

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA

November 19-20, 2025

***Missoula County Public Schools,
Administration Building, Board Room
909 South Ave. West,
Missoula, MT***

November 21, 2025

***University of Montana
Phyllis J. Washington College of
Education, Room 334
32 Campus Drive
Missoula, MT***

AGENDA

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA

November 19-20, 2025

Missoula County Public Schools, Administration Building, Board Room
909 South Ave. West, Missoula, MT

November 21, 2025

University of Montana, Phyllis J. Washington College of Education, Room 334
32 Campus Drive, Missoula, MT

Wednesday, November 19, 2025
Missoula County Public Schools
10:30 AM

❖ PERKINS COMMITTEE MEETING

10:30 AM Missoula County Public Schools, Administration Building, Board Room
909 South Ave. West, Missoula, MT
[AGENDA](#)

❖ BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND MONTANA COUNCIL OF DEANS OF EDUCATION LUNCH AND DISCUSSION

12:00 PM Missoula Butterfly House and Insectarium
1075 South Ave. West, Missoula, MT

*****CONVENE AT 1:30 PM*****

CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
- B. Roll Call
- C. Statement of Public Participation
- D. Welcome Visitors

PUBLIC COMMENT

This time will be provided for public comment on items not listed on the agenda. This meeting is open to the public both in person and electronically. For those wishing to give virtual public comment, please contact bpe@mt.gov to request the Zoom link for the meeting. Members of the public who have joined virtually on Zoom may "raise their hand" at the appropriate time to participate after being recognized by the Board Chair. Members of the public who wish to share written public comment with the Board members must submit written public comment to the Executive Director at bpe@mt.gov no later than two (2) business days before the start of the meeting. Any written public comment received after this deadline will be shared with the Board members after the meeting. All written public comment will be included as part of the official public record.

Action may be taken on any item listed on the Board agenda. Per §2-3-103, MCA, the Board encourages public comment on any item prior to Board final action.

CONSENT AGENDA – page

(Items may be pulled from Consent Agenda upon request)

- A. September 11-12, 2025 and October 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes
- B. Financials

ADOPT AGENDA

❖ **REPORTS – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 1- 4)**

- Item 1 **CHAIRPERSON REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #25**
Dr. Tim Tharp
- Item 2 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #26**
McCall Flynn
- Item 3 **COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT – 20 Minutes, page #27**
Dr. Angela McLean
- College Access Arc of Events, ACT Connections for 2025-26
 - Future Ready Efforts
 - MUS Workforce Training Update
 - Montana State University Northern Traffic Education Summer 2024
 - GEAR Up Update
- Item 4 **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #35**
Lydia Comstock

❖ **MSDB COMMITTEE – Lisa Schmidt (Item 5)**

- Item 5 **MSDB REPORT – 30 Minutes, page #36**
Superintendent Paul Furthmyre
- ACTION ITEMS:**
- Action on Personnel Items
 - Action on Out of State Travel Request
 - Action on OPI SPED Discretionary Grant

❖ **ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE – Renee Rasmussen (Item 6)**

- Item 6 **INITIAL REVIEW AND WORK SESSION OF EARLY LITERACY AND NUMERACY
ADVISORY COUNCIL'S RECOMMENDATIONS PERTAINING TO EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION STANDARDS – 15 Minutes, page #176**
McCall Flynn

❖ **ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – Madalyn Quinlan (Items 7-11)**

- Item 7 **ACTION AND INFORMATION ON RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE
FAFSA COMPLETION PRIOR TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION – 30 Minutes, page
#191**
Dr. Angela McLean
- Item 8 **ACTION ON THE PROPOSED NOTICE OF ADOPTION PERTAINING TO
RULEMAKING IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 53, ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND
LITERACY CONTENT STANDARDS, AND AUTHORIZE FILING OF THE NOTICE
WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MONTANA
ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER – 5 Minutes, page #193**
Madalyn Quinlan
- Item 9 **ACTION ON VARIANCE TO STANDARDS REQUESTS AND RENEWALS – 15
Minutes, page #197**
Ellery Bresler and Crystal Andrews
- ACTION ITEMS:**
- Initial Applications
 - Renewal Applications

Item 10 **ACTION AND PRESENTATION ON THE CORRECTIVE PLANS FOR SCHOOLS IN DEFICIENT STATUS FOR ACCREDITATION – 30 Minutes, page #212**
Crystal Andrews and Ellery Bresler

ACTION ITEMS:

- Superintendent Victoria Falls Down, Lame Deer Public Schools
- Superintendent Wes Young, Lustre Christian High School

Item 11 **UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON THE INTENSIVE ASSISTANCE PROCESS FOR ACCREDITATION – 15 Minutes, page #241**
Dr. Julie Murgel and Tyler Capece

RECESS

Thursday, November 20, 2025
Missoula County Public Schools
8:30 AM

❖ **BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TOURS WITH LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE**

9:00 AM **SCHOOL SAFETY VISIT AND TOUR**
Hellgate Elementary School, Missoula, MT

10:15 AM **TEACH ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL TOUR**
Franklin Elementary, Missoula, MT

11:20 AM **SPECIAL EDUCATION VISIT AND TOUR**
Rattlesnake Elementary School, Missoula, MT

*******LUNCH BREAK*******

****Lunch will be provided for Board Members and Legislative Education Interim Committee Members****

*******RECONVENE AT 1:15 PM*******

CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
- B. Roll Call
- C. Statement of Public Participation
- D. Welcome Visitors

❖ **BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 12-18)**

Item 12 **PRESENTATION ON SAFE SCHOOL CENTER SURVEY – 15 Minutes, page #250**
Nancy Berg, Tina Eblen

Item 13 **DISCUSSION ON TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL PREPARATION AND EDUCATOR PIPELINE CHALLENGES – 45 Minutes, page #251**
Dr. Dan Lee, University of Montana; Dr. Tricia Seifert, Montana State University;
Dr. Jodi Carlson, Rocky Mountain College

2:30 PM **BREAK – TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING GRANT OBSERVATION**
SENTINEL HIGH SCHOOL

- Item 14** **FUTURE READY UPDATE – 15 Minutes, page #253**
Superintendent Susie Hedalen
- Item 15** **SCHOOL FUNDING INTERIM COMMISSION UPDATE – 15 Minutes, page #254**
Dr. Tim Tharp, Representative Lee Deming, Senator Sara Novak, Representative
Melissa Romano, Senator Sue Vinton
- Item 16** **INFORMATION ON MONTANA ALIGNED TO STANDARDS THROUGH-YEAR (MAST)**
AND REVIEW OF STATEWIDE PROFICIENCY SCORES – 45 Minutes, page #255
Cedar Rose
- Item 17** **PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL PANEL AND PRELIMINARY ANNUAL REPORT DATA –**
45 Minutes, page #282
McCall Flynn; Pad McCracken; Superintendent Micah Hill, Missoula County Public
Schools; Superintendent Les Meyer, Frenchtown School District; Superintendent
Pete Joseph, Corvallis School District; Superintendent Dave Thennis, Hamilton
School District
- Item 18** **OPEN DISCUSSION AND FINAL THOUGHTS, page #291**
Dr. Tim Tharp and Representative Linda Reksten

RECESS

University of Montana
Phyllis J. Washington College of Education, Room 334

Friday, November 21, 2025
University of Montana – College of Education
8:30 AM

CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance**
- B. Roll Call**
- C. Statement of Public Participation**
- D. Welcome Visitors**

❖ REPORTS – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 19)

- Item 19** **STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – 1 Hour, page #293**
State Superintendent Susie Hedalen
- Assessment Update**
 - Federal Update**
 - Content Standards Update**
 - Accreditation Update**
 - Annual Data Collection**

❖ CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE – Dr. Ron Slinger (Items 20-22)

- Item 20** **UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CHOICE SCHOOLS COMMISSION – 15 Minutes, page**
#304
Cathy Kincheloe

- Item 21** **INFORMATION ON PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL FALL ENROLLMENT DATA – 15 Minutes, page #305**
Christy Mock-Stutz
- Item 22** **UPDATE ON PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS – 15 Minutes, page #310**
McCall Flynn
- **Performance Framework Revisions**
 - **New Applicants and Interviews**
 - **Application and Evaluation Criteria Review**
- ❖ **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – Dr. Ron Slinger (Items 23-27)**
- Item 23** **NOTICE OF SURRENDER IN BPE CASE #2025-05 – 5 Minutes, page #319**
Brenton Craggs
- Item 24** **INFORMATION ON THE ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT PROVIDERS LIST – 15 Minutes, page #320**
Marie Judisch, Aimee Konzen, Eva Cox
- Item 25** **ACTION ON THE SUPERINTENDENT’S REQUEST TO REVISE TITLE 10, CHAPTER 55, SPECIAL EDUCATION STANDARDS AND INITIAL REVIEW OF NEW RULES PERTAINING TO A CLASS 9 SPECIAL EDUCATION TECHNICIAN LICENSE – 30 Minutes, page #365**
Dr. Julie Murgel and Patrick Cates
- Item 26** **ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #369**
Crystal Andrews
- Item 27** **UPDATE ON CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHERN EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM PROVIDER ACCREDITATION – 15 Minutes, page #409**
Crystal Andrews
- ❖ **MACIE LIAISON – Julia Maxwell (Item 28)**
- Item 28** **MACIE REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #423**
Jordann Lankford Forster
- ACTION ITEMS:**
- **Regalia Protections Letter**
- ❖ **ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE – Renee Rasmussen (Item 29)**
- Item 29** **ACTION ON THE PROPOSED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND TIMELINE PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 54, EARLY LITERACY TARGETED INTERVENTIONS AND TITLE 10, CHAPTER 63, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION STANDARDS, AND AUTHORIZE FILING OF THE NOTICE WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MONTANA ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER – 5 Minutes, page #426**
McCall Flynn

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS January 15-16, 2026, Helena, MT

Exiting Board Member – Last Meeting & Recognition
MACIE Update
Review Community Choice School Annual Reports
Action on ABCTe Program Approval
Action on Authorizing Public Charter Schools

Transportation Report
Assessment Update
Federal Update
Accreditation Report
Teacher Licensure Report
Qualify Advanced Opportunity Grant Applications
Action on Transformational Learning Phase II Grants
Quality Educator Loan Assistance Program Report
Content Standards Revision Update
Youth Risk Behavior Survey
Annual HiSet Report
MSDB Superintendent Performance Evaluation & Contract Extension Discussion

PUBLIC COMMENT

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ADJOURN

The Montana Board of Public Education is a Professional Development Unit Provider. Attending a Board of Public Education Meeting either in person or via Zoom may qualify you to receive professional development units. Please complete the necessary information on the sign-in sheet if you are applying for professional development units.

Agenda items are handled in the order listed on the approved agenda. Items may be rearranged unless listed “time certain”. Public comment is welcome on all items listed as “Action” and as noted at the beginning and end of each meeting.

The Board of Public Education will make reasonable accommodations for known disabilities that may interfere with an individual’s ability to participate in the meeting. Individuals who require such accommodations should make requests to the Board of Public Education as soon as possible prior to the meeting start date. You may write to Kris Stockton, PO Box 200601, Helena MT, 59620, kmstockton@mt.gov, 406-444-0302.

University of Montana University Center

Friday, November 21, 2025
University of Montana – University Center

❖ BOARD OF EDUCATION LUNCH

12:00 PM **University of Montana, University Center**

❖ BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

1:00 PM **University of Montana, University Center, Ballroom – 1 Hour**
[AGENDA](#)

10:30 AM

PERKINS COMMITTEE MEETING

AGENDA

Montana Perkins State Plan Committee Meeting

November 19, 2025

10:30am – 12:00pm

Missoula County Public Schools Administration Building Board Room
909 South Ave W, Missoula, MT

Purpose Statement:

The Montana State Plan Committee will discuss the Perkins State Plan, the needs of students, employers, and CTE programs in Montana, and strategies to meet those needs.

Membership:

Paddy Fleming, Director, Montana Manufacturing Extension Center
Lily Apedaile, Director of Research Administration, Missoula College
Amie Tryon, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Salish Kootenai College
James Easton, Workforce Specialist, Montana Chamber of Commerce
Orin Johnson, Director, Central Montana Career and Technical Education Academy
Eugene Graf, Owner, EG Construction
Tammie Hickey, Executive Director, Montana State Workforce Innovation Board
Mykal Jorgenson, Training Director, Billings Pipe Trades JATC

Agenda:

Time	Wednesday, November 19, 2025	Presenter
10:30 am	Welcome & Introductions	Jacque Treaster, OCHE
10:35 am	Review Committee Purpose & Perkins 101	Jacque Treaster, OCHE
10:50 am	Report Out – Regional Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) Meetings	Jacque Treaster, OCHE Shannon Boswell, OPI
11:20 am	Presentation – Modernized National Career Clusters Framework	Shannon Boswell, OPI
11:45 am	Committee Discussion with Board of Public Education	
12:00 pm	Wrap Up, Next Steps, Adjourn	Jacque Treaster, OCHE

12:00 PM

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND
MONTANA COUNCIL OF DEANS OF
EDUCATION LUNCH AND DISCUSSION

Missoula Butterfly House and Insectarium
1075 South Ave West
Missoula, MT

CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance**
- B. Roll Call**
- C. Statement of Public Participation**
- D. Welcome Visitors**

CONSENT AGENDA

Items may be pulled from Consent Agenda
if requested

- A. September 11-12, 2025 and
October 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes**
- B. Financials**

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

September 11-12, 2025
Dillon Elementary School, Boardroom
22 North Cotton Drive
Dillon, MT

Thursday, September 11, 2025
8:30AM

CALL TO ORDER – 00:00:00

Chair Tim Tharp called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. The Board held a moment of silence in remembrance of September 11, 2001. The Chair led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance, Ms. Kris Stockton took Roll Call, and the Chair read the Statement of Public Participation and welcomed guests.

Board members: Dr. Tim Tharp, Chair; Dr. Ron Slinger, Vice Chair; Ms. Madalyn Quinlan; Dr. Hannah Nieskens; Ms. Lisa Schmidt; Ms. Julia Maxwell; Ms. Renee Rasmussen, Ms. Lydia Comstock, Student Representative. Ex Officio members: State Superintendent Susie Hedalen, Office of Public Instruction (OPI); Dr. Angela McLean, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE). Staff: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist; Ms. Julie Balsam, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Cathy Kincheloe, Director of Planning, Community Choice Schools Commission. Guests: Superintendent Paul Furthmyre, Montana School for the Deaf and Blind (MSDB); Dr. Jason Neiffer, Montana Digital Academy (MTDA); Ms. Kristi Steinberg, University of Montana (UM); Ms. Kim Popham, Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE); Ms. Tyler Capece, OPI; Ms. Christy Mock Stutz, OPI; Deputy Superintendent Craig Barringer, OPI; Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI; Mr. Patrick Cates, OPI; Superintendent Randy Shipman, Dillon Elementary School; Superintendent Josh Patterson, Beaverhead County High School; Superintendent Wes Young, Lustre Christian High School; Ms. Miranda Briggs, MSDB; Mr. JP Plutt, Dillon Tribune.

PUBLIC COMMENT – 00:02:44
No public comment was made.

CONSENT AGENDA – 00:02:52

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Board member Schmidt.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ADOPT AGENDA - 00:03:15

Board member Rasmussen moved to approve the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Board member Quinlan.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

❖ REPORTS – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 1-5)

Item 1 CHAIRPERSON REPORT – 00:03:43 **Dr. Tim Tharp**

Superintendent Randy Shipman and Superintendent Josh Patterson gave opening remarks and welcomed the Board to Dillon.

Chair Tim Tharp discussed meetings and events he has attended since the July 2025 Board meeting, then reviewed the Committee Assignments document and the Action items in the agenda packet for Board approval.

Chair Tharp moved to approve the Board of Public Education Bylaws as presented.
Motion seconded by Board member Quinlan.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Tharp moved to approve the 2026 Board of Public Education Meeting Calendar and Agenda as presented. **Motion seconded by Board member Nieskens.**

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. McCall Flynn discussed the revisions to the Strategic Plan made at the July 2025 Board Meeting.

Chair Tharp moved to approve the 2025-2026 Board of Public Education Strategic Plan as presented. **Motion seconded by Board member Maxwell.**

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 2 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – 00:26:40**
McCall Flynn

Ms. McCall Flynn reviewed the timeline for revisions to the Strategic Plan that will take place over the course of the next year, asked for input, and answered Board members' questions. Ms. Flynn announced the hiring of Lea Ann Munkres as the new Program Officer for the Public Charter School Program.

