



To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Bitterroot Early Learning Network (BELN) to express our enthusiastic and wholehearted support for the Bitterroot Discovery Children's Museum. We believe this visionary project will become a cornerstone of learning, play, and connection in our valley—especially for the youngest among us.

The museum's vision to support all children, caregivers, and community members—through inclusive, immersive exhibits and programming—is particularly inspiring. Designing experiences that span science, art, history, wellness, and multi-sensory discovery reflects a deep understanding of how children learn best, and aligns with BELN's belief that play is vital for healthy development and can change the world.

Moreover, the museum's plans for flexible, multi-use spaces, and programming such as volunteer-led story time, STEM/tinkering, art and music, citizenship classes, and community events, directly support BELN's mission of holistic childhood development. These offerings will not only supplement pre-K learning but also serve as gathering points for families, educators, and neighbors to connect and grow together.

We recognize the power of play-based learning—research shows that approximately 90% of brain development occurs before age five, and play is a critical engine for that growth. Through play, children build essential life skills like problem-solving, communication, emotional resilience, and more—all foundational to lifelong learning and well-being.

In practical terms, BELN stands ready to support the museum through collaboration, advocacy, and outreach:

- **Partnerships in programming:** collaborating on early learning play events, workshops for caregivers, and joint outreach to families.
- **Resource sharing:** offering expertise in early childhood education, community engagement, and inclusive programming.
- **Advocacy:** amplifying the museum's mission through our network, and potentially collaborating on fundraising or awareness initiatives.

The Bitterroot Discovery Children's Museum represents more than a building—it is a bold commitment to nurturing community, imagination, learning, and resilience. BELN is honored to stand alongside you in bringing this vision to life.

Please consider us a supportive partner, enthusiastic collaborator, and reliable advocate for your work. We look forward to the day when children and families across the Bitterroot can experience this wonderful resource firsthand—playing, discovering, and growing together.

With deep admiration and unwavering support,

Ariella Wells
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