.net/>

2.1.1 Emergencies

In an emergency, call the school directly at **(530) 477-1235**. Our Fire/Emergency Plan is on file in the school office and available online if you would like to review our emergency procedures in detail.

2.1.2 Snow Closures

Bitney and other district schools are occasionally closed because of transportation and power challenges associated with our winter weather. Phone service permitting, the school administrator or a designee will inform local radio stations (KVMR - FM 89.5 and KNCO - AM 830) regarding the status of school closures and will attempt to call you (via our voice messaging system) to inform all families directly. If you do not receive a call, please call the school at **(530) 477-1235** to find out whether the school is open or listen to KVMR FM 89.5 or KNCO AM 830 in the morning for this information. We will also post the announcement on our Facebook page.

2.1.3 Administrative Contacts

The administrative staff is available by phone during school hours. Call the main school number (**530-477-1235**) to reach the Director or members of the administrative staff. See Section 2.4 – Faculty and Staff Directory for a complete listing of school contacts.

2.1.4 School Communication

Bitney Prep High School maintains several other modes of communication with students and parents.

2.1.4.1 Website

The school maintains a comprehensive web site at www.BitneyPrep.net which includes all of the following resources. Community members with Internet access are encouraged to bookmark the school website and refer to it regularly.

- Faculty & staff directory
- Class and bell schedules
- Course descriptions (syllabi)
- Secure access to current student grades via link to outside site, School Pathways
- School Calendar
- Other important documents and policies

2.1.4.2 Community email list

Upon enrollment, students and parents are added to a community email list: community@bitneyprep.net. Bitney staff uses this email for important information and updates. If parents or students are not receiving emails, they should contact the school office.

2.1.4.3 Social Media

Bitney maintains several social media sites, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Parents and students should contact the school office to get a link to these sites.

2.2 School Calendar

The following school calendar lists many important dates and holidays for the 2017/2018 school year. Students do not attend school on Staff Development Days. **For a much more complete calendar, please refer to the one on the school web site.**

August 15	Parent Meeting/Orientation Evening
August 16	First Day of School
August 31	Back to School Night
September 4	Labor Day Holiday - No School
September 14	Wilderness Day
September 18	Professional Day for Teachers
October 13	Last Day of 1st Quarter
October 16-20	Fall Break
November 10	Veteran's Day Holiday
November 23-24	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 22	Last Day of 1st Semester
December 22 – January 5	Winter Break and Holiday
January 8-12	Intersession Week
January 15	Martin Luther King Holiday
February 16	Presidents' Holiday
March 16	Last Day of 3rd Quarter
March 26-30	Spring Break
April 23	Snow Make Up Day
May 14	Professional Development Teachers
May 25	Snow Make Up Day
May 28	Memorial Day Holiday
May 29 – June 1	Minimum Days – Finals
June 1	Last Day of School Graduation – Minimum Day
June 4	Professional Day for Teachers

2.3 Bell Schedule

Students are expected to be on campus and ready to learn each day by 8:15 AM. Students are normally dismissed at 3:30 PM Monday through Thursday and at 2:00 PM on Friday.

	Monday – Thursday	Friday
Period 1	8:20 AM – 9:11 AM	8:20 AM – 8:55 AM
Assembly	(Fridays only)	9:00 AM – 9:20 AM
Period 2	9:16 AM – 10:07 AM	9:25 AM – 10:00 AM
Period 3	10:12 AM – 11:03 AM	10:05 AM – 10:40 AM
Period 4	11:08 AM – 11:59 AM	10:45 AM – 11:20 AM
Lunch	11:59 AM – 12:42 PM	11:20 AM – 12:00 PM
Period 5	12:47 PM – 1:38 PM	12:05 PM – 12:40 PM
Period 6	1:43 PM – 2:34 PM	12:45 PM – 1:20 PM
Period 7	2:39 PM – 3:30 PM	1:25 PM – 2:00 PM

2.4 Faculty and Staff Directory

The school website (www.BitneyPrep.net) includes an up-to-date list of faculty and staff contact information, as well as links to web pages describing each course taught.

Staff Name	Responsibilities	Email Contact
Davidson, Kathy	Business Manager	kdavidson@bitneprep.net
Elkin, Daniel	English Teacher, Advisor	delkin@bitneprep.net
Grebe, Beth	Math Teacher	bgrebe@bitneprep.net
Jones, Russ	Director	rjones@bitneprep.net
Madrona, Julie	Spanish Teacher, Advisor	jmadrona@bitneprep.net
Medeiros, Grace	School Psychologist	gmedeiros@nevcoca.org
Melia, John	Social Sciences Teacher	jmelia@bitneprep.net
Molnar, Jonathan	Dean of Academic Affairs	jmolnar@bitneprep.net
O'Neill, John	Art Teacher	joneill@bitneprep.net
Pugel, Amy	Science Teacher, Advisor	apugel@bitneprep.net



Bitney Prep High School



Schneider, Chris	Ultimate Frisbee Coach	cschneider@bitneprep.net
Young, Angelina	Office Manager, Attendance	ayoung@bitneprep.net
Young, Scott	English Teacher, Advisor	syoung@bitneprep.net

3 School Governance

3.1 Vision Statement

Bitney...Inspiring students to be ready for life and relevant to the world.

3.2 Mission Statement

With collaborative, experiential, and traditional methods, Bitney imbues our students with profound curiosity, a love of learning, and a clear sense of self-direction.

3.3 School Motto

Bitney Prep is a place where students are “known, respected, and educated.”