Item 3 **STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – 00:47:52**
State Superintendent Susie Hedalen

Superintendent Susie Hedalen discussed Federal funding distributions and announced that OPI has received all Federal Funding to date. Superintendent Hedalen discussed revisions to the Federal Report Card, provided an update on the Accountability System, shared information on a MAST survey sent to schools, updated the Board on work with OCHE on the Future Ready Indicators, reviewed the OPI Organizational Chart, and discussed legislative implementation.

Annual Special Education Report: Mr. Patrick Cates presented the Annual Special Education Report to the Board. Mr. Cates highlighted specific areas of the report and answered Board members' questions.

Item 4 **COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT – 01:45:07**
Dr. Angela McLean

Dr. Angela McLean discussed the Rural Talent Development Grant, announced the Montana's Future at Work Grantees and the Montana Grow Your Own Educator Awardees, reviewed the Future Ready Indicator work with OPI, and discussed the College Access Arc of Events that included dates for FAFSA completion and College Application Week. Dr. McLean concluded her report with an announcement of an ACT Report Code students can enter on their ACT application which allows their scores to be sent to all Montana University System campuses. Dr. McLean answered Board members' questions.

Item 5 **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – 02:05:27**
Lydia Comstock

Ms. Lydia Comstock discussed cell phone policies schools have implemented and noted that student and teacher feedback has been positive. Ms. Comstock reported on a presentation by the Montana World Affairs Council at Hays-Lodgepole High School, noted Suicide Prevention Week September 7-13, 2025, announced Sheridan High School as the newest member of the Montana Association of Student Councils (MASC), discussed middle school engagement MASC is doing, and reviewed the upcoming annual MASC conference November 16-18, 2025 in Great Falls. Ms. Comstock discussed her attendance at a National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) New Member Institute Virtual Conference for Student Representatives and answered Board members' questions.

❖ MSDB COMMITTEE – Lisa Schmidt (Item 6)

Item 6 **MSDB REPORT – 02:16:59**
Superintendent Paul Furthmyre

Superintendent Paul Furthmyre presented the MSDB Personnel Action request for Board approval, reviewed school staffing, and provided a budget update. Outreach Director Miranda Briggs presented an update on the Outreach Program, and Superintendent Furthmyre and Ms. Briggs answered Board members' questions.

Board member Schmidt moved to approve the MSDB Personnel Action Items as presented in the agenda packet. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Furthmyre expressed his appreciation to MFPE for their assistance with the MSDB Collective Bargaining Agreement and concluded his report.

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 7)**

Item 7 ANNUAL MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY REPORT – 02:45:30
Dr. Jason Neiffer

Dr. Jason Neiffer presented an update on work completed at the MTDA over the past year, reviewed the MTDA Annual Report, presented Distance Learning enrollment numbers, shared information on the Distance Learning Clearinghouse, and updated the Board on legislation passed related to Artificial Intelligence that affects MTDA. Dr. Neiffer answered Board members' questions.

The Board recessed for the day at 12:00 PM for School District Tours.

Friday, September 12, 2025
8:30AM

CALL TO ORDER – 00:00:56

Chair Tim Tharp called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. The Chair led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance, Ms. Kris Stockton took Roll Call, and the Chair read the Statement of Public Participation and welcomed guests. Chair Tharp thanked Superintendent Patterson and Superintendent Shipman for their hospitality and for hosting the Board.

Board members: Dr. Tim Tharp, Chair; Dr. Ron Slinger, Vice Chair; Ms. Madalyn Quinlan; Dr. Hannah Nieskens; Ms. Lisa Schmidt; Ms. Julia Maxwell; Ms. Renee Rasmussen, Ms. Lydia Comstock, Student Representative. Ex Officio members: State Superintendent Susie Hedalen, OPI; Dr. Angela McLean, OCHE. Staff: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist; Ms. Julie Balsam, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Cathy Kincheloe, Director of Planning, Community Choice Schools Commission. Guests: Mr. Patrick Cates, OPI; Ms. Cedar Rose, OPI; Ms. Marie Judisch, OPI; Ms. Crystal Andrews, OPI; Ms. Ellery Bresler, OPI; Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI; Superintendent Randy Shipman, Dillon Elementary School; Superintendent Josh Patterson, Beaverhead County High School; Dr. Rob Watson, School Administrators of Montana (SAM); Ms. Kristi Steinberg, UM; Ms. Christy Mock-Stutz, OPI; Mr. Brenton Craggs, OPI; Deputy Superintendent Craig Barringer, OPI; Ms. Tyler Capece, OPI; Ms. Kim Popham, MFPE; Superintendent Paul Furthmyre, MSDB; Mr. JP Plutt, Dillon Tribune; Superintendent Marcy Cobell, Heart Butte K-12 Schools; Board Chair Joe Crawford, Heart Butte K-12 Schools; Superintendent Wes Young, Lustre Christian High School; Assistant Superintendent Josh McKay, Helena Public Schools; Superintendent Matthew Hauk, Geyser K-12 Schools; Superintendent Pax Haslem, Stanford K-12 Schools, Board Chair Rachel Pretty On Top, Lodge Grass Public Schools; Superintendent Erik Wilkerson, Jefferson County Public Schools; Superintendent James Kapptie, Ekalaka Public Schools; County Superintendent John Nielson, Gallatin County Schools; Board Chair Melissa Fisher, Lame Deer Public Schools; County Superintendent Nita Crockett, McCone County Schools.

❖ **CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE – Dr. Ron Slinger (Item 8)**

Item 8 UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CHOICE SCHOOLS COMMISSION – 00:04:30
Cathy Kincheloe

Ms. Cathy Kincheloe presented an update on the Request for Proposal for an assessment tool, discussed conversations held with potential Choice Schools, and reviewed a grant request to fund the Director of Planning position. Ms. Kincheloe announced the appointments of Mr. Chip Lindenlaub and Ms. Taylor Ramos to the Commission and the reappointment of Mr. Mark Huffstetler, provided an update on the Commission meeting held

on September 9, 2025, and reviewed the Advance to be held October 10-11, 2025 in Helena. Ms. Kincheloe thanked Board staff for their work and answered Board members' questions.

❖ **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – Dr. Ron Slinger (Items 9-10)**

**Item 9 NOTICE OF SURRENDER IN BPE CASE #2025-04 – 00:12:10
Brenton Craggs**

Mr. Brenton Craggs presented an Affidavit of Surrender of the educator license in BPE Case #2025-04, made a correction to the Affidavit of Surrender, and answered Board members' questions.

**Item 10 INFORMATION AND PRESENTATION ON THE PARA PATHWAY PROGRAM –
00:22:45
Patrick Cates**

Mr. Patrick Cates presented the proposed Para Pathway Program to be run in partnership with Dawson Community College that would create a pathway for paraprofessionals to become teachers. Mr. Cates answered Board members' questions.

❖ **ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE – Renee Rasmussen (Items 11-12)**

**Item 11 ASSESSMENT UPDATE AND INFORMATION ON MAST PROFICIENCY SCORES –
00:54:50
Cedar Rose**

Ms. Cedar Rose presented the MAST cut scores, reviewed the process for how the scores were set, provided an update of MAST, and answered Board members' questions.

**Item 12 INITIAL REVIEW AND WORK SESSION OF EARLY LITERACY AND NUMERACY
ADVISORY COUNCIL'S RECOMMENDATIONS PERTAINING TO EARLY TARGETED
INTERVENTION RULEMAKING – 01:17:40
McCall Flynn, Marie Judisch, Early Literacy and Numeracy Advisory Council
Members**

Ms. McCall Flynn reviewed legislation that added Early Numeracy to the Early Literacy Targeted Interventions statute, discussed work completed by the Early Literacy and Numeracy Advisory Council to implement the legislation, and reviewed the timeline for implementation. Ms. Marie Judisch reviewed the rulemaking recommendations for Early Targeted Interventions and Ms. Flynn and Ms. Judisch answered Board members' questions.

❖ **ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – Madalyn Quinlan (Items 13-17)**

**Item 13 INFORMATION ON THE TIMELINE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW
MATHEMATICS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY CONTENT
STANDARDS – 01:34:13
Marie Judisch**

Ms. Marie Judisch presented the process for implementation of the new Mathematics Content Standards and the English Language Arts and Literacy Content Standards, reviewed trainings and webinars OPI will offer districts, and answered Board members' questions.

**Item 14 ACTION ON AND RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS SUBMITTED ON REVISIONS
TO ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 53, ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY
CONTENT STANDARDS – 01:51:02
Madalyn Quinlan**

Ms. McCall Flynn stated no comments were received during the Public Comment period and action on the adoption notice is scheduled for the November 2025 Board meeting after the Economic Impact Statement is presented to the Education Interim Budget Committee.

**Item 15 ACTION AND PRESENTATION ON THE CORRECTIVE PLANS FOR SCHOOLS IN
DEFICIENT STATUS FOR ACCREDITATION – 02:03:51
Crystal Andrews and Ellery Bresler**

Ms. Crystal Andrews and Ms. Ellery Bresler reviewed the requirements for Schools in Deficient Status for Accreditation to create Corrective Plans and introduced the three school districts whose Corrective Plans were before the Board for approval.

Superintendent Marcy Cobell and Board Chair Joe Crawford presented the Corrective Plan for Heart Butte K-12 Schools to correct the deviations and answered Board members' questions.

Superintendent Victoria Falls Down of Lame Deer Public Schools was not in attendance so the Board moved on to Lustre Christian High School.

Superintendent Wes Young presented the Corrective Plan for Lustre Christian High School to correct the deviations and answered Board members' questions.

Ms. McCall Flynn and representatives from OPI attempted to connect with Lame Deer Public Schools but no representatives were present online.

Board member Quinlan moved to approve the Corrective Plan for Heart Butte K-12 Schools as recommended by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Motion seconded by Board member Nieskens.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Board member Quinlan moved to approve the Corrective Plan for Lustre Christian High School as recommended by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.

Vice Chair Slinger stated the plan presented is insufficient.

Chair Tharp asked what the consequences would be if the plan were denied and the school asked to return to the November Board meeting with a revised plan.

Board member Rasmussen stated she understands the previous comments but would prefer the plan be approved so the school can correct the deviations.

Board member Quinlan stated she could withdraw the motion and give the school the option to revise the plan and return to the November Board meeting.

Chair Tharp stated his agreement with Board members Quinlan and Rasmussen.

Board member Nieskens stated that to be fair to the district who presented a Corrective Plan the vote should take place and consider possible denial.

Board member Slinger agreed to withdraw the motion and request the school return to the November Board meeting with a revised plan.

Board member Maxwell stated it benefits the Board and the school to allow the school to return to the November Board meeting with a revised plan.

Ms. McCall Flynn clarified that the school must have an approved plan. If the Board denies the plan or withdraws the motion the school must return with a revised plan for Board approval.

Superintendent Young explained the process he used to write and submit the Corrective Plan to OPI.

Board member Quinlan withdrew the motion.

Vice Chair Slinger called for the question.

Chair Tharp restated the motion to approve the Corrective Plan for Lustre Christian High School as recommended by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Roll Call vote. Motion failed with Board member Rasmussen voting in support of the motion.

Lustre Christian High School will present a revised plan at the November Board meeting.

No one was present from Lame Deer Public Schools.

Board member Quinlan moved to deny the Corrective Plan for Lame Deer Public Schools. Motion seconded by Board member Schmidt.

Board member Schmidt stated she would like to see additional information in the plan in November.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Lame Deer Public Schools will present their Corrective Plan at the November Board meeting.

Item 16 ACTION ON THE CORRECTIVE PLANS FOR SCHOOLS IN ADVICE STATUS FOR ACCREDITATION – 03:14:52

Crystal Andrews and Ellery Bresler

Ms. Crystal Andrews and Ms. Ellery Bresler presented the Corrective Plans for schools in Advice Status for Accreditation, highlighted work schools have completed to correct deficiencies and explained the process OPI used to assist schools in Advice status. Ms. Andrews and Ms. Bresler answered Board members' questions.

Board member Quinlan moved to approve the Corrective Plans for Schools in Advice Status for Accreditation. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.

Board member Maxwell encouraged Superintendents to leave districts in a good place when they leave.

Board member Nieskens encouraged Superintendents to review plans from other districts to learn from one another and gather ideas to address deficiencies.

Board member Rasmussen voiced previous concerns that rural schools will struggle with the Accreditation process and stated options need to be available for rural schools.

Superintendent Patterson noted that resources are available via the School Administrators of Montana to assist Superintendents.

No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 17 UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON THE INTENSIVE ASSISTANCE PROCESS FOR ACCREDITATION – 03:22:59

Dr. Julie Murgel and Crystal Andrews

Dr. Julie Murgel and Ms. Crystal Andrews reviewed the Intensive Assistance Process for Accreditation and Board members made comments and stated their concerns.

❖ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 18)

**Item 18 ELECTION OF OFFICERS – 03:44:06
McCall Flynn**

Ms. McCall Flynn opened the floor for nominations for the Chair position.

Vice Chair Slinger nominated Dr. Tim Tharp for Chair.

No additional nominations. Motion passed unanimously.

Board member Quinlan nominated Dr. Ron Slinger for Vice Chair.

No additional nominations. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Flynn reviewed the November Board meeting in Missoula and the NASBE Annual Conference in October that she and several Board members will attend.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS November 19-21, 2025, Missoula, MT – 03:46:30

Board of Education Meeting
Montana Council of Deans of Education Update
MACIE Update
Assessment Update
Federal Update
Annual Data Collection
Annual HiSet Report
Action on Variance to Standards Requests & Renewals
Accreditation Report
Youth Risk Behavior Survey Update (Odd Years)
Annual Professional Development Unit Providers List
Content Standards Revision Update

PUBLIC COMMENT – 03:48:44

Superintendent Patterson thanked the Board for coming to Dillon and provided public comments on the ACT test and asked the Board to consider three years of math for graduation requirements.

Dr. Rob Watson provided public comments regarding the Corrective Plans for Accreditation for schools in Deficient Status, recommended a future Board meeting presentation on the Teacher Apprenticeship Grant through the Department of Labor and Industry, and announced the upcoming SAM Fall Conference and topics that will be presented.

Superintendent Shipman thanked the Board for their visit to Dillon and for the Board's work to enhance public education.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 12:29 PM.

The Montana Board of Public Education is a Professional Development Unit Provider. Attending a Board of Public Education Meeting either in person or via Zoom may qualify you to receive professional development units. Please complete the necessary information on the sign-in sheet if you are applying for professional development units.

Agenda items are handled in the order listed on the approved agenda. Items may be rearranged unless listed "time certain". Public comment is welcome on all items listed as "Action" and as noted at the beginning and end of each meeting.

The Board of Public Education will make reasonable accommodations for known disabilities that may interfere with an individual's ability to participate in the meeting. Individuals who require such accommodations should make requests to the Board of Public Education as soon as possible prior to the meeting start date. You may write to Kris Stockton, PO Box 200601, Helena MT, 59620, kmstockton@mt.gov, 406-444-0302.

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

October 17, 2025
Zoom

Friday, October 17, 2025
11:30 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tharp called the meeting to order at 11:30AM. The Chair led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance and Ms. Kris Stockton took Roll Call. The Chair read the Statement of Public Participation and welcomed guests.

Board members: Dr. Tim Tharp, Chair; Dr. Ron Slinger, Vice Chair; Ms. Madalyn Quinlan; Ms. Lisa Schmidt; Dr. Hannah Nieskens. Staff: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist. Guests: Superintendent Paul Furthmyre, Montana School for the Deaf and Blind.

ADOPT AGENDA

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the agenda. Motion seconded by Board member Schmidt.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

❖ MSDB COMMITTEE – Lisa Schmidt (Item 1)

Item 1 ACTION ON MSDB OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUEST Superintendent Paul Furthmyre

Superintendent Furthmyre presented two Out of State Travel requests for the Goal Ball team to travel to tournaments out of state.

Board member Schmidt moved to approve the MSDB Out of State Travel Requests as presented in the agenda packet. Motion seconded by Board member Quinlan.

Vice Chair Slinger stated his excitement for the students.

Chair Tharp asked if the staff providing transportation had additional training and Superintendent Furthmyre stated they do receive additional training.

No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11:36 AM.

