

Beebe Junior High School Solar Eclipse Information

On Monday, August 21, 2017, the moon's shadow will block the sun from view and a solar eclipse will occur. In Beebe, the partial eclipse will begin in Beebe at 11:48 a.m. and end at 2:46 p.m. With safety as our number one priority, during this time we will need to be very careful and make sure students and staff members do not look directly at the sun without protected eyes.

Dr. Russell Ven Gelder, a professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Washington School of Medicine and spokesman for the American Academy of Ophthalmology explains that "Your eye is basically a very powerful magnifying glass...if you stare at the sun, you're focusing all the energy of that light onto your retina, the light-sensitive tissue in the back of your eye, and essentially burning a hole. You won't feel it because the retina doesn't have any pain fibers, but the damage can happen after a few seconds."

The damage is known as solar retinopathy. That can include blind spots, distortions or loss of contrast in your central vision, which is what you use to read, drive, and work on the computer. "There have been reports of people becoming legally blind in at least one eye after watching eclipses," Van Gelder said. The danger is real for permanent vision loss."

The only safe way to look directly at the uneclipsed or partially eclipsed sun is through special-purpose solar filters, such as "eclipse glasses" or hand-held solar viewers. The Beebe School District has purchased some solar eclipse glasses for students to use to view the solar eclipse.

If solar eclipse glasses are available then teachers will be allowed to take their classes out to view the solar eclipse. However, students will ONLY be allowed outside during this time if permission has been granted by the parent or guardian of the student. In addition, if the child checks out with the parent to view the eclipse, it will be counted as an excused absence. We ask that parents checking out a child come NO later than 11:30 a.m.

7th and 8th grade students will stay in the building and no transitioning between buildings will take place during the three-hour time span. The students will have the opportunity to view the live stream of the eclipse.