3.4 Charter Council

The Charter Council is the body from which all other governing bodies derive authority; and is made up of representatives from the administration, faculty, parents, students, and the surrounding community. The Charter Council is the official Board of Directors of the school, which is organized as a tax-exempt public entity under section 501c3 of the Internal Revenue Code. The Charter Council meets once each month during the school year, normally the second Tuesday evening at 6:00 PM. The date and time of each meeting are posted at the school as well as the online calendar on the school web site. The agenda for each regular Charter Council meeting is posted on the school web site at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. All meetings are open to the public.

3.5 Director

The Director is responsible for all day-to-day administrative, financial, and disciplinary decisions and ensures that the school is adhering to all legal parameters. The Director reports directly to the Charter Council (attending all meetings), chairs faculty meetings, and is responsive to the Parent and Student Councils, as well as to individual parents and students. The Director serves as the school's designated representative to our authorizing body - the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools Office (NCSOS), and serves on the Board of Directors of the NCCSA, our student services provider. The Director may organize and convene committees as necessary to support any and all school issues and functions.

3.6 Dean of Academic Affairs

The Dean of Academic Affairs coordinates enrollment, registration, transcript reporting, accreditation, standardized testing, guidance counseling, college and financial aid applications, and award assemblies (see also Section 6.1 – Guidance Counseling). The Dean also holds a voting position on the Charter Council and attends faculty meetings.

3.7 Parent Council

As a charter school, we are indebted to our parents for many of the support services provided by a traditional public school's administrative infrastructure. The Parent Council *usually* meets on the first Monday of the month at 6:00 PM, to find ways to provide this support. All parents are members of the Parent Council, and become voting members at the second meeting they attend. Parents are encouraged to attend whenever possible, to ensure that the Council reflects the broad range of voices in our community, has as much active participation as possible in its support activities, and can confidently recommend parent representatives to the Charter Council.

3.8 Student Council

Students from all grade levels participate in Student Council, representing the larger student body regarding issues of common concern to the school community. The council meets twice each week, once with the faculty advisor and once during "closed session" when no adults are present. This democratic process assures that the student voice is heard and that they have input on issues, activities, and programs at Bitney.

3.9 Student Representatives to the Charter Council

Each year, there are two student seats on the Charter Council: one active and one alternative. These seats are typically held by a Senior (12th grade) and a Junior (11th grade). Usually, but not always, the Alternate Rep becomes the voting member the following year.

3.10 Non-Discrimination Policy

Bitney Prep High School fosters an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of the community. Consistent with this principle, it is therefore Bitney Prep High School's policy not to discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities or



with respect to employment, on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under state or federal law.

4 Academics

4.1 Academic Program

Bitney's academic program is delivered through the Big Picture Learning model (www.bigpicture.org) and includes a comprehensive academic program coupled with a strong experiential learning component. Four days each week (M, T, Th, F) students attend academic and advisory classes on campus and on Wednesday, all students participate in mentored internships in the greater community. Every student designs an Individualized Learning Plan that integrates required subjects with learning opportunities that align with the student's interests and eventual post-secondary direction, whether that is college, a vocational career, travel, an entrepreneurial pursuit, the military or any one of a number of choices and options. As our name implies, we strive to "prep" students to be "ready for life and relevant to the world."

4.2 Enrollment/Admission Policy

Bitney Prep High School has an open admission policy, and will consider enrollment at any time during the school year on a case-by-case basis.

Bitney Prep High School does not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.

If a student has been expelled from a prior school or is facing current disciplinary action, the student must be in compliance with the plan that is currently in place in order to be considered for enrollment, even if that student transfers to Bitney.

Enrollment Procedure

To enroll for the subsequent school year, students must complete and turn in to the Bitney Prep Enrollment Coordinator the following materials by the stated enrollment deadline, typically March 1st prior to Fall enrollment:

1. Fill out on online Enrollment Interest form.
2. Complete an Enrollment Essay, the prompt provided at the time that a student or parent completes the Enrollment Interest form.
3. Complete an Enrollment Questionnaire
4. Provide transcript from previous school and/or, in the case that a student is transferring mid-semester or is applying for 9th grade admission as a current 8th grader, current courses and grades for the purpose of placement.
5. At the request of the parent/guardian, students are encouraged to have an Enrollment Conference with the Enrollment Coordinator, Dean of Academics and/or the Director, at which they express an understanding of, and desire to pursue the philosophy and policies of Bitney Prep High School.
6. Prior to enrollment, the parent/guardian must complete and turn in the Registration packet including, but not limited to:
 - a. Registration form
 - b. Proof of Immunization
 - c. Release of records from previous school
 - d. Birth certificate
 - e. Any other form(s) deemed necessary by the Registrar

If applicable, students/parents should include a copy of his/her Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan in order to determine appropriate placement.

Enrollment/Placement Requirements

In order to enroll at Bitney College Prep High School as a 9th grade (Freshman) student, students must have graduated from the 8th grade. For students entering 2nd semester freshman year or later, the following criteria must be met for the purpose of placement:

- Entering 2nd semester freshman must have earned at least 25 credits.
- Entering sophomores must have earned at least 50 credits.
- Entering juniors must have earned at least 110 credits and must be determined to be on track for graduation in four semesters.

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- Entering seniors must have earned at least 170 credits and must be determined to be on track for graduation in two semesters (one semester if a second semester senior).

In the event that a student has been or is about to be expelled by another school, Bitney administration will review the rehabilitation plan of the previous school to ensure that the conditions have been met.