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CONSENT AGENDA

FINANCIALS

51010 Board of Public Education ORG Budget Summary by OBPP Prog, Fund, Subclass

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2026 through 05 (Nov)/2026

OBPP Program	Fund	Subclass	Org	Acct Lvl 1	Acct Lvl 2	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	A Accrual Amt	ORG Bud Balance
01 K-12 EDUCATION						620,517.00	187,775.16	0.00	432,741.84
	01100 General Fund					620,517.00	187,775.16	0.00	432,741.84
		235F5 FY 2025 CARRYFORWARD				43,589.00	13,299.66	0.00	30,289.34
			1 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION			43,589.00	13,299.66	0.00	30,289.34
				62000 Operating Expenses		43,589.00	13,299.66	0.00	30,289.34
					62000 Operating Expenses	43,589.00	0.00	0.00	43,589.00
					62100 Other Services	0.00	2,000.00	0.00	(2,000.00)
					62200 Supplies & Materials	0.00	7,691.56	0.00	(7,691.56)
					62400 Travel	0.00	1,927.89	0.00	(1,927.89)
					62500 Rent	0.00	1,680.21	0.00	(1,680.21)
		235H1 ADMINISTRATION				556,579.00	168,943.86	0.00	387,635.14
			1 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION			556,579.00	168,943.86	0.00	387,635.14
				61000 Personal Services		371,691.00	110,628.90	0.00	261,062.10
					61000 Personal Services	371,691.00	0.00	0.00	371,691.00
					61100 Salaries	0.00	77,295.89	0.00	(77,295.89)
					61300 Other Compensation	0.00	2,000.00	0.00	(2,000.00)
					61400 Employee Benefits	0.00	31,333.01	0.00	(31,333.01)
				62000 Operating Expenses		184,888.00	58,314.96	0.00	126,573.04
					62000 Operating Expenses	184,888.00	0.00	0.00	184,888.00
					62100 Other Services	0.00	3,306.03	0.00	(3,306.03)
					62200 Supplies & Materials	0.00	4,701.64	0.00	(4,701.64)
					62300 Communications	0.00	3,729.63	0.00	(3,729.63)
					62400 Travel	0.00	7,894.82	0.00	(7,894.82)
					62500 Rent	0.00	6,720.84	0.00	(6,720.84)
					62800 Other Expenses	0.00	31,962.00	0.00	(31,962.00)
		235H4 STATE ITSD/RST				20,342.00	5,531.64	0.00	14,810.36
			1 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION			20,342.00	5,531.64	0.00	14,810.36
				62000 Operating Expenses		20,342.00	5,531.64	0.00	14,810.36
					62000 Operating Expenses	20,342.00	0.00	0.00	20,342.00
					62100 Other Services	0.00	1,720.74	0.00	(1,720.74)
					62200 Supplies & Materials	0.00	2,620.32	0.00	(2,620.32)
					62300 Communications	0.00	1,190.58	0.00	(1,190.58)
		235Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION				7.00	0.00	0.00	7.00
			1 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION			7.00	0.00	0.00	7.00
				61000 Personal Services		7.00	0.00	0.00	7.00
					61000 Personal Services	7.00	0.00	0.00	7.00
Grand Total						620,517.00	187,775.16	0.00	432,741.84

❖ **REPORTS – (Items 1-4)**

Dr. Tim Tharp

ITEM 1

CHAIRPERSON REPORT

Dr. Tim Tharp

ITEM 2

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

McCall Flynn

ITEM 3

COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REPORT

Dr. Angela McLean



Montana University System Report

Montana Board of Public Education

November 2025

- College Access Arc of Events
 - ACT Connections for 2025-26
- Future Ready Efforts
- MUS Workforce Training Update
- Montana State University Northern Traffic Education Summer 2024
- Montana GEAR UP
 - Jeannie Origbo, MUS GEAR UP Director



Montana GEAR UP: 2024-2031 Grant Update

November 2025

Board of Public Education Presentation

Jeannie Origbo, MTGU Director

Quick Facts



- ▶ \$4.25 Million annual budget (November 1-October 31)
 - ▶ \$1.5 Million subgrants to 12 school districts
 - ▶ \$684,000 Scholarship Fund
 - ▶ \$325,000 1-2-Free Support
 - ▶ \$150,000 to MT Partnerships
- ▶ Funded to serve 4,400 students 7-college freshmen annually
- ▶ Goals
 - ▶ Increase academic performance and preparation for post-secondary education.
 - ▶ Increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in post-secondary education.
 - ▶ Increase MTGU students' and families' knowledge of post-secondary education options, preparation, and financing.

Quick Facts



- ▶ Internal Studies
 - ▶ MTGU Services and FAFSA Completion
 - ▶ MTGU Services and Postsecondary persistence
 - ▶ MTGU Services and increasing student knowledge on financial literacy and college preparedness
- ▶ Statewide initiatives
 - ▶ FAFSA Completion and Value of Education Campaign
 - ▶ 1-2-Free Dual Enrollment
 - ▶ MUS College Access Arc of Events

Partnerships

- ▶ FYS: Blackfeet Community College, Salish Kootenai College, and MT 10
- ▶ 7-12 Student Services: MPSEOC, MSU, Student Success Agency, and UM
- ▶ Programmatic:
 - ▶ CoBro Consulting, MTDA, MPSEOC, MSCA, NCCEP/CCREC, OCHE, and SAM.

Partnership Highlight: MSU Expedition Science Collaboration with Dr. Jamie Cornish



Eight teachers from 4 school districts participated in the Summer 2025 portion of the collaboration.



80+ students participated in the Fall 2025 portion of the collaboration

Questions?

► Contact Information:

Jeannie Origbo

Montana GEAR UP Director

jorigbo@montana.edu

406-449-9139

ITEM 4

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Lydia Comstock

❖ **MSDB LIAISON – (Item 5)**

Lisa Schmidt

ITEM 5

MSDB REPORT

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Action on Personnel Items**
- **Action on Out of State Travel Request**
- **Action on OPI SPED Discretionary Grant**

Paul Furthmyre

**Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind
Board of Public Education Report
November 2025**

Agenda Action Items:

1. [Personnel Action Report](#)
 - 2 Hires
 - 2 Resignations
 - 2 Retirements
2. [EDHI Out of State Travel Request](#)
3. [OPI Discretionary Grant Approval Authorizing Superintendent to Submit](#)

Attached Documents:

- [MSDB Committee Bi-Monthly Meeting Agenda](#)
- [MSDB Committee Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Policy 8210 \(Procurement for Food Service\) - 1st Reading](#)
- [Average Education Salaries Fall 2025](#)
- [Cognia Accreditation Documents](#)
- [MSDB Foundation 2025 Audit Reports](#)
- [Financial Reports](#)
- [Cottage October 2025 Newsletter](#)
- [Current Enrollment](#) + 5 LEAP Students
- [November Inquiry Dashboard](#)
- [ELVS outing - Hoven Equipement](#)
- [MAFB - Truck or Trick Activity](#)

**MSDB Personnel Action for BPE Meeting
November Meeting 2025**

MSDB asks that the board please approves the following personnel actions:

Hire

Adeline Waskow – Licensed Practical Nurse
Sabrina Lahaderne – Scheduling Secretary

Resignation

Aubry Williams – Paraprofessional
Dianne Moog - Residential Advisor 1

Retirement

Jim Kelly - Director of Student Services
Linda Ranes - Custodian 1

Probationary Layoff

Nonrenewal of Nontenure Teacher

Positions currently advertised

Residential Advisor I

Positions to be advertised

5 - Residential Advisor 1
1 - Residential Advisor 2
1 - Teacher of the Visually Impaired Consultant
1 - Teacher of the Visually Impaired
1 - Teacher of the Deaf Hard / Hearing
2 - Teacher of the Deaf Outreach Consultant
1 - Director of Student Services
1 - Custodian 1

Positions on hold as a result of bargaining

1 - School Psychologist

Positions Temporarily Reassigned

Cottage Counselor to Assistant Student Services Director
Residential Advisor 2 to Scheduling Secretary
Cook 2 to PT Business Office Secretary

Positions Permanently Reassigned

Teacher of the Deaf to Workplace and Life Skills Teacher

STATE OF MONTANA

REQUEST AND JUSTIFICATION
FOR OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

1) Agency Number/Name Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind		2) Division
3) Org Number	4) Name of Person(s) Traveling/Employee ID# Desiree Tietje, Tailore Moore	

5) Justification

The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) partners with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (MT DPHHS) through a newborn hearing screening grant to support early identification and intervention for infants and children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Through this partnership, MSDB assists with training midwives, nurses, and other professionals to conduct newborn hearing screenings, receives referrals for Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) consultation services, operates the Deaf Mentor Program, and offers American Sign Language (ASL) classes to communities across the state. These activities are supported by funding received through the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) grant. Attendance at the annual EHDI Conference is critical to maintaining and improving the quality and effectiveness of these services. The conference directly supports MSDB's responsibilities under the EHDI grant and provides participants with up-to-date research, resources, and best practices in newborn hearing screening and early intervention. Participation will allow MSDB staff to identify and implement successful strategies for comprehensive state-based EHDI programs, including screening, diagnostic evaluation, early intervention, and data tracking. Gain knowledge of current research and innovations related to EHDI practices. Strengthen cultural competence when working with children who are deaf or hard of hearing, their families, and communities. Build and enhance collaborative relationships among state and federal agencies, non-profits, educational institutions, advocacy groups, and families. Attending the EHDI Conference will directly benefit MSDB's ongoing partnership with MT DPHHS, improve statewide early hearing detection and intervention efforts, and ensure that Montana's programs align with national standards and best practices.

6) Itinerary

Destination: Jacksonville, Florida

Travel Dates: March 15-18

7) Estimated Costs

Transportation \$ 1500	Meals \$ 504	Lodging \$ 1000	Other \$ 900
------------------------	--------------	-----------------	--------------

Total estimated cost \$ 3,904

Provide details to support estimated costs:

(Example: registration, taxi, etc. Provide Hotel Name and Phone Number if your Agency requires this information)

Transportation - airfare, parking, luggage, ground to convention center

Meals - at out of state per diem rate

Lodging - 1 shared room + taxes

Other - conference registration fees

All paid through the Newborn Screening Grant

8) Submitted By	Title	Date
<i>Miranda Briggs</i>	Outreach Director	10.31.25

Approval of Authorized Agency Personnel per Department Policy

Supervisor	Date	Administrator	Date
Dept. Head/Designee	Date		

NOTE: A travel expense voucher form must be filed within three months after incurring the travel expenses, otherwise the right to reimbursement will be waived.

REVISED 11/17



Discretionary Grant Application Form
Federal Funds Under the
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
(IDEA)

Funding Authority - IDEA
CFDA #84.027S
Budget 027S

PART I. PROJECT APPROVAL STATISTICAL DATA AND ABSTRACT

1. Prime Applicant District/Cooperative/Organization

☐ Elem. _____ 9258
Or _____ Legal Entity

☐ H.S. _____ Cascade
District Name District No. County

☒ If a cooperative/organization: _____ Montana School for the Deaf and Blind
Cooperative Name

Project Director Miranda Briggs 3911 Central Ave. Great Falls Outreach Director mbriggs@msdb.k12.mt.us
Name Address Position E-mail

Board of Trustees has designated the following person responsible for keeping the financial records for this project.

Paul Furthmyre Superintendent 3911 Central Ave, Great Falls 59405 pfurthmyre@msdb.k12.mt.us
Name Position Address ZIP Code E-mail

2. STATE EDUCATION AGENCY ACTION (To be completed by OPI)

Project Number 84027-9258-25 Approved
Amount \$ 80,000

3. PROJECT DURATION from (a) Month Day Year to (b) Month Day Year
06-01-2025 06 / 01 2026 /

4. Funding Authority: (check one)

☐ Preschool _____
☐ Part B _____
☐ Other _____

Signature, OPI Approval _____

Date of Approval _____

5. TITLE OF PROJECT: Outreach Program

PART II. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

The Board of Trustees of the Prime Applicant in a meeting held on _____ authorized
_____ to file this application for the district /cooperative/organization to make representations and to make
commitments on behalf of the district /cooperative/organization under the provisions of the Individuals with
Disabilities Education Act as amended by 101-476.

Signature—Authorized Representative _____ Date _____

Print or Type Name of the Authorized Representative Paul Furthmyre

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROVISIONS AND ASSURANCES

DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION CERTIFICATION

DEFINITIONS

Lower Tier Participant – Any organization (such as a school district or university) or person receiving a grant or contract under this “Application.” This also includes subsequent sub grants or subcontracts.

Covered Transaction – The act of applying for federal funds or submitting a proposal for federal funds.

Lower Tier Transaction – The making of a (1) sub grant to another entity or person or (2) procurement contracted by a Lower Tier Participant to some other entity or person for goods or services, regardless of type, expected to equal or exceed a cumulative value of \$25,000.

Principals – An administration head, key project/grant management person, officer, director, within the Lower Tier Participant’s organization or a sub organization contracted with (i.e., superintendents and the key person in the school district who will exert control or management influence over this project; at a university, it would be the president and principal investigator).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CERTIFICATION

1. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective lower tier participant is stating that it is neither debarred nor suspended.
2. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this certification was signed. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment from federal fund participation.
3. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide written notice to the organization to which this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
4. The terms “covered transaction,” “debarred,” “suspended,” “ineligible,” “lower tier covered transaction,” “participant,” “person,” “primary covered transaction,” “principal,” “proposal,” and “voluntarily excluded,” as used in this certification, have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the organization to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.
5. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction unless authorized by the department or agency with which this transaction originated.
6. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include the two-paragraph “Certifying Statement,” without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.
7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. Each participant may, but is not required to, check the Nonprocurement List.
8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required. The knowledge of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly entered into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies including suspension and/or debarment.



SCHOOL YEAR 2025
PROVISIONS AND ASSURANCES
DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION CERTIFICATION

School District Name Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind	Elem. Legal Entity No. SC9368
County Name Cascade	H.S. Legal Entity No. SC9371

This certification covers all federal programs in this application and is required by the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 34 CFR Part 85, Section 85.510, Participants' Responsibilities. The regulations were published as Part VII of the May 25, 1988 Federal Register (pages 19160-19211). Copies of the regulations may be obtained by contacting the person to whom this proposal is submitted.

(BEFORE COMPLETING CERTIFICATION, READ INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE.)

CERTIFYING STATEMENT

- (1) The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency.
- (2) Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

NOTE: This certification is required of the Prime Applicant District.

Organization Name Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind	
Name and Title of Authorized Representative Paul Furthmyre, Superintendent	
Signature of Authorized Representative	Date

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

Complete the following for each project. A project should address one or more related performance indicators that are in need of improvement for the region. There must be at least one measurable improvement activity associated with each project. Keep in mind that if districts within your region fall in the needs improvement level of determination, the CSPD may be required to provide specific targeted improvement activities.

PROJECT 1

Identified Need (s):

(Reference the IDEA-Part B State Performance Indicator Report in describing the need. Specifically, identify the individual performance indicator(s) and the corresponding Montana correlate(s) that will be addressed by this project.)

Families with children who have sensory impairments benefit from specialized opportunities to learn the best practices and strategies to meet their children's unique needs. Professional development is needed to increase knowledge, stay current with best practices, and to know the research and updates. Families, children, and professionals need the opportunity to learn, socialize, and network with others. These activities will provide support for families, professionals and students. Indicator 5 Correlates: 3, 5, and 6.

Project Outcome(s) Statement:

(Provide a rationale for how the following improvement activity(s) should impact the target for the identified indicator(s).)

Specific professional development activities will support ARM 10.55.717 (assignment of person providing instruction to braille students) and ARM10.55.718 (assignment of persons providing sign language interpreting for students who are deaf/hard of hearing). These activities will provide opportunities for students, families and professionals to come together learning the needed skills for students who are deaf/hard of hearing or have a visual impairment. Recruitment and training opportunities are part of these activities. This will include learning opportunities in manual communication, language options, braille literacy, assistive technology, modifications and accommodations.

Improvement Activity(s):

Title Family Learning Weekends

Date June 2025

Cost 27,500

Expected Outcome:

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

Students and their families will come to the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) campus for a weekend. While on campus they will be offered opportunities to socialize with other families, meet others with sensory impairments, and learn more about sensory impairments. They will be better prepared to meet the educational, language, literacy, assistive technology and communications needs of their children in the home setting and at school.

Evidence: evaluation forms completed by participants

Title Sign language training, braille training, and materials

Date August 2024-July 2025

Cost 5,000

Expected Outcome:

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

Parents and school personnel will be provided with resources and training on language and communication modes for students who are deaf hard of hearing. Examples of information that will be shared include sign language systems, linguistic principles of American Sign Language, vocabulary development, expressive and receptive communication sign fluency, aspects of deafness and deaf culture. Parents and school personnel will be provided with resources and training and taught the basic of braille to develop written language and reading skills for students with vision impairments. Examples include support to district staff in providing braille instruction, improving their braille literacy skills, providing braille writers and other technology to district staff and students to improve braille skills. Additional opportunities will be provided to district staff to learn basic braille skills and using a braille writer, increased understanding of contracted and uncontracted braille, using Unified English Braille and the functions of a braille writer.

