



## Big Sky Community School

### *K-4 Elementary Specialist*

**Position:** K-4 Elementary Specialist

**Location:** Big Sky, Montana (full-time, in-person)

**Start Date:** August 2026

**Compensation:** \$60,000 - \$85,000

### About Big Sky Community School

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Big Sky Community School is an independent, nonprofit K-12 school in Big Sky, Montana, serving approximately 50 students across two divisions. Our K-4 program serves 12-15 students in a dynamic hybrid learning environment where in-person instruction, online instruction, small-group teaching, and a cutting-edge digital learning platform come together to give young students an extraordinary foundation. We are mastery-based, not grade-based. Students advance when they are ready, not when the calendar says so. We believe in joyful, rigorous early childhood education, and we are building the infrastructure to deliver it.

Big Sky Community School exists for a specific kind of family, one that refuses to compromise. We are built around the belief that a small, intentional school can deliver a better academic experience than anything larger or more traditional. Every child here is known deeply, taught deliberately, and pushed to grow. That is the promise we make to families, and it starts in the earliest grades.

### The Opportunity

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This is a diverse teaching role for a versatile elementary educator who loves the “aha” moments in both reading and math. As our K-4 Elementary Specialist, you will own the literacy and math programs for our lower school, including phonics, reading groups, writing instruction, word study, and fluid, mastery-based math groups. Our K-4 program is mastery-based, not grade-based. Students advance when they demonstrate readiness, and your instruction is organized around where each child actually is, not what grade they happen to be in. With 12-15 students in the program, you will know every learner deeply and teach with a level of precision and personalization that larger schools simply cannot offer.

You will teach small groups, assess students individually, track progress through a mastery-based system, and collaborate closely with our Head of Lower School and online

teaching colleagues. You will also use MAP Primary data to identify gaps and drive instruction for every student in the program. You will play an active role in helping develop and refine our custom AI-integrated learning platform for K-4, a tool being built specifically around our mastery model and the way our students learn. If you believe in the science of reading and math, love the moment a child cracks the code, and are excited by the intersection of great teaching and smart technology, this role was written for you.

## **What You Will Do**

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### **Reading**

#### **Phonics & Decoding**

- Deliver explicit, structured phonics instruction in small groups organized by decoding level, not grade. A student's phonics group reflects where they are, full stop.
- Assess each student's phonics and decoding skills regularly and move students between groups as they progress.
- Build a phonics culture in K-4 where every child advances systematically. No student stays stuck.

#### **Reading Groups**

- Run leveled reading groups across K-4, assess student reading levels using F&P or equivalent, and adjust groups as students grow.
- Confer with individual readers, build comprehension strategies, and develop fluency alongside decoding.
- Recommend independent reading at the right level for every student and track reading volume over time.

#### **Writing Instruction**

- Lead Writers Workshop instruction: mini-lessons, individual conferring, and portfolio-based writing development across K-4.
- Review student writing regularly to identify where each child is as a writer and what they need next.
- Build a writing culture where young students see themselves as authors with something to say.

#### **Word Study & Grammar**

- Deliver word study instruction using a stage-based spelling program, matching each student to their developmental spelling stage.
- Integrate grammar instruction naturally into writing and reading work.

### **Mathematics**

#### **Concept Mastery**

- Deliver explicit math instruction focusing on number sense, operations, and problem-solving.
- Groups are organized by mathematical readiness, not age.

#### **Manipulatives & Inquiry**

- Use hands-on tools and visual models to move students from concrete understanding to abstract application.

#### **Fact Fluency**

- Build a culture of mathematical confidence where students master foundational facts (addition, subtraction, multiplication) through regular, joyful practice.

## Applied Math

- Integrate math into the broader K-4 world—measuring during projects, analyzing data from school activities, and making math "visible" in the classroom.

## MAP Primary & Data-Driven Instruction

- Use MAP Primary scores to assess every K-4 student's reading, language, and math development across testing windows.
- Identify specific skill gaps from MAP results and build targeted instruction around them, not general re-teaching, but precise intervention.
- Track MAP growth over time and communicate results clearly to families and the Head of Lower School with a concrete plan for each student.
- Work within our LMS to log mastery milestones, review AI-generated student data, and maintain individual literacy profiles.

## Collaboration & Community

- Collaborate closely with our Head of Lower School and online teaching colleagues on curriculum alignment and student progress.
- Play an active role in developing and refining our custom AI-integrated K-4 learning platform, providing teacher feedback, flagging what is and is not working, and helping shape how literacy and math mastery are tracked and displayed within the system.
- Communicate regularly with families about reading and math progress, milestones, and how to support emergent learning at home.
- Support students during independent work blocks and transitions throughout the school day.
- Contribute to the broader K-4 community: field trips, community circle, Friday programming, and school events.
- Support our 5-12th as needed.
- Pitch in on school operations as part of a small, all-hands team.

## Who You Are

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- Patient, warm, and great at building trust with young learners. You know that confidence and skill develop together.
- A natural collaborator who communicates well with colleagues, families, and school leadership.
- A trained elementary educator with deep knowledge of the science of reading and math, as well as structured literacy and math approaches, Fountas & Pinnell, Read Write Inc., Singapore Math, Eureka, or similar, with comfort in supporting the rigor of Beast Math enrichment
- Experienced in small-group phonics instruction, leveled reading groups, and writing workshop models.
- Experience in mastery-based math and leveled fluid math groups
- Genuinely comfortable with a mastery-based model. You assess each child's level and instruct them at their level, regardless of grade.
- A skilled assessor who uses MAP Primary and informal data to drive instruction without losing sight of the whole child.
- Someone who can look at a student's reading or writing and immediately know what to address next.

- Curious about technology, excited about AI-integrated learning, and genuinely interested in helping shape a new platform rather than just using one.
- Energized by the opportunity to build a literacy program from the ground up.

## **Preferred Background**

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A teaching credential with a focus in emerging literacy and math, early childhood, and/or elementary education is strongly preferred. Experience with structured literacy programs (Read Write Inc, Fountas and Pinnell, Lucy Calkins, Words Their Way, or similar, as well as mastery-based math (Singapore Math, Eureka, Beast Math enrichment, or similar), is highly valued. Familiarity with MAP Primary and using assessment data to drive instruction is a strong plus. Candidates with experience in independent schools, hybrid learning environments, or small schools are especially encouraged to apply.

## **Schedule & Time Off**

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Full-time position following the Big Sky Community School academic calendar (approximately 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday). Includes winter and spring breaks, major holidays, and paid time off. Support for January Term and summer camp programming.

## **Benefits of Joining Our Team**

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Big Sky Community School offers competitive compensation, \$60,000 - \$85,000, based on experience; health, dental, and vision insurance; paid time off aligned with school breaks; professional learning opportunities; and the chance to work in one of the most beautiful mountain communities in the country. And the rare opportunity to help build a literacy program from the ground up in a school that is genuinely doing things differently.

## **Background Check**

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All employment offers are contingent upon completion of fingerprinting, an FBI background check, and reference checks.

## **Equal Opportunity**

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Big Sky Community School is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes candidates of all backgrounds and experiences.

## **To Apply**

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Email Jeremy Harder ([jeremy@bigskycommunityschool.org](mailto:jeremy@bigskycommunityschool.org)) and Julie Edwards ([julie@bigskycommunityschool.org](mailto:julie@bigskycommunityschool.org)) with your resume and a cover letter describing your experience with emerging literacy and math, the programs you have worked with, and why this opportunity excites you.