In the event that enrollment at Bitney is at capacity either school-wide or by grade level, students will be considered for enrollment based on the following priorities:

1. Student already currently enrolled
2. Children of staff, teachers and board members
3. Siblings of students currently enrolled or siblings of Bitney graduates
4. Lottery – Once the initial three prioritized classifications of students are enrolled, all eligible students will be considered for admission based on a public random drawing.

Appeal for Admission

For any extenuating circumstances that could cause a denial of enrollment, students and parent/guardian can appeal for admission. The Director will consider appeals on a case-by-case basis. If denied by the Director, an appeal may be made to the Bitney Prep High School Charter Council, which meets once per month, usually on the 2nd Tuesday of every month.

In order to file for an appeal, students and/or parent/guardian must make a request by letter or email to the Charter Council Chair directly. The student and his/her parent/guardian will then be expected to be present during the scheduled Charter Council meeting and address the Council directly. This takes place in a Closed Session, and the results of the decision will be communicated to the parent/guardian as soon as is reasonably possible.

4.3 Dis-enrollment

Students dis-enrolling during the course of a semester for any reason must complete a drop slip, and ensure that all fees and/or books belonging to the school have been returned in good condition. Upon request, at that point a transcript will be sent to the student's new academic placement.

4.4 Graduation Requirements

Subject Requirements

Bitney students are expected to complete the following subject requirements. However, the Charter Council has given the administration the authority and flexibility to work with students to meet graduation requirements that are on a continuum from the minimum state requirements to those that meet the most rigorous college acceptance criteria.

Subject	Bitney Graduation Required Years	Bitney Graduation Required Credits	CSU/UC Eligibility Required Course Credits*
English	4	40	40
Math	3	30	30 <i>(40 recommended)</i>
Laboratory Science	2	20	20 <i>(30 recommended)</i>
U.S. History	1	10	5
U.S. Government	1/2	5	5
World History	1	10	10
Foreign Language	2	20	20
Economics	1/2	5	
Visual/Performing Arts	1	10	10
Physical Education	2	20	
Technology	1	10	
Electives*		5	10 <i>(must be CSU/UC approved)</i>
Advisory/Internship		40	
Totals		225	

**Electives are those additional courses needed to reach a total of 225 credits. Thus, they may be more or less than what is stated here.*

The University of California and California State University systems require that high school graduates complete certain courses to be eligible for admission. These courses are organized into seven categories. These “a-g” requirements can be summarized as follows:

- A **History/Social Science** – Two years required, including the following: (i) one year of U.S. history **or** one half year of U.S. history and one half year of civics or American government; **and** (ii) one year of world history, cultures, and geography.
- B **English** – Four years of college preparatory English that include frequent and regular writing, as well as reading classic and modern literature.
- C **Mathematics** – Three years of college preparatory mathematics that include the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and in two- and three-dimensional geometry.
- D **Laboratory Science** – One year of laboratory life science and one year of laboratory physical science.
- E **Language other than English** – Two years of the same foreign language.
- F **Visual and Performing Arts** – One year, including dance, drama/theater, music, and/or visual art.
- G **College Preparatory Elective** – In addition to those courses required in “a-f” above, one year (two semesters) of college preparatory electives is required, chosen from visual and performing arts, history, social science, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science, and language other than English.

In addition to offering “a-g list” courses, Bitney’s commitment to the full range of post-secondary options includes the following: all Freshmen visit a college campus, all Sophomores attend the 2-day Bay Area college visit field trip, all Juniors take the PSAT, all Seniors 1) take the SAT, 2) complete an application for a 4-year college, including two college entrance essays, 3) complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and 4) formally visit a college campus.

4.5 Educational Options

Bitney students are encouraged to utilize the world, and specifically our community to extend their learning. In addition to core courses on campus, there are many different ways that students can learn. Students work with their Advisor to craft an educational path that is most suitable to their interests and aspirations.

4.5.1 Internship

Each Wednesday, students are at an Internship site not on the Bitney campus. Early in the school year, students work with their Advisor to develop a plan for an Internship, and are supported in how to go about securing it. Freshman students may need more time (mid-fall), but it is expected that each student develop a learning plan at their site, arrange for their own transportation to their site, and both contribute to and learn from their Internship experience.

4.5.2 Sierra College

Bitney students have the opportunity to enroll in Sierra College classes as early as their freshman year. Ideally, classes take place outside of the regular school day (ie. afternoons and evenings), but if circumstances warrant, exceptions can be made. Students work with their Advisor to determine (1) whether they are able to be successful in Sierra College classes and (2) what course(s) would be most appropriate. Advisor and parental permission must be granted for this experience, and the Dean of Academic Affairs makes a final determination (via signature) authorizing this.

4.5.3 Project-Based Learning

Students may develop, in conjunction with their Advisor, project-based learning experiences that are commonly known as “Electives” classes. The possibilities with this are endless and are independent by nature, and course credit will be granted by the student’s Advisor according to achievement and competence-based criteria. Students work on their projects during their Advisory time as well as independently.

4.5.4 Senior Project

During their senior year, all students are required to take the Senior Seminar class, and must complete a project of significant scope and depth in an area of interest to the student. Satisfying required deadlines for this project during the first and second semesters of the senior year contributes to earning academic credit in the Senior Seminar

class. Although the many hours required to complete this project will be invested outside of class, deadlines and support will be regularly administered in the Senior Seminar class. The Senior Project Coordinator will review and assess each student's project to determine whether it successfully satisfies this requirement for graduation. In the fourth quarter of the school year, seniors present their projects to teachers, students, and members of the community.