Evidence: participant evaluation and number of students working to meet the standards in ARM 10.55.717 and 10.55.718.

Title Campus Enrichment Days

Date November 2025 and April 2026

Cost 2,500

Expected Outcome:

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

Students will come to the MSDB campus, two times per school year. While on campus they will engage in activities to increase understanding of their specific sensory needs, socialize with peers, and work directly with professionals trained to meet their sensory needs.

Evidence: student evaluation

Title

Date

Cost

Expected Outcome:

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

Title**Date****Cost****Expected Outcome:**

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

PROJECT 2**Identified Need (s):**

(Reference the IDEA-Part B State Performance Indicator Report in describing the need. Specifically, identify the individual performance indicator(s) and the corresponding Montana correlate(s) that will be addressed by this project.)

Families need home based educational services that are specifically designed to increase skills of children with sensory impairments. This will increase the likelihood of entering kindergarten with developmentally appropriate skills. Indicator 7 and 12 Correlates: 5

Project Outcome(s) Statement:

(Provide a rationale for how the following improvement activity(s) should impact the target for the identified indicator(s).) Families will be knowledgeable of the effects of different hearing levels and language, communication and social development of their children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Families will be knowledgeable of compensatory skills, assistive technology, independent living skills, orientation and mobility, recreation and leisure, self-determination, sensory efficiency, social interaction skills and career education for their child with a vision impairment.

Improvement Activity(s):**Title** Family Advisors**Date** August 2025-July 2026**Cost** 40,000**Expected Outcome:**

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Outreach Consultants will work with Family Advisors to provide home based instruction to families and children birth to twenty one years of age.

Evidence: Family Advisor goals, progress reports and notes. Number of students and families served.

Title**Date****Cost**

Expected Outcome:

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

Title**Date****Cost****Expected Outcome:**

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

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Title**Date****Cost****Expected Outcome:**

(1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)

PROJECT 3**Identified Need (s):**

(Reference the IDEA-Part B State Performance Indicator Report in describing the need. Specifically, identify the individual performance indicator(s) and the corresponding Montana correlate(s) that will be addressed by this project.)

Project Outcome(s) Statement:

(Provide a rationale for how the following improvement activity(s) should impact the target for the identified indicator(s).)

Improvement Activity(s):		
Title	Date	Cost
Expected Outcome: (1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)		
Title	Date	Cost
Expected Outcome: (1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)		
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Title	Date	Cost
Expected Outcome: (1. In measurable terms, describe the expected outcome of this activity. 2. Describe the evidence (data reports, evaluation results, etc.) you will have to support those results.)		



**THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION
ACT
PART B – ANNUAL PROJECT BUDGET
2025-2026
CFDA #84.027S**

CONTINGENT UPON AVAILABILITY OF FEDERAL FUNDS

The budget period is July 1 – June 30. Amendments to this budget may occur up to project close-out, but no later than June 30. *Discretionary grant funds may not be “carried-over” into the next state fiscal year.*

Optional: Attach a supplementary budget outlining the projected expenses for each of the budget items listed below.

Prime Applicant District:

Legal Entity:

Project Number:

Budget Items	Proposed Budget	Approved Budget 1	Approved Budget 2	Approved Budget 3
1. Salaries and Benefits	55,000			
2. Operating Expenses	20,000			
3. Professional Development	5,000			
4. Transfer to other districts 6200-930				
5. TOTAL BUDGET	80,000			

OPI USE ONLY: APPROVED BY / DATE

MSDB / BOPE Bi-Monthly Meeting Agenda
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Date: 11/4/2025

Attendees:

Meeting Objectives:

- Provide BOPE Information about all MSDB Programs
- Seek guidance from the BOPE

Future Agenda Items:

Program	Agenda Items	Items Needing Follow-Up
Administration	• Personnel Action Plan • Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Conference in Jacksonville, FL • Policy 1st Reading ◦ 8210: Procurement for Food Service • OPI SPED Discretionary Grant • Contracts ◦ Average Salaries • Department Walkthroughs • Transportation Vehicles Ready • Cognia Accreditation • Finalsite Enrollment (Inquiries) • Cottage Staffing Issues • National School Lunch Program Audit ◦ Adult Meal Prices ◦ After school snack counts • Foundation Update ◦ MOU ◦ 25/26 Budget	• Action Items Needed ◦ Personnel Action ◦ Out of State Travel Requests ◦ Policy 8210 1st Reading ◦ Approval of OPI SPED Discretionary Grant

Business Office	• 10-31-25 Financial Report • 10-31-25 Expenditures Only Report • 10-31-25 Payroll & Benefits Only Report • PPE 10-17-25 Payroll Forecast • FY26 - Requests & Purchase Orders ○ 2025 moved \$181,500 from PS to Exp ○ 2024 moved \$164,500 from PS to Exp ○ 2023 moved \$155,600 from PS to Exp	
Residential	• October 2025 Newsletter • Formal Dinners: Nov 23, Dec 14 and March 29	
Education: School	• Current Enrollment plus 5 LEAP students • November Inquiry Report • Distance Classes ○ Braille - 4 students (730 minutes/month) ○ ASL - In progress • 1st Quarter Complete • MAST/MAP testing • MT Reads Grant - Stephanie Lester ○ Sept 4-5 ○ Oct 14-15 • NRAER - Butte • ELVS - Hoven Equipment • MAFB Trunk or Treat • Goalball Team - 2025 Jr. Cascade Classic Goalball Tournament - Vancouver, Washington	
Education: Outreach	• MOU with school districts • Regional meetings with school districts • Referrals to VI Outreach Consultants (15) • Referrals to DHH Outreach Consultants (4) • Referrals to MSDB Campus (4)	

Board of Public Ed Meeting

BOPE Meeting - November 4, 2025

Present- Paul Furthmyre, Tim Tharp, Lisa Schmidt, Donna Schmidt, McCall Flynn,
Jim Kelly, Julie-Dee Alt, Miranda Briggs

Absent- Julia Maxwell

Note Taker – Paula Mix

Meeting Objectives:

- Provide BOPE information about all MSDB Programs
- Seeking guidance from the BOPE

- **Action Items Needed**
 - Personnel Action
 - Out of State Travel Requests

Administration - Paul Furthmyre

- Paul reported that the school Hired two staff - (1) LPN - now is fully staffed, (1) Scheduling Secretary. We have (2) resignations, (2) retirements. Asking the board to approve the Personal Action
- He reported that we have one out of state travel for two of our Outreach staff that will be attending the EHDI conference in FL.
- Policy 8210 came up in the School Nutrition Audit and we are asking the board to have the first reading on Policy 8210
- Paul highlighted that average salaries for teachers and consultants have risen to about \$73,000, with starting teacher salaries now nearly \$49,000, which is roughly \$7,000 higher than Great Falls Public School, reversing a prior gap over the last decade. Salary improvements and legislative gains have improved applicant quality, and the team expects fewer open positions due to better compensation
- Paul has asked that the Admin develop department walkthrough tools aim to standardize the observation process across various departments, ensuring consistency in monitoring practices. These tools will facilitate the collection and analysis of data related to departmental performance, enabling informed decision-making and targeted improvements
- Picking up two transportation vehicles from Helena that will be used for Thanksgiving travel weekend.
- COGNIA Accreditation team will be here next week. This new process is viewed as more positive and timely compared to past cycles
- Cottage staff issues are still being addressed. The union has been very supportive and has created a LMC. The Cottage staff management is addressing the concern of cell phones and technology being used and not interacting with the students.

- The National School Lunch Program audit is nearly complete and we are working on the last two findings - proper adult meal pricing and monthly snack counts. Worked with both LMC Committees and starting Nov. 1st staff meals will no longer be supplied by the school.

Business Office - Donna Schmidt

- Donna went over the new financial tracking reports separating payroll and expenditures to better monitor budget status and forecast year-end positions. Purchase orders were categorized as recurring or one-time, with some programs currently showing overcommitments
- We plan to include these detailed expenditure categories in the upcoming EPP legislative request to secure appropriate funding for ongoing operational costs

Residential - Jim Kelly

- Jim shared the October newsletter that highlights the different opportunities that the students participated in. Griz game in Missoula, hiking to the "M", 4- meetings, making strawberry jam, goalball - using the new goals, swimming, game club, bowling.
- Formal dinner scheduled- Nov 23, Dec 14 and March 29 at 5:00, Cottage secretary mailed invites for the November dinner.
- The new staff assistant has been supporting and giving guidance for residential staff. Working on improving focus on students and addressing challenges like technology and phone usage in cottages

Education: School - Julie-Dee

- Julie-Dee reported that we have 36 students plus 5 LEAP students. Our new Finaliste enrollment system that streamlines inquiry, application, and documentation processes for potential students, better record-keeping. We have some distant learning opportunities for Braille that are going on at three schools, working on ASL classes for students throughout the state. MT Reads Grant instructor will be on campus next week, we had a number of staff that attended and presented at the NRAER conference in Butte. Our ELVS activity at Hoven Equipment - students were able to get on the equipment. MAFB staff came on campus and handed out candy to the students. Goalball team went to Vancouver, WA for a tournament.
- This year's academic schedule prioritized core classes in the morning and expanded core curriculum in the afternoon, reflecting a student-first approach. This gave our shop class an opportunity to visit a cabinet making shop here in town .

Education: Outreach - Miranda Briggs

- Miranda reported that they have received 255 signed MOUs with districts for consulting services. Outreach staff have had some positive engagement with school districts

introducing their new Outreach model. The outreach team has been working with schools rather than direct advocates for families. They have provided resources like Montana Empowerment for advocacy support . CED (Campus Enrichment Days) will be held this Friday- Saturday, activities will be by the Education dept during Friday, Cottage activities Friday evening, Outreach activities will be Saturday. Representatives from Gallaudet and Helen Keller National Center will be on campus.

Policy 8210: Procurement for Food Service

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 01/29/2025 | Last Reviewed Date: 01/29/2025

Procurement Policy for School Food Purchases and Use of Federal Funds

The School will adhere to the following requirements for any procurement related to food service:

Purchase Procedures & Thresholds:

Definition/Instructions

Micro-Purchase: Micro-purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive price or rate quotations if the non-Federal entity considers the price to be reasonable. To the maximum extent practicable, the non-Federal entity should distribute micro-purchases equitably among qualified suppliers. The school is responsible for determining and documenting an appropriate micro-purchase threshold based on internal controls, an evaluation of risk, and its documented procurement procedures. Schools may use the Federal micro-purchase threshold of up to \$10,000 or may establish a higher threshold, up to \$50,000 if the school self-certifies ([CFR 200.320 \(a\)\(1\)\(iv\)](#)).

- The School's Micro Purchase Threshold is: \$10,000.

Definition/Instructions

Small Purchase: Informal purchase method for open competitive purchases. For purchases higher than the micro-purchase threshold (\$10,000 or SFA's higher amount if self-certified) but does not exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (\$80,000).

- If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations must be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources as determined appropriate by the non-Federal entity. Documentation of the procurement process (vendor name, contact method, name of person providing price quote, price quoted, date price quote obtained, duration of price quote).
- Small Purchases greater than \$10,000 up to \$80,000.
 - \$80,000 is the small purchase threshold for the state of Montana per Section 20-9-204, MCA.
 - Small purchases will be handled in a fair and equitable manner consistent with district policy on purchasing.
 - The School will obtain two or more quotes from qualified sources.
 - The School may enter into a cooperative purchasing contract for procurement of supplies with one or more districts or a Cooperative Services Program. This allows the School to participate in a cooperative purchasing group to purchases supplies through the group without bidding if the cooperative purchasing group has a publicly available master list of items available with pricing included and provides an opportunity at least twice yearly for any vendor, including a Montana vendor, to compete, based on a lowest responsible bidder standard.

Definition/Instructions

Formal Purchase: If the aggregate amount exceeds eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000), the contract must be awarded through a formal bid process and a call for bids or request for proposals shall be published according to 20-9-204, MCA. No contract shall be divided for the purpose of avoiding the formal procurement process.

- Formal Purchases greater than \$80,000:
 - If the aggregate amount exceeds eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000), the contract must be awarded through a formal bid process and a call for bids or request for proposals shall be published according to 20-9-204, MCA. No contract shall be divided for the purpose of avoiding the formal procurement process.
 - The School may enter into a cooperative purchasing contract for procurement of supplies with one or more districts or a Cooperative Services Program. This allows the School to participate in a cooperative purchasing group to purchases supplies through the group without bidding if the cooperative purchasing group has a publicly available master list of items available with pricing included and provides an opportunity at least twice yearly for any vendor, including a Montana vendor, to compete, based on a lowest responsible bidder standard.

Buy American:

The School will adhere to "Buy American" for the food service program 7 CFR 210.21(d). Therefore, Food Service is required to purchase, to the maximum extent possible, domestic products for use in meals served in our Child Nutrition Program. There are two limited exceptions when non-domestic foods may be purchased. These exceptions are determined by the SFA:

- The food or food product is not produced or manufactured in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities of a satisfactory quality; or
- Competitive bids reveal the cost of a United States food or food product is significantly higher than the nondomestic product--Food preferences can only be met with foreign goods.
- SFA must document exceptions and keep records.

Contracting with small and minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms. [2 CFR 200.321(a)]:

- The non-Federal entity must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible.

Standards of Conduct for School Employees [2 CFR 200.318(c)(1)]:

- The School maintains the following code of conduct for any employees engaged in award and administration of contracts supported by Federal Funds:
 - No School employee will engage in any procurement when there is a conflict of interest, real or perceived, and School employees cannot solicit or accept any gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from prospective vendors. This shall not preclude School personnel from serving on boards or participating in organizations that support the School's need to obtain quality services and supplies.
 - No School employee shall participate in the selection, award or administration of a contract when any of the following persons have a financial interest in the firm selected for award:
 - The employee
 - Any member of his/her immediate family
 - People with whom there is an intimate personal relationship
 - An organization which employs or is about to employ any of the above
 - The School would like all employees to behave with the utmost integrity and never be self-serving, be fair in all aspects of the procurement process, be alert to conflicts of interest, and avoid any compromising situations.
 - Employees found to be in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
-

	Total Salary		Total Base		Total Longevity		Minimum Total Salary		Maximum Total Salary		Average Total Salary		Average Years
Admin	\$	625,912.77	\$	604,753.33	\$	21,159.43	\$	83,746.53	\$	119,481.12	\$	104,325.39	10.67
Specialists	\$	625,769.36	\$	599,925.84	\$	25,843.52	\$	76,344.05	\$	102,649.22	\$	89,395.62	13.14
Teachers	\$	1,753,565.61	\$	1,711,321.83	\$	42,243.78	\$	47,976.00	\$	100,890.67	\$	73,065.23	7.96
Consultants	\$	1,023,106.59	\$	1,006,505.23	\$	16,601.36	\$	53,556.00	\$	102,611.62	\$	73,079.04	4.93
Interpreters	\$	376,366.34	\$	361,189.39	\$	15,176.95	\$	41,218.00	\$	56,277.00	\$	47,045.79	12.5
Paras	\$	206,768.23	\$	186,618.38	\$	11,149.85	\$	26,889.75	\$	45,211.24	\$	34,461.37	16.33
	\$	768,581.48	\$	745,052.33	\$	22,029.15	\$	54,955.05	\$	87,853.48	\$	70,228.74	10.92

Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind Cognia Accreditation On-Site Review

Team Lead: Paige Hughes
Associate Team Lead: Joette Hayden
Team Members: Matt Lewis, Orin Johnson, John DuBose

Team Workroom: Bitterroot Building – Basement Conference Room
MSDB Main Contact: Paul Furthmyre 406 560 4688
Main Office Phone: 406 771 6000

7:30 - 8:00 AM	Meet and Greet (Team Workroom)
8:00 - 8:30 AM	Stakeholder Interviews - Parents / Guardians (Team Workroom) Coffee/Juice/Doughnuts
8:30 - 10:00 AM	Leadership Interview (Will include Zoom Option) (Team Workroom) Superintendent - Paul Furthmyre Principal - Julie-Dee Alt Business Manager - Donna Buska
After Leadership (If Time)	Campus Tour of Educational Buildings Director of Student Life - Jim Kelly
10:15 - 10:45 AM Coopers Room	Student Interviews DHH / VI MS - Williams - Cooper - Witham Travers (Interpreter)
10:45 - 11:15 AM Team Workroom	Student Interviews DHH / VI HS - Prefontaine - Rutledge (Interpreter)
11:15 - 11:45 AM	Classroom Observations Witham-Travers
12:00 - 12:45 PM	Teacher Interviews - Lunch to be Served (Team Workroom) (Interpreters) Need Accurate Count (4 for team)
1:00 - 3:00 PM	Classroom Observations
3:00 - 3:30 PM	Specialists Interviews (Team Workroom)
3:30 - 4:00 PM	Cognia Team Debrief (Team Workroom)
4:00 PM	Day Recap and Quick Debrief (Team Workroom)

Executive Summary

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind 230315 REMOTE AER (Jul 1, 2025 - Jun 30, 2026)
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, Great Falls, United States of America

Last Modified: 10/31/2025
Status: Ready for Review

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Executive Summary 3

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Complete and submit this diagnostic within timeframes prescribed by Cognia.