4.6 Schedule Changes

Schedule changes must first be discussed with the student's Advisor, taking into account the student's past coursework, current schedule, and future plans. Once approved, the student must complete a Course Reassignment Form and submit it to the Dean of Academic Affairs, who will inform them when the change is to become effective.

4.7 Field Trips and Other Releases From Class

Students are encouraged to take part in enriching and valuable learning opportunities outside of school. These should take place, as much as is possible, outside of the regular school days and while school is not in session, recognizing that attendance in their traditional academic classroom setting is critical to success in their regular classes. However, should a student, parent and Advisor determine that a great opportunity should allow them to miss classes, the student and parent must make arrangements with their teachers and Internship Mentors, also completing the necessary paperwork with the Attendance Czar. The student must complete the necessary academic work; otherwise, they will be considered truant.

4.8 Controversial Curricular Material

Teachers will not show inappropriate movies in class or present curricular material covering sensitive topics (e.g., sexual education) without written parent/guardian approval. Alternate curricula will be provided for those students who choose or are not permitted to participate due to the subject matter or rating.

4.9 Group Work, Plagiarism, and Cheating

plagi•a•rism [n.] – the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work. [from the *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*, Copyright ©1997, by Random House, Inc.]

Teachers will clearly identify assignments that are to be completed through group effort, but each group member is expected to contribute equally in the effort. Students who attempt to pass someone else's work off as their own (e.g., copying text from a source without proper citation, cheating on a test, etc.) will earn zero credit for that assignment. The first such offense will result in an Incident Notice. The second such offense in the same class may result in the student receiving an "F" in the class and a meeting of the School Director, parents and the student. Tracking of a second offense shall be for the duration of the student's attendance at Bitney. Students who provide access to enable plagiarism/cheating may also earn zero credit, depending on the circumstances.

4.10 Grades

Although a grade point average is only one measure of a student's academic performance, the school tries to provide each student with a predictable, accurate, and fair accounting on their transcript. Students should be diligent in understanding the importance of grades and where they stand at any point within a semester as well as within their high school career.

Grade Point Averages

Grade Point Averages (GPAs) are computed on a 4-point scale: each A (A-, A, or A+) is worth 4 points, each B is worth 3 points, each C is worth 2 points, and each D is worth 1 point. The grade point average is then computed by weighting each class grade by the number of credit units. No other weightings are applied to class grades, even those from classes that might be considered "college level" or "advanced placement."

Grade Reporting

It should be stressed that grades are not “given” to students by course instructors. Instead, students **earn** grades through concerted effort to meet their instructors’ clearly articulated expectations.

Grades are computed in each class approximately halfway through the semester, and these Midterm Progress Reports are printed and distributed to all students to take home. These midterm progress reports are not entered into the student’s transcript; instead, they serve as important feedback while there is still time to rectify any problems. A Semester/Final Grade Report is entered onto the student’s transcript and then mailed to each student’s home at the end of each semester.

Academic teachers develop and distribute a syllabus for each class they teach. Each syllabus includes a clear formula for computing student grades. All academic class grades are also computed (according to the published rubric) with the help of the school’s official grade computation software, School Pathways, and are updated at least once every two weeks. The reporting program lists all assignments up to the present date. Grades and assignments for all of his/her classes can also be printed.

Parents and students are strongly encouraged to make use of the online grade reports so that they can monitor progress through each academic class. Instructions for accessing the online grade reports, and the necessary username and password, are mailed to parents and students at the beginning of the school year. Additional instructions are available on the school web site. Please note, you must have a username and password to utilize this online system. Additional information or access to “hard copies” of student grades, are available by calling the school office (530-477-1235).

Teachers and Advisors may notify parents if a student’s performance (ie. grade) has fallen to an unacceptably low level. However, it is the responsibility of the student and parent to keep track of current levels of performance and, if desired, to initiate a meeting with the student, teacher and/or Advisor.

Granting Course Credit

While a traditional semester-long course earns 5 credits, a teacher/Advisor may grant variable-credit for work completed. Teachers and Advisors may grant credit based on work completed in a class or Internship, with the accompanying grade reflecting quality of work. For example, a student may earn a 'B' in a class reflecting quality of work, but a continuum of credit (1-5 credits, or possibly more) based on achievement as determined by the Teacher/Advisor.

Academic Honors

Students who maintain a 4.0 average for a semester are recognized on the Director's List. Students who maintain a 3.5 average for a semester are recognized on the Dean's List. Bitney does not rank students within a grade level; no valedictorian or salutatorian is recognized at the graduation ceremony.

Academic Probation

All students at Bitney are expected to approach their class work with effort and integrity. Evidence of serious academic difficulty normally results in a Student Success Team (SST) being convened to help resolve the problem (see Section 6.3 – Student Success Teams). Any student whose GPA falls below 2.0 in any quarter may be placed on Academic Probation for the following quarter.

To define the terms of the probation, the Director or Dean of Academic Affairs will develop a contract outlining the specific academic goals and the steps the student will take to reach these goals. The contract will be signed by the student and his or her parent/guardian. At the end of the probationary period, if the student has not met the goals outlined in the contract, a meeting with the Director or Dean may be convened to address the question of whether Bitney is the appropriate placement for the student. Students may be placed on probation for behavioral circumstances as well.

Clearing Financial Obligations

Official transcripts will be withheld if a student has outstanding financial obligations to the school (e.g., lost or damaged textbooks or other school equipment).

4.11 Independent Study Credit

Through prior arrangement with the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Independent Study Coordinator, students may obtain independent study credit for on or off-campus activities. This can range from physical education credit to academic courses taken at other accredited institutions (e.g., Sierra College), participation in semester or yearlong programs, extended internships, and individualized educational programs for solid creative and independent thinkers.

4.12 Independent Study for Planned Absences

Students taking a planned leave of absence of one day or longer must request assignment to Independent Study. Students must obtain *prior* approval from the Director and arrange through the Secretary/Attendance Clerk for assignments that will be missed. All Independent Study assignments are due to the school office, the first day the student is back in school. The office will distribute student work to their teachers.

4.13 Standardized Testing

During the spring semester, the school participates in the state-mandated CAASPP program. All students in Grade 11 take a series of subject matter tests. California Achievement Tests and California Standards Tests are used to provide detailed feedback to individual students about their performance in relation to both national norms and specific California curriculum standards. These tests are also used to assess the effectiveness of schools and districts. Individual schools receive a score based, in part, on their students' performance on the CAASPP program tests. Participation in the CAASPP is expected.

Bitney also administers the state-mandated Physical Fitness Test to all ninth graders.

4.14 Academic Supplies

All students are expected to come to school each day prepared to learn. Each course may have different required supplies, and students are expected to understand what is needed.

5 School Services

5.1 Attendance

All students must be seated and prepared to learn at the start of the class. A faculty member who notices a student missing from a subsequent class must check the attendance sheet at the office to determine whether the student is absent or has cut the class. Students who arrive late to school must sign in at the office before going on to class. Students are required to attend all class sessions.

Excusing Absences

If a student is going to be absent, a parent/guardian should call the office (477-1235) by 8:20 AM and give the reason for the absence. A student may be legally excused from school when the absence is due to personal illness or injury, medical appointments, attendance at funeral services, jury duty, family emergency, or upon prior approval of the Director or designee. Periodic calls should be made to report on the student's progress during an extended absence (at least once per week). Regardless of the student's age, absences will only be legally excused when the parent/guardian informs the school by telephone or writes and signs a note listing specific reasons for the absence that are consistent with this policy. Written notes must be delivered to the school office, which maintains a record of excused and unexcused absences. Absences in excess of three days for medical reasons may require a note from a medical practitioner.

An unexcused absence from school will be treated as a Cut (see below), and will result in notification to the student's parent/guardian and possible further consequences as determined by the Director (See Section 5.17).

Unexcused Absences From Class (Cuts)

A cut is defined as a student missing over 15 minutes of a class without an excuse authorized by the office. Excused absences (e.g., those due to sickness, medical appointments, etc.) are not considered Cuts, though they should be minimized whenever possible. Cuts may result in a meeting with the student's Advisor, parent and/or the School Director or Dean of Academic Affairs. Cuts may also result in reduced course credit.

Excusing Tardiness

Students who are late for their Period 1 class must first report to the office. Regardless of the student's age, such Period 1 tardiness must be excused on the same day with a phone call, note written and signed by the parent/guardian and if available, a doctor's note. The office will issue the student a pass specifying whether the tardiness was excused or unexcused, and the student will bring this pass to the Period 1 instructor.

Unexcused Tardiness

Teachers will maintain a record of each time a student is tardy to their class. Three unexcused tardies in a class within the same semester are treated as a single unexcused absence.

Early Dismissal

Students who need to leave the campus before the close of the school day must have permission from their parent/guardian (usually obtained by coming to the office in person to sign the student). Students leaving early will remain in class until they are called to the office when their transportation arrives. Parents should not go directly to their student's classroom. Unplanned interruptions are disruptive to instruction.

Students who must leave the school early on a regular basis must have an Early Dismissal Release Form on file in the office and must also sign out before leaving each day. Students with approved early dismissal must leave the campus immediately at the agreed upon time.

5.2 Lunch

Students may enjoy their lunch in any clearly visible area within the campus boundaries, as long as they do not disrupt any academic activities conducted during that period.

5.2.1 Off Campus Lunch

The school allows students to leave campus for lunch with parental approval. While students are off campus, all school rules and policies remain in effect. The school administration has the authority to modify details or provisions of the policy, and to revoke the privilege for individual students or the entire student body. Of particular concern will be excessive tardiness to 5th period, reports of any use of rude behavior or improper

language while representing Bitney in the community, student riding in cars with other students who are not licensed to carry underage passengers, or any other violation of school rules and policies.

The Bitney staff feels that off campus lunch is a privilege rather than a right.

Campus Boundaries

Students are allowed only in the areas designated within the Campus boundary. Smiley Guys is considered part of the school boundaries. The Bitney campus is closed, unless otherwise noted; students are not allowed to leave the campus during lunch or at any other time of the day unless permission is received from faculty or administration.

5.3 Transportation and Parking

Parking on campus is a privilege. To keep this privilege, a student must abide by the rules regarding parking, loitering, accessing cars during school hours, and closed campus restrictions (see Section 5.5 – Campus Boundaries). **A safe and respectful speed (5 mph maximum) must be maintained at all times within the parking lot.** All cars must be parked between the lines of established parking spaces. Students with approved early dismissal (see Section 5.1 – Early Dismissal) are not permitted to provide rides to other students unless the other students have also obtained official permission to leave campus, ride with the said student, and have signed out.