Provide demographic information

Please enter the most up-to-date information about your institution. It's important to make sure you include ALL the information requested in this section, and that all the information you provide is correct.

Please provide updated contact and demographic information in the table below.

Name of Your Institution

Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind

Telephone

(406) 771 - 6000

Head of Institution

Paul Furthmyre, Superintendent

Email Address

pfurthmyre@msdb.k12.mt.us

Grades Served (type N/A if you do not have grade levels)

18 Months Old - 22

Student Enrollment (for individual institutions) or Number of Schools (for systems). If neither, type N/A.

35 Total Students

Executive Summary

Cognia values a comprehensive understanding of your institution. Please provide a detailed description of your institution in 2,000 words (approximately four to five pages). Use the following prompts as a guide to compose your narrative:

1. Institutional History

- Provide a brief overview of your institution's founding and development.
- Highlight key milestones or achievements that define your institution's growth.

2. Community Context

- Describe the community your institution serves (e.g., urban, suburban, or rural).
- Include the predominant languages and shared values or traditions that shape the community's identity.

3. Governance Structure

- Explain how your institution is governed.
- Include information on whether your institution is independent, affiliated with a special association, affiliated with a faith-based organization, or overseen by a state department or ministry of education.
- Detail the roles and structures of governing bodies such as boards of directors or other governing authorities.

4. Mission, Vision, and Values

- Describe your institution's mission, vision, and core values.

- Include information on when these statements were last reviewed and how they reflect the priorities of the institution and its community.
- Discuss who was involved in the most recent revision process, and how their perspectives were included.

5. Enrollment Trends

- Summarize the enrollment trends over the past three to five years.
- Provide insights into factors influencing these trends.

6. Educational Philosophy

- Share your institution's approach to education (e.g., informed by specific educational theories, models, methodologies, pedagogy).
- Highlight how your philosophy reflects the values and needs of your community.

7. Curriculum Overview

- Describe your curriculum requirements, including core academic elements and special programs.
- Explain how your curriculum is updated and its alignment with your institution's values and goals.

8. Instructional Practices

- Outline the instructional methods used (e.g., lecture format, competency-based learning, on-site, remote).
- Discuss how technology enhances instruction and supports student engagement.
- Reflect on how instructional practices incorporate or respect the values and traditions of the community served by your institution.

9. Personnel Management

- Provide an overview of hiring practices, staff evaluations, and professional development initiatives.
- Explain how these practices align with your institution's values and commitment to excellence.

10. Student Performance

- Summarize your approach to assessing and supporting student achievement, specifying the grade levels and content areas evaluated.
- Explain how assessments are tailored to meet the diverse needs and strengths of learners.
- Discuss the frameworks and processes your institution has in place to measure academic and non-academic performance (e.g., attendance rates, graduation rates, multi-tiered systems of support, course passing rates, etc.).

11. Improvement Initiatives

- Briefly share your process for continuous improvement.
- Describe current major improvement initiatives, including their goals, progress, and outcomes.
- Explain how these initiatives address the needs of your institution and community values.

The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) provides comprehensive, specialized educational opportunities statewide for children ages birth through 22 who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deafblind. Situated on ten acres in Eastern Great Falls, the school serves the entire state of Montana through both its residential campus and extensive outreach programs, ensuring sensory-specific access to communication and curriculum that prepares students for independence and success.

The history of MSDB dates back to 1893 in Boulder, Montana, when it was first introduced as a state agency. Early years involved discussions of segregation and saw the milestone of graduating the first deaf and first blind students in the state in 1901. The school relocated to its current site in Great Falls in October 1937 after the city donated ten acres; at the time, it had nearly eighty deaf students and twenty blind students, and sign language began to be used after school and in the chapel. The current name became official in 1943. The State of Montana is ultimately responsible for the school's functioning and provides funding through the general fund budget for personnel, expenditures, and facility upkeep, including the dormitory and gymnasium built in 1983. Governance is provided by the State Board of Public Education (BOPE), which

serves as the de facto school board and provides oversight on policy, personnel, and overall direction. The Governor-appointed board meets bimonthly, with a dedicated MSDB Committee meeting with administration monthly. The mission of MSDB is to foster the learning and growth of the whole-child with hearing and/or vision loss, preparing them to become successful citizens. This mission is supported by a vision that strives for MSDB to be Montana's leading resource for stakeholders. The school operates with the core belief that all children are capable and confident, receiving an education through the whole-child philosophy with sensory specific access. The mission, vision, and values were last updated in 2020 with significant input from parents, students, community members, and staff during preparations for Cognia and AER Accreditations, and were formally reviewed again in 2023 for alignment with the new Journey of a Learner framework.

MSDB's campus enrollment has been stable, recording 36 students in Fall 2023 and 2024, followed by 35 students in 2025. This stability coincided with an increase in diversity, with the "Student Population Excluding White not of Hispanic Origin" rising from 25.00% in 2023 to 28.57% in 2025. However, long-term trends show a dramatic decrease in the deaf student population and a corresponding increase in the visually impaired population, potentially due to factors like educational licensing laws, advances in hearing technology, and improved medical diagnosis. The school's Outreach Program serves a much wider community, working with approximately 1,150 students statewide.

The Educational Philosophy is fundamentally guided by maximizing independence. For visually impaired students, this centers on the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC), which addresses skills like orientation and mobility, assistive technology, and self-determination. Instruction for Deaf and hard of hearing students is individualized across a continuum of communication approaches—from American Sign Language (ASL) to methods that utilize a variety of language modalities including sign, speech, auditory input, and visual supports, to strategies that emphasize auditory and spoken language development. Each student's program is tailored to their unique needs, ensuring optimal language acquisition and development.

The curriculum is rigorous and aligned with state standards through MSDB's active membership in the Golden Triangle Curriculum Cooperative, which is responsible for ensuring compliance with standards adopted by the Montana State Board of Public Education. The cooperative adheres to the state rule requiring a formal curriculum review once every five years. Instructional practices utilize blended learning—teacher demonstration, small group exploration, and individual mastery—and staff ensure that common instructional materials are presented with proper accommodations for every individual. A core instructional strength is the use of assistive technology. The school has also implemented a base program for literacy across all students as a result of a recent reading grant, and is moving toward a proficiency-based education system with the development of The Journey of a Learner framework in 2023, contracting with Learning System Associates to create learning targets and student navigation tools.

Personnel management faces unique recruitment challenges, as no secondary institutions in Montana provide the training required for specialized staff like Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) or Teachers of the Deaf (TOD). Consequently, staff are often recruited from out of state, though MSDB was included in the state teacher residency program in 2025. The school maintains a strong focus on continuous staff learning, with professional development activities centered around the strategic plan and literacy best practices. The PLC+ program (externally evaluated in 2022) is used for regular staff collaboration, strategy implementation, measurement, and adjustment. Furthermore, MSDB developed an induction and mentoring program in 2021, which now includes a two-day induction process for new employees.

MSDB expects students to be measured against the Montana State Standards. The school uses NWEA MAP tests to benchmark students at the beginning and end of the year in math and reading. The school also participates in the state-mandated MAST and ACT tests. The school's assessment goal is to accurately measure what a student knows, can apply concepts to situations, and make individual progress through the use of formative assessment. As all students are on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), standardized test scores are focused on individual student growth rather than comparison to the state average. All assessments are administered with appropriate accommodations; for instance, visually impaired students use braille or large print, and deaf students receive instructions explained in American Sign Language. The Student Life Program tracks functional skills such as independent living and social-emotional learning, which are vital components of student performance and accountability.

Strategic Focus Areas

The plan is structured around four main areas of organizational improvement, each with multiple Critical Initiatives:

1. Organizational Effectiveness

Objectives: Create and sustain an organizational culture that fosters new learning by all staff and create and sustain a maintenance program that promotes proactive maintenance.

- Advance the organizational mentoring program.
- Refine the leadership structure that continues employee leadership opportunities.
- Build a collaborative staff environment through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
- Implement Maintenance Software to track work orders, inventory, and preventative maintenance.

2. Communication & Engagement

Objective: Communicate pertinent information to and engage stakeholders consistently.

- Identify and build relationships with key stakeholders.
- Create and utilize a communication system to enhance stakeholder involvement.
- Enhance sponsored family engagement activities (State).

3. Instructional & Functional Effectiveness

Objective: Improve instructional practices and outcomes for students.

- Provide professional development specific to the MSDB population, including SPED, VI, DHH, curriculum, and instruction.
- Extend/enhance services within the current family advisor program for early intervention (State).
- Provide opportunities for students to participate in the community.
- Establish processes related to staffing and student placement based on instructional and functional levels.

4. Transformational Learning

Objective: Determine schoolwide and individual learning goals connected with meaningful assessment.

- Collect and analyze assessment information to create a list of sensory specific assessments.
- Develop a clear and concise scope and sequence of student learning competencies, including academic, life, functional, social, work-based, and expanded core skills (Journey of a Learner).
- Develop and Implement an MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) system.

Standards Self-Assessment

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind 230315 REMOTE AER (Jul 1, 2025 - Jun 30, 2026)
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, Great Falls, United States of America

Last Modified: 11/04/2025
Status: Ready for Review

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Standards Self-Assessment 3

Standards Self-Assessment

Standards Self-Assessment

In this diagnostic, you will transfer ratings and evidence information from your workbook for each of the Standards.

You will also transfer your narratives for each Key Characteristic and your reflections.

Culture of Learning Standards

A good institution nurtures and sustains a healthy culture for learning. In a healthy culture, learners, parents, and educators feel connected to the purpose and work of the institution as well as behave in alignment with the stated values and norms. The institution also demonstrates evidence that reflects the mission, beliefs, and expectations of the institution (e.g., student work; physical appearance of the institution; participation in institution activities; parents' attendance at institution functions).

Keys to Culture of Learning

A healthy culture is evident where:

- Stakeholders are actively engaged and supportive of the institution's mission
- Learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests are the focal point
- Stakeholders are included and supported

Standard 1

Leaders cultivate and sustain a culture that demonstrates respect and fairness for all learners and is free from bias.

- 4 - Leaders consistently model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members consistently implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision-making that embody the values of respect and fairness for all learners and are free from bias.
- **3 - Leaders regularly model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members routinely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision-making that embody the values of respect and fairness for all learners and are free from bias.**
- 2 - Leaders occasionally model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members sometimes implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision-making that embody the values of respect and fairness for all learners and are free from bias.
- 1 - Leaders rarely model the attributes and implement practices that shape and sustain the desired institution culture, clearly setting expectations for all staff members. Leaders and professional staff members seldom implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision-making that embody the values of respect and fairness for all learners and are free from bias.

COMMENTS

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Perceptions on respect and Fairness // Culture of Learning Staff Survey

Standard 2

Learners' well-being is at the heart of the institution's guiding principles, such as mission, purpose, and beliefs.

- **4 - Staff members continually demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions are documented and regularly reviewed for consistency with its stated values.**
- 3 - Staff members routinely demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions are documented and are consistent with and based on its stated values.
- 2 - Staff members occasionally demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions are consistent with and based on its stated values.
- 1 - Staff members seldom demonstrate commitment to learners' academic and non-academic needs and interests. The institution's practices, processes, and decisions may not be based on its stated values.

COMMENTS

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Perceptions regarding academic and non academic support // Coaching Cycle Document Analysis // MSDB Strategic Plan Improvement Plan Annual Plan - Mission, Vision, Belief Statements

Standard 3

Leaders actively engage stakeholders to support the institution's priorities and guiding principles that promote learners' academic growth and well-being.

- 4 - Leaders establish and sustain conditions that consistently result in support and active participation among stakeholders. Leaders consistently collaborate with stakeholders to advance identified priorities. Institutions implement a formal process to choose areas of focus based on analyzed data on learners' needs and consistent with guiding principles.
- **3 - Leaders establish and sustain conditions that regularly result in support and active participation among stakeholders. Leaders routinely collaborate with stakeholders to advance identified priorities. Institutions choose areas of focus based on analyzed data on learners' needs and consistent with guiding principles.**
- 2 - Leaders establish conditions that occasionally result in support and participation among stakeholders. Leaders sometimes collaborate with stakeholders to advance identified priorities. Institutions choose areas of focus sometimes based on data on learners' needs and consistent with guiding principles.
- 1 - Leaders establish conditions that rarely result in support and participation among stakeholders. Leaders seldom collaborate with stakeholders. Institutions choose areas of focus rarely based on data about learners.

COMMENTS

25 - 26 MSDB Master Schedule - Core Classes Morning / ECC Enrichment Afternoon // MSDB Strategic Plan Improvement Plan Annual Plan - Instructional and Transformational Learning // MSDB ACT Performance Data 2023-2025 // MSDB MAP Performance Data 2023-2025 // MSDB MAST Performance Data 2025 // Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Active stakeholder involvement and support for school priorities

Standard 4

Learners benefit from a formal structure that fosters positive relationships with peers and adults.

- 4 - A formal structure is planned and consistently implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors consistently demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.
- **3 - A formal structure is planned and regularly implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors routinely demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.**
- 2 - A formal structure may be planned but is minimally implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors sometimes demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.
- 1 - A formal structure is not planned or implemented to promote a culture and climate in which learners receive support from adults and peers. Peer and adult interactions and behaviors rarely demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for one another's well-being.

COMMENTS

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Positive Student and staff relationships // MSDB
Journey of a Learner // MSDB JOL Year Long Context Summer 2025

Standard 5

Professional staff members embrace effective collegiality and collaboration in support of learners.

- 4 - The institution's documented operating practices cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration and are monitored for fidelity of implementation. Professional staff members consistently interact with respect and cooperation, learn from one another, and consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members intentionally and consistently work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.
- **3 - The institution's documented operating practices cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration. Professional staff members regularly interact with respect and cooperation, often learn from one another, and routinely consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members often work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.**
- 2 - The institution's operating practices somewhat cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration. Professional staff members generally interact with respect and cooperation, periodically learn from one another, and somewhat consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members sometimes work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.
- 1 - The institution's operating practices rarely cultivate and set expectations for collegiality and collaboration. Professional staff members may or may not interact with respect and cooperation, learn from one another, or consider one another's ideas. Professional staff members rarely work together in self-formed or assigned groups to review information, identify common problems, and implement solutions on behalf of learners.

COMMENTS

MSDB Report June 2024 // MSDB 24 - 25 Induction Program Evaluation // MSDB PLC+
Characteristics of Effective PLCs Staff Averages // MSDB PLC Examples from World Cafe's

Standard 6

Professional staff members receive the support they need to strengthen their professional practice.

- 4 - Professional staff members consistently receive adequate resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. A formal structure ensures that professional staff members receive personalized mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.
- **3 - Professional staff members receive adequate resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. Professional staff members receive personalized mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.**
- 2 - Professional staff members receive some resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. Professional staff members periodically receive mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.
- 1 - Professional staff members receive few or no resources and assistance based on data and information unique to the individual. Professional staff members rarely receive mentoring and coaching from leaders and peers.

COMMENTS

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Availability of resources and support to increase student outcomes // Coaching Cycle Document Analysis // MSDB 25 - 26 New Staff Induction Agenda // MSDB 24 - 25 Induction Program Evaluation // MSDB 24-25 Induction and Mentoring Information // MSDB Report June 2024

Enter the Culture of Learning Key Characteristic narrative from your workbook in the field below:

MSDB Culture of Learning Performance Analysis: Strengths and Areas for Growth

The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) demonstrates strong performance in several key areas of its culture of learning. The institution has a cohesive Shared Purpose and Direction, effectively translating its mission and beliefs into practice, evidenced by high stakeholder alignment with the core, "whole-child" focus aimed at preparing students for successful citizenship. The school also excels in fostering Positive Relationships, with a 93% favorability rating for creating a safe and positive environment. Furthermore, 75% of stakeholders agree there is a formal structure ensuring each student is "well-known by at least one adult advocate", a belief reflected in the 65% extreme likelihood rating among staff for successfully nurturing these relationships. This sense of commitment and belonging is also indicated by a significant increase in student attendance, rising from 88.09% to 92.78%. In terms of staff collaboration, MSDB shows strength in Learning-Focused Relationships through the high-fidelity operation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which consistently show high yearly averages (above 4.5) for both Structural and Supportive Relational Conditions. Finally, the institution is adept at Resource Alignment and Utilization, using cross-departmental teams and student performance data as the primary driver for curriculum review and renewal, aligning this effort with the expectation of reducing foundational knowledge gaps and ensuring reliable academic growth.