Community members park on campus at their own risk; the school is not responsible for valuables left inside vehicles, damage to vehicles, or theft of vehicles.

The school does not operate a school bus. Instead, Gold Country Stage provides bus service to the campus. All students are encouraged to carpool or utilize the public bus service.

No student is allowed to ride with another student unless the driver's license authorizes he or she to do so, and only if permission is granted from both sets of parents/guardians.

5.4 Visitors

All visitors must park in the school parking area and check in with the office immediately upon arrival. Visitors must obtain approval from a member of the staff, sign in at the school office and be issued a Visitor Pass before gaining access to the rest of the campus. Whenever possible, visitation requests should be submitted to the office prior to the visit.

5.5 Dress Code

Parents/guardians/students are responsible for appropriate student dress and cleanliness. **Personal appearance must not be disruptive to the educational process, and may be dealt with by the Director or other staff members on an individual basis.**

- Students who come to school inappropriately dressed will be loaned a long T-shirt to wear over their other clothing until either (a) more appropriate clothing may be brought from home, or (b) the school day has ended, at which time the T-shirt will be returned. Repeated dress code violations will be considered an act of willful disobedience, and further disciplinary action may be taken (see Section 5.16 – Willful Disobedience). **Shoes must be worn on the school grounds at all times.**
- Clothing that exposes personal body parts, underwear (other than bra straps), or more than three inches of the midsection (when standing up straight) is not allowed.

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- Underclothing (boxers, undershirts, camisoles, bras, etc.) may not be worn as outerwear at any time.
 - The length of shorts and skirts must be appropriate for an academic setting.
 - Clothing, tattoos, or jewelry with ethnic, sexist, and/or racial slurs is not allowed. Vulgar, obscene, or violent writing or connotations are not allowed.
 - No clothing that advertises drug, alcohol, or tobacco products is allowed.

5.6 Non-Educational Devices

Skateboards, inline skates, razors, bicycles, or scooters, may not be used (or even stood upon) at any time while on campus, unless the student is wearing a helmet.

No music playing devices may be used at any time while the student is in class (unless the individual instructor has given the student explicit permission to do so). If a student attempts unauthorized use of such a device during class, the device will be confiscated for the remainder of the class period. Any subsequent use will result in confiscation for the remainder of that day and may result in a meeting with the student, parents/guardians, and the Director.

Cell Phone Use

Cell phones and other communication devices may not be used at any time while students are in class. Unless the instructor explicitly directs students to do so, phones should be turned off while in class and kept out-of-sight in a bag or pack. Unauthorized use of cell phones (including making calls, text messaging, answering a phone, playing games, taking pictures, or accessing the web), allowing it to ring while in class, or leaving it exposed, may result in the cell phone being taken away for the class period and/or confiscated for the entire day (to be retrieved in the office at the end of the day). Repeated violations will be considered an act of willful disobedience (see Section 5.16 – Willful Disobedience) and may result in a meeting with the student, parents/guardians, and the Director.

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged not to call students on cell phones when classes are in session (see section 2.3 Bell Schedule). Students are allowed to use the office phone during breaks to make important phone calls. Incoming messages constituting emergencies will be delivered to students during class. All non-emergency messages for students will be held at the office until a class break.

5.7 Student Publications and Notices

All students are encouraged to post flyers advertising community events. All announcements posted on the school bulletin boards or elsewhere on campus must be approved by the office and dated for removal. No student publications or flyers may be distributed on campus without office approval.

5.8 Campus Environment

Campus cleanliness and care is the responsibility of all community members. Intentional littering, tagging, vandalism, or other forms of disregard for our shared facilities will be dealt with by the Director and may include campus work projects, payment for damages, or other disciplinary consequences such as a behavior contract, suspension or expulsion.

5.9 Displays of Affection

Bitney is an educational institution with an educational focus. Kissing, inappropriate touching and other sexual behavior are not school appropriate and are prohibited. Repeated violations will be considered an act of willful disobedience (see Section 5.16 – Willful Disobedience) and may result in a meeting with the student, parents/guardians, and the Director.

5.10 Respect for the Individual

Every person in our school community is an individual worthy of our respect. Students are expected to treat others with courtesy and civility.

All conflicts on campus will be resolved through calm, civil, nonviolent discourse. All community members will use appropriate language while they are at school. The use of profanity is prohibited on campus and at all school related functions.

Community members will demonstrate respect for one another by ensuring that all are free from unwelcome sexual advances and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct that is of a sexual or abusive nature. Sexual harassment, bullying and other actions intended to cause harm to others (or their property) are a form of discrimination and have no place on the Bitney campus or elsewhere. For more information about the schools official Sexual Harassment Policy, please refer to the school website.

It is the responsibility of each community member to create and maintain this environment of respect by controlling his/her own actions and by encouraging other community members to do the same. An effort will be made to acknowledge positive behavior. Acts of kindness, respect, and good deeds will be noted and publicly recognized. Any student, parent, teacher or staff may nominate a student for such recognition.

5.11 Health Services and Medication

All students are required by state law to have on file in the school office the student's California School Immunization Form or Waiver and the completed Bitney Emergency Information Form.

If a student becomes ill or suffers an accident during school hours and needs to leave school, s/he must report to the office. A parent/guardian will be contacted to give permission for the student to go home and to make transportation arrangements.