Despite its notable strengths, the analysis identified specific areas within MSDB's culture requiring targeted improvement efforts. One critical area for growth is actively engaging all stakeholders to support the institution's priorities. While internal alignment to the mission is robust, there is a significant gap in engaging external stakeholders, particularly parents and the wider community. This is evidenced by the finding that less than 25% of parents attended the last three governance-related meetings, indicating a struggle to involve all stakeholders in formal decision-making and support activities. A second area for improvement relates to ensuring learners' well-being is consistently translated into practice. Although staff commitment to the overall mission is strong, the analysis shows that the implementation of specific, high-leverage instructional strategies, such as specialized reading strategies, is uneven across the school. This lack of collective efficacy is supported by data revealing that the last classroom observation cycle found only 40% of classrooms were consistently applying the new specialized reading strategy with fidelity, suggesting a gap in universally embedding professional practices among all teaching staff.

Finding Statement: The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) exhibits a strong internal culture of learning marked by clear Shared Purpose and Direction, high-fidelity Learning-Focused Relationships (PLCs), and robust structures for Positive Relationships and personalized student support, evidenced by high stakeholder alignment, a 93% favorability rating for a safe environment, and effective utilization of student data for curriculum renewal.

Finding Statement: MSDB is not fully meeting expectations in External Stakeholder Engagement and Consistent Instructional Fidelity, as demonstrated by low parental participation in governance-related meetings (less than 25%) and the uneven application of high-leverage instructional practices, with only 40% of classrooms consistently applying the new specialized reading strategy with fidelity.

If MSDB leverages the strong, collaborative foundation established in its Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), the high degree of stakeholder alignment to its Shared Purpose, and the proven capacity to foster Positive Relationships, then the school will institutionalize successful practices (like personalized student advocacy and data-driven curriculum review) and create a self-sustaining model for continuous cultural and instructional stability.

If MSDB leaders and staff implement a multi-faceted stakeholder engagement plan to proactively connect with parents and the community, then the school will achieve a significant increase in external stakeholder participation in support and decision-making activities.

Leadership for Learning Standards

The ability of a leader to provide leadership for learning is a key attribute of a good institution. Leaders who engage in their own learning while tangibly supporting the learning process for learners and teachers have a significant positive impact on the success of others. Leaders must also communicate the learning expectations for all learners and teachers continuously, with consistency and purpose. The expectations are embedded in the culture of the institution, reflected by learners', teachers', and leaders' behaviors and attitudes toward learning.

Keys to Leadership for Learning

Leadership for learning is demonstrated when school leaders:

- Communicate expectations for learning
- Influence and impact the culture in positive ways
- Model and engage in learning while supporting others to do so

Standard 7

Leaders guide professional staff members in the continuous improvement process focused on learners' experiences and needs.

- 4 - Leaders consistently engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is based on analyzed trend and current data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members consistently implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.
- **3 - Leaders regularly engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is based on analyzed data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members routinely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.**
- 2 - Leaders occasionally engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is sometimes based on data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members sometimes implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.

- 1 - Leaders seldom engage professional staff members in developing, communicating, implementing, monitoring, and adjusting the continuous improvement process. The continuous improvement process is rarely based on data about learners' academic and non-academic needs and the institution's organizational effectiveness. Leaders and professional staff members rarely implement ongoing practices, processes, and decision making that improve learning and engage stakeholders.

COMMENTS

MSDB Policy Manual October 2025 - Stakeholder Involvement Policy 2158 // MSDB Strategic Plan Improvement Plan Annual Plan // MSDB Strategic Plan 22-25 Non Cognia Format // MSDB Cognia Year 1 Annual Plan Review

Standard 8

The governing authority demonstrates a commitment to learners by collaborating with leaders to uphold the institution's priorities and to drive continuous improvement.

- 4 - The governing authority's policies and decisions are regularly reviewed to ensure an uncompromised commitment to learners and the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders use their respective roles and responsibilities to consistently and intentionally collaborate to further the institution's improvement.
- **3 - The governing authority's policies and decisions demonstrate a commitment to learners and support the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders use their respective roles and responsibilities to collaboratively further the institution's improvement.**
- 2 - The governing authority's decisions demonstrate some commitment to learners and sometimes support the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders use their respective roles and responsibilities to focus the institution's improvement.
- 1 - The governing authority's decisions demonstrate minimal commitment to learners and rarely support the institution's identified priorities. The governing authority and institution leaders seldom collaborate on the institution's improvement.

COMMENTS

MSDB Policy Manual October 2025 // Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Governing authority collaboration with school leadership // Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format (Stakeholder Subgroups) - Governing authority collaboration with school leadership

Standard 9

Leaders cultivate effective individual and collective leadership among stakeholders.

- 4 - Leaders consistently recognize and actively encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders create conditions that ensure formal and informal leadership opportunities, and provide customized support for individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders show initiative and eagerness to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.
- **3 - Leaders frequently recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders create conditions that regularly offer formal and informal leadership opportunities, and support individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders demonstrate a willingness to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.**

- 2 - Leaders occasionally recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders sometimes create conditions that offer leadership opportunities and support individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders sometimes volunteer to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.
- 1 - Leaders seldom recognize and encourage leadership potential among stakeholders. Leaders rarely create conditions that offer leadership opportunities and support individuals and groups to improve their leadership skills. Stakeholders rarely volunteer to take on individual or shared responsibilities that support the institution's priorities.

COMMENTS

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Perceptions regarding leadership opportunities for staff // Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format (Stakeholder Subgroups) - Perceptions regarding leadership opportunities for staff // MSDB Policy Manual October 2025 - Stakeholder Involvement Policy 2158 // 2025 Governors Award Nominees // 2425 Dufresne Nominees

Standard 10

Leaders demonstrate expertise in recruiting, supervising, and evaluating professional staff members to optimize learning.

- 4 - Leaders intentionally and consistently identify, develop, and retain qualified professional staff members who contribute to the institution's purpose and priorities. Leaders consistently use analyzed data from a variety of sources to forecast future staffing needs and employ best practices to attract qualified candidates from a broad range of backgrounds. Leaders implement and monitor documented practices and procedures for supervision and evaluation that improve professional staff members' performance to optimize learning.
- **3 - Leaders identify, develop, and retain qualified professional staff members who contribute to the institution's purpose and priorities. Leaders routinely use data from a variety of sources to forecast future staffing needs and employ best practices to attract qualified candidates from a broad range of backgrounds. Leaders regularly implement practices and procedures for supervision and evaluation that improve professional staff members' performance to optimize learning.**
- 2 - Leaders hire qualified professional staff members who contribute to the institution's purpose and priorities. Leaders sometimes use data to forecast future staffing needs. Leaders supervise and evaluate professional staff members to improve performance.
- 1 - Leaders hire qualified professional staff members without consideration of contribution to the institution's purpose and priorities. Leaders rarely use data to forecast future staffing needs. Leaders seldom supervise and evaluate professional staff members to improve performance.

COMMENTS

Coaching Cycle Document Analysis // MSDB Teacher Evaluation Tool // MSDB Paraprofessional Evaluation Tool // MSDB Interpreter Evaluation Tool // MSDB Administration Evaluation Tool

Standard 11

Leaders create and maintain institutional structures and processes that support learners and staff members in both stable and changing environments.

- 4 - Leaders consistently demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability and engage stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies to maintain stability and respond to change. The institution's structure and processes are documented, monitored, and thoroughly communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes include emergency and contingency plans that support agile and effective responses to both incremental and sudden change.
- **3 - Leaders regularly demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability and engage stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies to maintain stability and respond to change. The institution's structure and processes are documented and communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes include emergency and contingency plans that support responses to both incremental and sudden change.**
- 2 - Leaders sometimes demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability and engage stakeholders in planning and implementing strategies to maintain stability and respond to change. The institution's structure and processes are occasionally documented and communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes include emergency and contingency plans to respond to change.
- 1 - Leaders seldom demonstrate awareness of potential influences on institution stability. The institution's structure and processes are not well documented or communicated so that learners and staff members know what to do and expect in everyday circumstances. The institution's structure and processes may not include emergency and contingency plans to respond to change.

COMMENTS

2025 MSDB Safety Manual // MSDB EAP 2025 // MSDB Volunteer Handbook 2023 // MSDB Personnel Handbook 2020

Standard 12

Professional staff members implement curriculum and instruction that are aligned for relevancy and effectiveness for each and every learner.

- 4 - Professional staff members systematically implement, review, and adjust curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are regularly assessed through a formal, systematic process to assure alignment, relevancy, and effectiveness for each and every learner.
- **3 - Professional staff members implement, review, and adjust curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are regularly assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, and effectiveness for each and every learner.**
- 2 - Professional staff members implement curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are sometimes assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, and effectiveness for each and every learner.
- 1 - Professional staff members implement locally adopted curriculum and instruction. Curriculum and instructional practices are rarely or not assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, and effectiveness for each and every learner.

COMMENTS

MSDB Journey of a Learner // MSDB JOL Year Long Context Summer 2025 // MSDB Neuro K-12 ELA Skills Progression - Lit Reading // MSDB ELA Early Learning Standards Year Long Context // 24-25 GTCC Effectiveness Report // 23-24 GTCC Effectiveness Report

Standard 13

Qualified personnel instruct and assist learners and each other in support of the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.

- 4 - All staff members demonstrate commitment to enhancing their professional practice over and above the required knowledge and skills for their positions. Staff members work collaboratively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors consistently demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.
- **3 - All staff members demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for their positions. Staff members work cooperatively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.**
- 2 - Most staff members demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for their positions, and a plan is being implemented to ensure that all staff members are qualified for their positions. Staff members sometimes work cooperatively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors sometimes demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.
- 1 - Some staff members do not demonstrate the required knowledge and skills for their positions, and a plan does not exist to ensure that all staff members are qualified for their positions. Staff members rarely work cooperatively to instruct and assist learners and colleagues in support of the institution's guiding principles. Staff members' individual and collective decisions and behaviors rarely demonstrate alignment and coherence with the institution's mission, purpose, and beliefs.

COMMENTS

MSDB Educational Staffing Qualifications

Standard 14

Curriculum and instruction are augmented by reliable information resources and materials that advance learning and support learners' personal interests.

- 4 - Professional staff members consistently suggest and provide thoughtfully selected information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process and support learners' personal interests. A systematic process is used to identify and verify that information resources and materials are selected from credible sources.
- **3 - Professional staff members suggest and provide thoughtfully selected information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process and support learners' personal interests. These information resources and materials are selected from credible sources and based on verifiable information.**
- 2 - Professional staff members sometimes suggest and provide information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process and/or support learners' personal interests. These information resources and materials are usually selected from credible sources and based on verifiable information.

- 1 - Professional staff members rarely suggest and provide information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process or support learners' personal interests. These information resources and materials are rarely selected from credible sources or may not be based on verifiable information.

COMMENTS

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Perception of resource validity // Spring 2023 CNA OPI Result Format - IEFA / Literacy // Spring 2022 CNA OPI Result Format - IEFA / Literacy

Standard 15

Learners' needs drive the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources.

- 4 - Professional staff members engage in a systematic process to analyze learners' needs and current trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources to ensure each and every learner's needs are met. Adjustments to resource allocation are consistently based on current data at any point in time.
- **3 - Professional staff members routinely analyze learners' needs and current trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources to ensure each and every learner's needs are met. Adjustments to resource allocation are routinely based on current data and at predetermined points in time.**
- 2 - Professional staff members sometimes analyze learners' needs, current, and trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources to ensure each and every learner's needs are met. Adjustments to resource allocation are sometimes based on current or updated data.
- 1 - Professional staff members rarely analyze learners' needs and trend data to adjust the allocation and management of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources. Resources are rarely allocated in alignment with documented learners' needs or to ensure each and every learner's needs are met.

COMMENTS

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format (Stakeholder Subgroups) - Student Responses // Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Perceptions related to effectiveness of resource allocations // MSDB Strategic Plan Improvement Plan Annual Plan - Resource Allocations of Annual Plan //

Enter the Leadership for Learning Key Characteristic narrative from your workbook in the field below:

MSDB leaders employ a tiered structure to communicate expectations for learning and monitor progress toward meeting them (Standard 10). At the foundational level, expectations are embedded in the institution's Mission, Vision, and Beliefs (e.g., fostering the whole-child, providing sensory-specific access), which are formally reinforced by the MSDB Policy Manual (e.g., Policy 2000: Goals and Policy 2120: Curriculum and Assessment). The Instructional Expectations are made concrete through the Strategic Plan, which aims to "Determine schoolwide and individual learning goals connected with meaningful assessment".

Progress toward these expectations is monitored through a robust continuous improvement process (Standard 7). This includes the Annual Improvement Plan Self Reflection and the highly granular Coaching Cycle Document Analysis, which tracks 152 documented cycles across twenty-four teachers. Furthermore, a Curriculum Alignment Audit established a strength in 68% of academic units aligning with state standards (Standard 12). However, a significant weakness exists in the consistent use of data by general staff; the Fall 2025 CNA reported that only 36% of staff rate the systematic process for collecting and analyzing data as proficient or effective, creating a gap between the expectations and their consistent

implementation. In addition, only 59% of staff in the Culture of Leadership Report found instructional expectations to be clearly and consistently communicated, indicating a need to close the perception gap.

Leaders actively influence and impact the culture in positive ways (Standard 9) by engaging in formal and informal recognition of mission-aligned behavior. Leaders explicitly recognize and elevate staff members who demonstrate leadership, particularly by valuing teamwork and support. For example, the use of Governor's Award Nominees and Dufresne Award Nominees documentation is used to formally celebrate teams, such as the Health Services Team and the Fabulous Maintenance Team, for their strong sense of teamwork and dedication to a safe and efficient environment. This action affirms that leadership is not exclusive to administrators but is operational and collaborative, reinforcing the school's mission and beliefs. The institution's commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment (Standard 11) also positively influences the culture, evidenced by high favorability scores (80-85%) across the Fall 2025 CNA and the Culture of Leadership Report.

MSDB leaders model and engage in learning while supporting others to do so primarily through the Coaching Cycle process (Standard 7 & 13). The coaching cycles provide a structured environment for leaders to engage in instructional observation and feedback, while simultaneously fostering a culture of continuous learning for the teachers. Furthermore, the analysis noted specific examples of leaders modeling learning behaviors, such as engaging in collaborative training and sharing new instructional strategies with colleagues. This distributed process serves as the primary mechanism by which leaders support staff to develop new knowledge and skills, with 90% of teachers receiving a comprehensive Coaching Cycle Document Analysis report, ensuring specific, data-driven feedback on learner engagement.

Governing Authority: The Board of Trustees demonstrates a formal distribution of leadership and oversight through the MSDB Policy Manual (1000 series), which details explicit policies establishing their commitment to instruction and personnel (Standard 8).

Resource Management: Leadership for resource allocation is distributed, as 82% of staff believe learners' needs successfully drive the allocation of resources (Standard 15). This demonstrates a distributed influence where non-administrative staff input on student needs guides major operational decisions, ensuring alignment of human, material, digital, and fiscal resources.

High Performance Findings (Areas of Strength)

Finding Statement 1: MSDB demonstrates high performance by cultivating a strong culture of distributed leadership and providing exceptional instructional resources aligned with learner needs.

Finding Statement 2: The institution maintains a robust, policy-driven system for instructional support, staff qualification, and continuous improvement that ensures foundational program quality.

Poor Performance Findings (Areas for Improvement)

Finding Statement 1: The effectiveness of the continuous improvement process is severely limited by poor staff fidelity in using student data, compromising the systematic monitoring of learning progress.

Finding Statement 2: Leadership processes face significant staff perception challenges regarding fairness, effectiveness, and communication.

Theory of Action: Sustaining High Performance

ToA 1: If MSDB expands and formalizes the leadership opportunities within the current, highly-rated distributed leadership structure and documents the successful process by which learners' needs drive resource allocation, then MSDB will solidify leadership capacity beyond the administrative level, ensuring that instructional practices are consistently supported by reliable materials, and that resource management is systematic and clear.

Theory of Action: Addressing Areas for Improvement

ToA 3: If MSDB leadership implements mandatory, targeted professional development for all staff focused on data literacy, analysis, and instructional application, and establishes clear checkpoints for leaders to monitor the use of student data in planning, then MSDB will significantly increase the percentage of staff who view the data process as effective (currently 36%) and successfully address the gap in moving students from dependent compliance to independent cognitive rigor.

ToA3: If leaders implement a transparent communication plan detailing the metrics and rationale for the personnel evaluation process, then the school will improve staff confidence in leaders' evaluation expertise.

Engagement of Learning Standards

A good institution ensures that learners are engaged in the learning environment. Learners who are engaged in the learning environment participate with confidence and display agency over their own learning. A good institution adopts policies and engages in practices that support all learners being included in the learning process.

Keys to Engagement of Learning

Engagement is demonstrated when all learners:

- Are included in the learning process
- Participate with confidence
- Have agency over their learning

Standard 16

Learners experience curriculum and instruction that emphasize the value of different cultures, backgrounds, and abilities reflective of the global community.

- 4 - Respect for different cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is embedded in every aspect of the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are authentically integrated in the curricular content and instructional practices.
- **3 - Respect for different cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is clearly present in the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are intentionally included in the curricular content and instructional practices.**
- 2 - Respect for different cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is somewhat present in the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are inconsistently included in the curricular content and instructional practices.
- 1 - Respect for different cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is rarely present in the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are not included in the curricular content and instructional practices.

COMMENTS

MSDB IEFA Examples 2024 Teacher Survey IEFA 2025 Spring 2022 CNA OPI Result Format - IEFA Spring 2023 CNA OPI Result Format - IEFA Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Disposition regarding positive culture and climate

Standard 17

Learners have the support and opportunities to realize their learning potential.

- 4 - Professional staff members develop relationships with and understand the needs and well-being of individual learners. Academic and non-academic experiences are tailored to the needs and well-being of individual learners. Learners are challenged and supported to strive toward maximal levels of achievement and self-efficacy without barriers or hindrances by schedules or access to academic and non-academic offerings.
- **3 - Professional staff members know their learners well enough to develop and provide a variety of academic and non-academic experiences. Learners have access and choice in most academic and non-academic opportunities available according to grade levels or through expected sequencing of courses. Learners rarely encounter barriers when accessing academic and non-academic experiences most suited to their individual needs and well-being. Learners are challenged and supported to strive toward individual achievement and self-efficacy.**

- 2 - Professional staff members consider varying learner needs and well-being when developing and providing academic and non-academic experiences. Learners have access to some variety in academic and non-academic opportunities available according to grade levels or through expected sequencing of courses. Learners may encounter barriers when accessing some academic and non-academic experiences most suited to their individual needs and well-being. Learners are sometimes challenged and supported to strive toward individual achievement and self-efficacy.
- 1 - Professional staff members give little or no consideration to individual learner needs and well-being when developing and providing academic and non-academic experiences. Academic and non-academic opportunities are limited and standardized according to grade levels or a predetermined sequencing of courses. Learners frequently encounter a variety of barriers when accessing academic and non-academic offerings that would be well-suited to their individual needs and well-being. Learners are rarely challenged to strive toward individual achievement and self-efficacy.

COMMENTS

2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB 2025 Office of Public Instruction Special Education Monitoring Report Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Perceptions related to supportive learning opportunities and student agency MSDB Journey of a Learner MSDB JOL Year Long Context Summer 2025

Standard 18

Learners are immersed in an environment that fosters lifelong skills including creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.

- 4 - Conditions across all aspects of the institution promote learners' lifelong skills. Learners engage in ongoing experiences that develop the non-academic skills important for their next steps in learning and for future success. A formal structure ensures that learning experiences collectively build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.
- **3 - Conditions within most aspects of the institution promote learners' lifelong skills. Learners engage in experiences that develop the non-academic skills important for their next steps in learning and for future success. Collectively, the learning experiences build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.**
- 2 - Conditions within some aspects of the institution promote learners' lifelong skills. Learners engage in some experiences that develop non-academic skills important for their next steps in learning and for future success. Some learning experiences build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, and design thinking.
- 1 - Learners engage in environments that focus primarily on academic learning objectives only. Little or no emphasis is placed on non-academic skills important for next steps in learning and for future success. Learning experiences rarely build skills in creativity, curiosity, risk taking, collaboration, or design thinking.

COMMENTS

2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB 2025 Office of Public Instruction Special Education Monitoring Report Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Perceptions on learning environment MSDB Journey of a Learner MSDB JOL Year Long Context Summer 2025 2025 MSDB LEAP Handbook

Standard 19

Learners are immersed in an environment that promotes and respects student agency and responsibility for their learning.

- 4 - Conditions across all aspects of the institution promote learners' active discovery and expression of their needs and interests. Learners give input into the instructional and learning activities they pursue and the methods in which they learn. Learners consistently identify their learning targets and monitor their progress.
- **3 - Conditions within most aspects of the institution are learner-centered and promote learners' active discovery and expression of their needs and interests. Learners give input into most of the instructional and learning activities available to them. Learners are frequently involved in identifying their learning targets and monitoring their progress.**
- 2 - Conditions within some aspects of the institution are learner-centered and promote learners' active discovery and expression of their needs and interests. Learners have some opportunity for input into the instructional and learning activities available to them. Learners are sometimes involved in identifying their learning targets and monitoring their progress.
- 1 - Learners engage in environments that are heavily instructor-centered. Learners have little or no input into the instructional and learning activities available to them. Learners are rarely expected to monitor their learning progress.

COMMENTS

2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB 2025 Office of Public Instruction Special Education Monitoring Report Coaching Cycle Document Analysis

Standard 20

Learners engage in experiences that promote and develop their self-confidence and love of learning.

- 4 - Learners consistently pursue challenging opportunities that may not always result in success, knowing that they will be supported when needed. Learners readily and consistently show motivation, curiosity, and excitement about their learning.
- **3 - Most learners pursue opportunities that may not always result in success, knowing they will be supported. Most learners show motivation, curiosity, and excitement about their learning.**
- 2 - Some learners pursue opportunities that may not always result in success, but only with significant, individual support. Some learners show motivation, curiosity, and excitement about their learning.
- 1 - Most learners primarily pursue opportunities they believe to be risk-free or heavily guaranteed to be successful. Most learners show little motivation, curiosity, or excitement about their learning.

COMMENTS

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format - Perceptions of learning, motivation, and support 23-24 PIR Schedule by Committee 24-25 PIR Schedule by Committee 25-26 PIR Schedule by Committee 2025 Student Awards Program

Standard 21

Instruction is characterized by high expectations and learner-centered practices.

- 4 - Learners engage in instructional activities, experiences, and interactions based on their individual needs and interests. Professional staff members consistently deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their potential.

- **3 - Most learners engage in instructional activities, experiences, and interactions based on their individual needs and interests. Professional staff members routinely deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their potential.**
- 2 - Learners engage in instructional activities, experiences, and interactions based on needs and interests typical of most students. Professional staff members infrequently deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their potential.
- 1 - Instructional activities are primarily designed around curriculum objectives with little or no focus on learner needs and interests. Professional staff members rarely deliver instruction designed for learners to reach their individual potential.

COMMENTS

2025 MT READS GRANT Application Materials 2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB
2025 Office of Public Instruction Special Education Monitoring Report Coaching Cycle Document
Analysis MSDB MAP Performance Data 2023-2025

Standard 22

Instruction is monitored and adjusted to advance and deepen individual learners' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

- 4 - Professional staff members consistently monitor and adjust instruction based on each learner's response to instruction and achievement of desired learning targets. Professional staff members use a formal, systematic process for analyzing trend and current data to deepen each learner's understanding of content at increasing levels of complexity.
- **3 - Professional staff members regularly monitor and adjust instruction based on each learner's response to instruction and achievement of desired learning targets. Professional staff members routinely analyze trend and current data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.**
- 2 - Professional staff members sometimes monitor and adjust instruction based on each learner's achievement of desired learning targets. Professional staff members sometimes analyze data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.
- 1 - Professional staff members rarely monitor and adjust instruction. Professional staff members rarely analyze data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.

COMMENTS

2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB Coaching Cycle Document Analysis MSDB
Journey of a Learner MSDB JOL Year Long Context Summer 2025 23-24 PIR Schedule by
Committee 24-25 PIR Schedule by Committee 25-26 PIR Schedule by Committee MSDB Neuro
K-12 ELA Skills Progression - Lit Reading MSDB ELA Early Learning Standards Year Long
Context

Standard 23

Professional staff members integrate digital resources that deepen and advance learners' engagement with instruction and stimulate their curiosity.

- 4 - Professional staff members seamlessly and deliberately integrate digital resources that add value to the learning process and encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources consistently support learners' pursuit of interests and deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.
- **3 - Professional staff members intentionally select and integrate digital resources that add value to the learning process and encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources routinely support learners' pursuit of interests and deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.**
- 2 - Professional staff members occasionally select and integrate digital resources that add value to the learning process or encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources sometimes support learners' pursuit of interests and deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.
- 1 - Professional staff members select and integrate few or no digital resources or select digital resources that rarely add value to the learning process or encourage learners' active engagement in the learning process. Digital resources rarely support learners' pursuit of interests or deepen or extend curriculum topics to stimulate learners' curiosity.

COMMENTS

25-26 PIR Schedule by Committee - Artificial Intelligence Coaching Cycle Document Analysis

Enter the Engagement of Learning Key Characteristic narrative from your workbook in the field below:

The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) is operating at a Proficient level across the eight Engagement of Learning standards, building upon strong foundational structures and a clear vision for student growth. MSDB demonstrates a high degree of fidelity in creating an inclusive and supportive environment that builds student self-confidence. Intentionality is shown in ensuring learners experience curriculum and instruction that emphasizes the value of different cultures, backgrounds, and abilities, as evidenced by staff favorability and dedicated Indian Education for All (IEFA) analysis. Learner support is robust and externally validated by compliance with IDEA regulations. Further structural support is found in the MSDB LEAP Handbook (Living, Employment, Academic Planning), which outlines a post-high school transition program to help students realize their learning potential. This supportive culture culminates in high student self-confidence, universally evidenced by educators fostering a positive, safe, and affirming classroom atmosphere that allows students to participate with high eagerness, feel comfortable taking risks, and engage freely. This positive climate is reinforced through the formal recognition of academic and civic achievements in the Student Awards Program. The overarching vision for student outcomes—including agency, lifelong skills, and digital integration—is guided by the MSDB Journey of a Learner document. This framework defines expected learner traits for lifelong skills, such as FLEXIBLE THINKER and PROBLEM SOLVER. Student agency is established within this same framework, defining students as an INDEPENDENT PERSON and RESPONSIBLE LEARNER, expected to self-advocate, accept accountability, and take initiative. Staff buy-in for promoting student responsibility is high. However, the Learning Environment Analysis identifies a critical implementation gap: the need to transition student participation from dependent compliance to independent cognitive rigor. Digital integration is supported by the goal of creating a DIGITAL CITIZEN, with staff indicating a need for higher implementation and consistent integration of digital resources.

The school's instructional approach is characterized by high, consistent expectations, confirmed by high staff favorability and the consistent adherence to the Explicit Instruction Model (the "I Do, We Do, You Do" structure) by many teachers. This learner-centered practice drives active student engagement. However, the systematic use of data for instructional adjustment is identified as a critical area for improvement in the continuous improvement plan. Staff surveys show lower favorability for consistent monitoring and adjustment of instruction, with a significant percentage of staff at the Basic Implementation or Unsure/Not Implemented level regarding the systematic use of student data. To address this gap, MSDB

is committing to systemic corrective actions, including participation in the MT READS GRANT and the ongoing implementation of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).

Findings from Analysis

MSDB is performing exceptionally well in several critical areas

1. Inclusive and Supportive Environment (S16, S17)

MSDB excels at ensuring all learners are included and supported, regardless of their cultural background or disability status. The curriculum's emphasis on valuing different cultures, backgrounds, and abilities (Standard 16) is strongly affirmed by staff, with a 71% favorability score. This is not merely a perception; the school demonstrates intentionality through its dedicated data collection and analysis regarding the Indian Education for All (IEFA) program. Furthermore, performance regarding Learner Support and Opportunities (Standard 17) is externally validated, as the 2025 Office of Public Instruction Special Education Monitoring Report.pdf confirms MSDB has met the standards for compliance in the provision of special education services, ensuring regulatory fidelity. The 2025 MSDB LEAP Handbook (Living, Employment, Academic Planning) provides a robust structure for post-high school transition guidance, ensuring systematic support for future independence.

2. Confident Participation and High Expectations (S20, S21)

The instructional environment successfully promotes psychological safety and rigor, which drives active and confident student participation. The development of Self-Confidence and Love of Learning (Standard 20) is a universal strength identified through coaching cycle data. The Learning Environment Analysis confirms the consistent success in fostering a positive, safe, and affirming classroom atmosphere, which directly results in students demonstrating a high level of eagerness, participation, and comfort taking risks in their lessons. This confidence is formally reinforced through the 2025 Student Awards Program, which validates student achievement in scholarship, leadership, and citizenship. This engagement occurs within a framework of rigor, as Standard 21 (High Expectations) is highly affirmed, receiving a 71% favorability score from staff.

3. Vision for Lifelong Skills and Agency (S18, S19, S23)

MSDB performs well by establishing a clear and comprehensive strategic vision for future-ready skills, providing the conceptual groundwork for sustained engagement. The MSDB Journey of a Learner.pdf serves as the institutional blueprint, explicitly defining high-level outcomes that address both Standard 18 (Lifelong Skills) and Standard 19 (Student Agency). It mandates learners become a FLEXIBLE THINKER, PROBLEM SOLVER, INDEPENDENT PERSON, and RESPONSIBLE LEARNER. This comprehensive vision demonstrates intentional planning to cultivate these skills. Furthermore, the commitment to technology integration (Standard 23) is strong, defined by the DIGITAL CITIZEN outcome in the Journey of a Learner, which is supported by a 59% favorability score from staff regarding the integration of digital resources.

Critical Areas for Improvement

The most significant performance gap relates to Standard 22: Instruction is monitored and adjusted to advance and deepen individual learners' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. The evidence suggests a lack of systemic, consistent use of student data to inform and adjust curriculum delivery across all classrooms. The staff survey data shows only a 59% favorability score on this standard, which signals a fundamental inconsistency in practice compared to other high-performing areas. Reinforcing this, the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) reveals that a substantial 32% of staff rated the practice of "ensuring all staff use student data to address unique learning needs" as either Basic Implementation or Unsure/Not Implemented. This indicates that the core mechanism for systematic instructional adjustment—data literacy and consistent application—is not yet a system-wide practice.

The second area for improvement concerns the full realization of student agency as defined by Standard 19: Learners are immersed in an environment that promotes and respects student agency and responsibility for their learning. While MSDB has a clear and ambitious vision for agency through its Journey of a Learner framework, the evidence points to a significant disconnect in its consistent execution at the instructional level (a fidelity of implementation gap). The Learning Environment Analysis (Coaching Cycle Data) identifies the critical area for growth as the need to transition student participation from dependent compliance to independent cognitive rigor. This means that while students are safe and participating (S20), they are too often following the teacher's procedural lead rather than independently applying high-level critical thinking and problem-solving skills (S18) to drive their own learning. Full agency is achieved when the cognitive work shifts from the teacher to the student, which the current analysis indicates is not yet happening consistently across the board.

In conclusion, these two areas—data-driven decision-making (S22) and the consistent instructional practice that fosters independent cognitive rigor (S19)—represent the primary systemic weaknesses that the school must target with the resources allocated through the MT READS Grant and the MTSS implementation.

Theories of Action for Sustaining and Scaling Strengths

These ToAs focus on embedding and leveraging MSDB's existing high-performing standards (S16, S20, S21, S17) to amplify positive learning outcomes across the institution.

ToA 1: If teachers consistently apply the Explicit Instruction Model within the observed positive, affirming classroom climate, which includes encouraging intellectual risk-taking, then students will feel safe, confident, and supported during the acquisition of complex skills, which will lead to increased academic risk-taking and greater application of lifelong skills during independent and complex cognitive tasks.

ToA 2: If MSDB uses the data and principles from the Indian Education for All (IEFA) program to embed culturally responsive pedagogy into the professional learning communities (PLCs) focused on the Journey of a Learner outcomes, then instruction will authentically reflect diverse perspectives and experiences, which will lead to deeper, more relevant student engagement and sustained high performance in cultural responsiveness and student agency.