School personnel will not administer non-prescription internal medication (including aspirin and ibuprofen). Any medication brought to school must be in the original prescription bottle and kept in the school office. A completed Administration of Medication Form signed by the student's physician/health care provider must accompany any prescription and/or non-prescription medication that is to be kept at or brought to school for daily, short term, or emergency use. **Please schedule medical and dental appointments for times outside normal school hours.**

5.12 Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, etc.

The following items are prohibited in all areas of the campus (and within 100 feet of the school grounds) at all times. Possession of any of these items is not only a violation of the school contract, but it will normally result in serious legal consequences for the student(s) involved:

- **Alcohol, tobacco, and/or other controlled substances**
- **Drug paraphernalia**
- **Firearms and/or other weapons**

Community members are expected to arrive on campus prepared to focus on education. Arriving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs will also result in very serious disciplinary consequences. Note that these are all legal issues that may transcend the authority of the Director, and law enforcement may be called in certain circumstances.

Please see section 5.17 Drug Prevention Policy for more details.

5.13 Willful Disobedience

Students are expected to respect the authority of all staff and faculty on campus. Willful disobedience or direct defiance is a serious offense that will result in a mandatory review by the Director, along with probable suspension.

5.14 Disciplinary Actions

The school's disciplinary system is designed to be flexible enough to meet the needs of individual students, and the seriousness of each particular incident. Thus, while the steps described below provide useful guidelines, the Director retains the discretion to move through these steps at a quicker or slower pace.

Classroom Management

Faculty is encouraged to handle disciplinary problems within their classroom, rather than to send students to the office. In the event a student needs to be sent from the classroom for disrupting instruction, that student must go directly to the office, and report directly to the Director or Dean to discuss the incident.

Incident Notices

Community members who witness violations of the letter or spirit of this agreement should complete an Incident Notice describing the transgression. Completed notices should be delivered to the Director, who will determine what (if any) immediate action should be taken. Depending on the severity of the issue, the Director may decide to have an informal discussion with the student, call the parent/guardian directly, or convene a Student Success Team (see Section 6.3 – Student Success Teams). Incident Notices are maintained in the Director’s student file so that they may be referred to if and when subsequent disciplinary actions are taken.

5.14.1 First Incident Notice – Conference with Director

The first Incident Notice in a school year will result in a conference between the School Director and the student, and possibly the parent(s)/guardian(s). The potential consequences of any subsequent referrals will be discussed in detail.

5.14.2 Second Incident Notice – Suspension

The second Incident Notice in a school year may result in a one to three-day suspension. If suspended, at least one parent/guardian must accompany the student on his/her first day back to school for a brief re-entry meeting with an administrator. The meeting will focus on developing strategies for addressing the root problems in order to avoid a third referral. The consequences of a third referral will be clearly communicated, and the student and parent will both sign a contract agreeing to the intervention plan.

5.14.3 Third Incident Notice – Suspension & Transfer Conference

The third incident notice in a school year may result in a three to five-day suspension. If suspended, an administrator may meet with the student and his or her parent/guardian to discuss options for a more appropriate school placement for the student.

5.14.4 Fourth Incident Notice – Expulsion

The fourth incident notice in a school year will result in a mandatory hearing before the Charter Council, to determine whether the student should be expelled. The expulsion policy is available on the school website.

5.15 Dance Policies

Dances and proms are open to all enrolled students (with the exception of students under disciplinary restrictions). Students may invite friends from other schools to attend as well. However, guests will be admitted only at the discretion of the dance chaperones. Everyone, including guests, must read, sign, and abide by the Dance Policies:

- All attendees must sign in at the entrance immediately after arriving.
- All attendees must sign out before leaving.
- Students who leave the dance may not return.
- Dance area boundaries must be respected for the duration of the dance.
- No songs with explicit sexual or violent lyrics will be allowed.
- The posted dress code will be enforced.
- No tobacco, alcohol or other drugs are allowed.
- Abusive language or behavior will not be tolerated.
- Students who abuse drugs or alcohol or are violent will be isolated until transportation home can be arranged.

5.16 Technology Agreement

All students at Bitney who use school computers must agree to the following conditions:

- All directions of teachers and school staff will be followed
 - All rules established by the school will be followed.
 - All rules of any computer networks accessed will be followed.

The use of school computers and Internet access is a privilege, and failure to follow the rules may result in the loss of computer privileges. School computers are for school-related education and research purposes only. No personal use is allowed without permission from an instructor.

No changes or modifications may be made to any software or document, except for a student's own documents. The following types of information may not be produced, distributed, accessed, used, or stored:

- Unlawful
- Private or confidential
- Harmful, threatening, abusive, or denigrating to others
- Obscene, pornographic, or containing inappropriate language
- Disruptive of others' work
- Damaging to computer systems or networks
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The following rules of e-mail etiquette must be followed:

- No e-mail address, home address, telephone number, or personal information will be distributed.
- The privacy of others will be maintained at all times.

5.17 Drug Prevention Policy

In accordance with California Ed Code section 48900, for a student who possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, or was in possession of drug paraphernalia at school, the following takes place:

1. If a staff member has reason to believe that a student is in violation of this policy, the student, along with his/her backpack and materials, will be referred to the Director or his designee for action.
2. The Director/designee will make a determination if there is reasonable suspicion that the student has violated the school policy. If so, the student will be given the option to voluntarily enter a drug counseling program chosen by the school or face expulsion. If the student is suspected of being under the influence but denies it, local law enforcement will be contacted.
 - a) A Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) from the law enforcement agency will make a determination if the student is under the influence. If confirmed, the student will again be given the choice to voluntarily

enter the drug-counseling program. The student will also have the option to be tested (urine test, blood test, etc.) if they object to the determination of the DRE.

- b) The law enforcement agency may choose to cite the student at this point.
3. Once the school administration or DRE has made a determination that the student has violated the policy, the parent(s) will be contacted.
 4. If the student is found to be in violation of the policy and refuses to enter the drug-counseling program he/she will be suspended pending an expulsion hearing.
 5. If the student enters and successfully completes the drug counseling program, and tests negative during the course of the counseling program and the remainder of the semester, he/she will continue as a student with no further consequences.
 6. The student will be placed on a Probationary Status Agreement (contract) which will remain in place for the rest of the school year or longer as determined by the Director/designee.
 7. If the student is not successful in the drug-counseling program (does not participate or tests positive), he/she will be suspended pending an expulsion hearing.

6 Student Services

6.1 Guidance Counseling

The Dean of Academic Affairs (see also Section 4.1 – Dean of Academic Affairs) has the overall responsibility for ensuring that Bitney meets the academic expectations outlined in its charter, including offering a curriculum that satisfies the requirements for admission to the University of California/California State University system. The Dean also coordinates guidance counseling services, both to help students meet graduation requirements and to lead them through the college and financial aid application process.

6.2 Class Advisors

Each class (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) has a faculty member appointed as a Class Advisor. It is the role of the Advisor to give guidance to the Class Officers and help facilitate their class meetings and chosen activities. Some of these activities may include, but are not limited to, Student Government elections, fundraising, service projects, class trips, and social events.

6.3 Student Success Teams

Student Success Team meetings will be scheduled to address the needs of students who are having disciplinary or academic difficulties. A Student Success Team is comprised of the student, his or her parent/guardian, and members of the faculty and/or administration. In order to address serious academic concerns, the team may decide to place the student on Academic Probation (see Section 4.9.4 – Academic Probation for details), or draft some other academic and/or behavioral contract outlining both the remediation strategy and the consequences if the student fails to meet these expectations.

6.4 Special Education

The Nevada County Charter Services Authority (NCCSA), a California Joint Powers Agency, provides special education services to students who have Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Teachers and the Special Education Coordinator (Resource Specialist) work together to modify the curricula to meet these special needs.

6.5 School Psychologist

The NCCSA psychologist provides counseling and special education services to students on IEPs, and is available for counseling to other students as necessary.

6.6 Transcript Requests

In addition to the normal grade reports provided at the end of each semester, grade transcripts may also be obtained by completing the Transcript Request Form available in the school office.

6.7 Student Lockers

Locker space will be provided to all students. This locker space remains the property of the school and all school policies apply (e.g., no alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, firearms, or other weapons, are allowed within the locker space). **Lockers are subject to search by school personnel who have valid concerns.** No keyed locks are allowed, and the code to all combination locks must be on file in the office.

7 Summary of Student Responsibilities

As a member of the Bitney community, I agree to abide by the letter and spirit of the school expectations and policies outlined in this handbook, specifically the following:

- I will treat other members of my community with respect and will resolve all conflicts through calm, civil, nonviolent discourse. I will not engage in sexual or other forms of harassment, bullying, discrimination, or abusive behavior.
- I will arrive at school punctually and fully prepared to engage in academics.
- I will abide by the school dress code at all times while on campus.
- I will refrain from engaging in inappropriate displays of affection as defined in this handbook.
- I will never use a cell phone, digital pager or like device during any class, nor will I allow such a device to create any noise in a classroom.
- I will never bring alcohol, tobacco, or other controlled substances or paraphernalia to campus.
- I will never bring firearms or other weapons to campus.
- I will have all notices and flyers approved by the office before posting them.
- I will help maintain a clean campus environment by recycling, disposing of my own trash properly, and encouraging other members of my community to do the same.
- I will abide by the Technology Agreement.
- I will represent Bitney well by adhering to this agreement whenever I attend a school function (e.g., an athletic event).

As a member of the Bitney student body, I also agree to the following:

- I will bring my academic planner, pencil, paper, and completed homework with me to each academic class every day, along with any other course-specific items required by the instructor (calculators, books, etc.).
- I will be seated in class and prepared to learn before the bell rings to signal the start of the class period.
- I will use the restroom during breaks, rather than during class time.
- I will not leave the classroom while classes are in session without a Hall Pass.

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- I will respect all campus boundaries and will not leave the campus without first obtaining permission from the office and then signing out.
 - I understand that it is my responsibility to bring written excuses from my parent/guardian in order to clear any absences or tardies.
 - I will obtain written authorization from the office before bringing any prescription medication to campus.
 - I will never willfully or carelessly present someone else's work as my own, nor make my own work available for others to do so.
 - I will respect the authority of staff and faculty members and defer to their judgment while on campus.

8 Signature Page

Each member of the faculty and student body (as well as at least one parent/guardian of each student) must complete and sign the appropriate portion of this page, detach it, and return the signed copy to the school.

8.1 Handbook and Policy Revisions

This handbook is reviewed and revised each year by the School Administration, with input from the Parent, Faculty, Student, and Charter Councils. The school reserves the right to make modifications to the policies described in the handbook in order to respond to the changing academic environment. Such revisions will be announced to the entire community and incorporated into the handbook as soon as possible. By signing this agreement and remaining a member of the community, you agree to abide by all of these terms, as so amended.

8.2 Student/Parent Signature

I have received a copy of the BPHS Community Handbook and agree to the student responsibilities it describes.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date