Theories of Action for Targeted Improvement (Addressing Weaknesses)

ToA 4: If MSDB utilizes the resources and structural protocols from the MT READS Grant and the MTSS implementation to establish weekly, mandatory data team meetings, then all teachers will systematically analyze student performance data and collectively adjust their instructional delivery and differentiation strategies, which will lead to the consistent and effective monitoring and adjustment of instruction, closing the system-wide data literacy gap.

Growth in Learning Standards

A good institution positively impacts learners throughout their journey of learning. A positive impact on the learner is reflected in readiness to engage in and preparedness for the next transition in their learning. Growth in learning is also reflected in learners' ability to meet expectations in knowledge and skill acquisition.

Keys to Growth in Learning

Growth is evident when:

- Learners possess non-academic skills that ensure readiness to learn
- Learners' academic achievement reflects preparedness to learn
- Learners demonstrate growth in meeting expectations of learning as defined by the institution
- Learners attain knowledge and skills necessary to achieve goals for learning

Standard 24

Leaders use data and input from a variety of sources to make decisions for learners' and staff members' growth and well-being.

- 4 - Leaders consistently demonstrate skill and insight in considering a variety of information, choosing relevant and timely information, and interpreting data. Leaders make intentional decisions by consistently taking into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members, such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.
- **3 - Leaders regularly demonstrate skill and insight in considering a variety of information, choosing relevant and timely information, and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions by routinely taking into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members, such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.**
- 2 - Leaders sometimes demonstrate skill and insight in considering and choosing information and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions that occasionally take into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members, such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.

- 1 - Leaders rarely demonstrate skill and insight in considering and choosing information and interpreting data. Leaders make decisions that rarely take into account data and additional factors that have an impact on learners and staff members, such as institution history, recent experiences, and future possibilities.

COMMENTS

MSDB Strategic Plan 22-25 Non Cognia Format // Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format

Standard 25

Leaders promote action research by professional staff members to improve their practice and advance learning.

- 4 - Leaders intentionally create and preserve a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution and/or individual learning environments. Professional staff members, as a group or as individuals, consistently engage in action research using an inquiry-based process that includes identifying instructional areas of improvement, collecting data, and reporting results to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in learning opportunities customized for professional staff members about action research.
- **3 - Leaders regularly create and preserve a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution and/or individual learning environments. Professional staff members, as a group or as individuals, routinely engage in action research using an inquiry-based process that includes identifying instructional areas of improvement, collecting data, and reporting results to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in learning opportunities for professional staff members to implement action research.**
- 2 - Leaders occasionally create and preserve a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution and/or individual learning environments. Professional staff members, as a group or as individuals, sometimes engage in action research using an inquiry-based process that includes identifying instructional areas of improvement, collecting data, and reporting results to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in some learning opportunities for professional staff members to implement action research.
- 1 - Leaders rarely create a culture that invites inquiry, reflection, and dialogue about instructional problems and issues relevant to the institution or learning environments. Professional staff members seldom engage in action research to make informed instructional changes. Leaders provide and engage in few or no learning opportunities for professional staff members about action research.

COMMENTS

Coaching Cycle Document Analysis // 2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB // Characteristics of Effective PLCs_ Education Yearly Averages - Sheet1 // MSDB PLC Examples from World Cafes

Standard 26

Leaders regularly evaluate instructional programs and organizational conditions to improve instruction and advance learning.

- 4 - Leaders consistently implement a documented process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders use a formal, systematic process for analyzing current and trend data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.
- 3 - Leaders routinely implement a documented process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders use analyzed current and trend data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.
- **2 - Leaders occasionally implement a process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders sometimes use data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.**
- 1 - Leaders rarely implement a process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders seldom use data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.

COMMENTS

2024-2029 Curriculum Calendars // 23-24 GTCC Effectiveness Report // 24-25 GTCC Effectiveness Report // Characteristics of Effective PLCs_ Education Yearly Averages - Sheet1 // 2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB

Standard 27

Learners' academic and non-academic needs are identified and effectively addressed through appropriate interventions.

- 4 - The institution consistently addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are formally and systematically planned and implemented based on analyzed information, data, and instructional best practices to ensure learners' success.
- **3 - The institution routinely addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are regularly planned and implemented based on analyzed information, data, and instructional best practices to ensure learners' success.**
- 2 - The institution sometimes addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are occasionally planned and implemented based on information, data, and instructional best practices to ensure learners' success.
- 1 - The institution rarely addresses the range of developmental, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs to support learners' ability to learn. Strategies and interventions for these needs are seldom planned and implemented based on information, data, or instructional best practices.

COMMENTS

2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB // Coaching Cycle Document Analysis // MSDB MAP Performance Data 2023-2025 // MSDB ACT Performance Data 2023-2025

Standard 28

Learners pursue individual goals including the acquisition of academic and non-academic skills important for their educational futures and careers.

- 4 - Professional staff members consistently engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners consistently choose activities and monitor their own progress, demonstrating active ownership of their stated goals.
- **3 - Professional staff members regularly engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners routinely choose activities and monitor their own progress, demonstrating active ownership of their stated goals.**
- 2 - Professional staff members sometimes engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners occasionally choose activities and monitor their own progress, demonstrating active ownership of their stated goals.
- 1 - Professional staff members rarely engage with learners to help them recognize their talents and potential and to identify meaningful, attainable goals that support academic, career, personal, and social skills. Learners do not choose activities or monitor their own progress toward goals.

COMMENTS

MSDB JOL Year Long Context Summer 2025 // 2025 Office of Public Instruction Special Education Monitoring Report

Standard 29

Understanding learners' needs and interests drives the design, delivery, application, and evaluation of professional learning.

- 4 - Professional learning is learner-centered, customized around the needs of individual or groups of professional staff members, and focuses on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning is fully implemented and monitored for fidelity.
- **3 - Professional learning is learner-centered, designed around the principle that professional staff members need opportunities to focus on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning is being fully implemented.**
- 2 - Professional learning is occasionally learner-centered designed around the principle that professional staff members need opportunities to focus on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning exists but is not fully implemented.
- 1 - Professional learning is rarely learner-centered and may or may not focus on improving pedagogical skills and knowledge to better address learners' needs and interests. A documented process to select, deliver, implement, and evaluate professional learning does not exist.

COMMENTS

23-24 PIR Schedule by Committee

Standard 30

Learners' progress is measured through a balanced system that includes assessment both for learning and of learning.

- 4 - Professional staff members and learners collaborate to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives based on assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods. Assessment data are systematically used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.
- 3 - Professional staff members and learners regularly use assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives. Assessment data are routinely used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.
- **2 - Professional staff members occasionally use assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives. Assessment data are sometimes used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.**
- 1 - Professional staff members seldom use assessment data to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives. Assessment data are rarely or inconsistently used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.

COMMENTS

2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB // MSDB MAST Performance Date 2025 // MSDB MAP Performance Data 2023-2025 // MSDB ACT Performance Date 2023-2025

Standard 31

Learners demonstrate growth in their academic performance based on valid and reliable assessments.

- 4 - The institution consistently sustains high levels of learner performance over time and/or shows consistent trends of improvement in low-performing areas. The institution continually monitors and uses results from multiple required and/or selected valid and reliable assessments of student learning and implements formal plans to address areas of low performance. The institution consistently communicates results and plans for improving learner performance with stakeholders.
- **3 - The institution routinely sustains high levels of learner performance over time and/or shows trends of improvement in low-performing areas. The institution regularly monitors and uses results from multiple required and/or selected valid and reliable assessments of student learning and implements plans to address areas of low performance. The institution routinely communicates results and plans for improving learner performance with stakeholders.**
- 2 - The institution occasionally sustains high levels of learner performance over time and/or shows trends of improvement in low-performing areas. The institution sometimes monitors results from multiple required and/or selected assessments of student learning and implements plans to address areas of low performance. The institution occasionally communicates results and plans for improving learner performance with stakeholders.
- 1 - The institution rarely sustains high levels of learner performance over time or shows trends of improvement in low-performing areas. The institution inconsistently monitors or uses results from multiple required and/or selected assessments of student learning and implements plans to address areas of low performance. The institution seldom communicates results or plans for improving learner performance with stakeholders.

COMMENTS

MSDB MAP Performance Data 2023-2025 // MSDB ACT Performance Date 2023-2025

Enter the Growth in Learning Key Characteristic narrative from your workbook in the field below:

Based on the data analyzed regarding the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), the school presents a mixed picture of instructional effectiveness versus long-term student attainment, which is critically evaluated against the Cognia Growth in Learning Standards (Standards 24-31).

Strengths: Efficacy of the Instructional Process

MSDB excels in the execution of its day-to-day instructional process and the supportive culture it fosters, directly validating several Cognia standards. The primary strength, as confirmed by the MSDB MAP Performance Data, is the consistent trend of positive academic growth experienced by students during the Fall-to-Spring academic year in both Reading and Math. This success empirically validates the efficacy of the school's instructional model, particularly the staff's universal adherence to a high-fidelity explicit instruction model and a deep commitment to inclusion and differentiation for learners with sensory impairments (Standard 31). Furthermore, MSDB demonstrates a strong focus on the whole child, with the Strategic Plan emphasizing the acquisition of both academic and non-academic skills, including readiness for transition (Standard 24). The school also supports its staff well, with needs-based professional development that aligns with high staff buy-in (Standard 29), and utilizes a balanced assessment system that includes reliable summative measures (MAP, ACT) and continuous formative feedback (Coaching Cycle) (Standard 30).

Weaknesses: Attainment and Sustained Skill Retention

Despite the strong in-year growth, the analysis reveals a critical failure in translating this progress into the cumulative knowledge and skills required for competitive post-secondary readiness, failing the ultimate purpose of the Growth in Learning standards. The most significant weakness is a major academic attainment gap, with the MSDB ACT Composite score averaging 12.13. This score is cited as definitive evidence that learners are not meeting the end-point expectations for knowledge and skill acquisition necessary for competitive educational and career goals. This concern is compounded by the volatile and deteriorating Spring-to-Spring (year-over-year) trends in the MAP data. This pattern indicates a fundamental issue with the sustained retention and building of academic knowledge across the full annual cycle. Ultimately, while the school's process for generating in-year growth is highly effective, the students' cumulative performance shows they are not fully ready for their next transition, suggesting that the acquired skills are not being permanently integrated and mastered over time (Standard 24 & 31).

Finding Statements

What the School is Doing Well (Strengths)

Instructional Effectiveness: MSDB's instructional staff is highly effective, adhering to a high-fidelity explicit instruction model that successfully generates consistent positive academic growth during the Fall-to-Spring academic year (Cognia Standard 31).

Learner Support & Whole-Child Focus: The school maintains a deep commitment to providing individualized support and a whole-child approach, ensuring that learners' academic and non-academic needs are addressed as a key component of transition readiness (Cognia Standard 27).

What the School is Not Doing Well (Opportunities for Improvement)

Academic Attainment Gap: Students demonstrate a severe academic attainment gap, as evidenced by an overall average ACT Composite score of 12.13, which is significantly below state averages and fails to meet the end-point knowledge required for competitive post-secondary transitions (Cognia Standard 28).

Skill Retention Deficit: The school struggles with sustained knowledge retention, as strong in-year growth is undermined by volatile and deteriorating Spring-to-Spring (year-over-year) trends, indicating a failure to accumulate and build upon skills over time (Cognia Standard 31).

Inconsistent Data Use: A critical systemic weakness is the low fidelity of data-driven decision-making, with a high percentage of staff either reporting that they do not use student data or rating the process as only Basic Implementation (Cognia Standard 24).

Theories of Action for Strengths

ToA 1. If MSDB instructional staff continue to universally adhere to a high-fidelity explicit instructional model, then learners will continue to show consistent, positive academic growth during the Fall-to-Spring academic year, because the explicit

model, combined with differentiation, is empirically proven to be the most effective mechanism for in-year knowledge acquisition for these learners.

ToA 2. If MSDB continues to prioritize a whole-child approach and deliver high-quality, individualized support services, then learners will successfully develop the necessary academic, life, functional, and social skills, improving their confidence and preparation for successful adult life, because proactively addressing both non-academic and academic needs removes critical barriers to learning and transition.

Theories of Action for Opportunities for Improvement

ToA 3. If MSDB reviews and strategically adjusts its curriculum for increased rigor, then the major academic attainment gap, will narrow over time because the current curriculum is not accumulating the depth of cumulative knowledge required for competitive college and career readiness (Cognia Standard 28).

ToA 4. If MSDB leaders formalize a mandatory, streamlined data-based decision-making process with clear staff roles and expectations, then the percentage of staff who use and report confidence in student data will increase significantly, because systemic data use is required to rigorously monitor, prove, and adjust the school's long-term effectiveness in meeting individualized goals (Cognia Standard 24).

Standards Rating Process

Enter the description you wrote in your workbook of the process you used to rate the Standards in the field below.

The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) used a structured and multi-faceted self-assessment process to prepare for its Cognia accreditation. This comprehensive approach is noteworthy in its attempt to triangulate data from internal staff, student achievement metrics, instructional practice, and key stakeholders.

The initial phase involved a broad, internal evaluation of the Cognia standards. All educational staff participated in a Likert-style survey to gauge their perception of the institution's performance against each standard. A critical feature of this step was the direct translation of the staff's average Likert score into the official self-assessment score for each standard. This approach grounds the self-assessment score directly in the collective perception of the practitioners. Furthermore, staff feedback was leveraged to proactively identify potential sources of evidence (documents) that could either affirm strengths or highlight weaknesses, indicating a strong early focus on evidence-based documentation. This initial step generated a compiled list of supporting documents and concluded with the creation of the executive summary.

The school's self-assessment correctly prioritized an analysis of student outcomes. For assessments common to the student body, such as MAP and the ACT, a robust approach was taken by compiling three-year averages for both reading and mathematics. This use of longitudinal data provides a more stable and reliable measure of student performance trends. It is noted that the initial implementation of the MAST assessment precluded a similar longitudinal analysis, which is an expected limitation for a new data source. The consolidated student achievement data served as a foundational analysis to identify overall learning strengths and weaknesses at MSDB.

Given the unavailability of traditional evaluation or walkthrough data, the institution innovatively utilized coaching cycle data to assess the learning environment. This qualitative analysis was executed in two phases: first, a theme analysis of coaching cycles was conducted for individual teachers. Second, an aggregation of these individual analyses was performed to identify common themes across the entire teaching staff regarding instructional strengths and weaknesses. A particularly critical step was the subsequent correlation check between these themes from the learning environment analysis and the previously compiled student achievement data, suggesting an intent to establish links between teaching practices and student results.

A third significant data stream was the analysis of stakeholder data collected during the Fall 2025 Comprehensive Needs Analysis (CNA). The methodology for grouping stakeholders ensured a minimum participation threshold (10 participants) for meaningful analysis, with smaller groups being combined. This current CNA data was benchmarked against two prior comprehensive surveys conducted by the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) to establish longitudinal trends in stakeholder perception. The completed stakeholder analysis was then cross-referenced with the combined findings from the student achievement and learning environment analyses, ensuring that the school's performance was evaluated through the lenses of students, teachers, and the broader community.

The concluding stage involved a final cross-validation as the accreditation portfolio was constructed. As documents pertaining to areas like student assessment, budget, policies, curriculum, and supervision were placed into the comment

areas for their respective standards, a final layer of analysis occurred. This involved a direct comparison of the supporting documentation against the specific standards. This sectional analysis was then iteratively integrated with the previous findings—student achievement, learning environment, and stakeholder feedback—to build a final, integrated picture of the school's alignment with all four key areas of the Cognia standards. This process ensured that the final reported self-assessment was the result of a systematic synthesis of multiple, diverse data sources.

Reflections

During your group discussion of your data and the resulting analyses, you reflected on the areas you were most proud of about your institution, areas you wished to improve, and challenges your institution is facing or you felt it will be facing in coming years. You recorded your reflections in brief narratives (500 words or less). You should have used the some prompts below for each reflection.

Based on the prompts below, you have identified areas of excellence and areas for improvement:

- Is the culture and climate of your institution positive or could it be improved?
- What areas are you most proud of in terms of student academic performance?
- What areas of student academic performance need improvement?
- Are there outstanding non-academic areas, or some that need improvement? (You might consider topics such as graduation and retention rates, disciplinary referrals, faculty stability or turnover, parent involvement, community support and involvement, finances, technology, special programs, extracurricular activities, etc.)

Based on prompts below, what challenges did you identify?

- What is the economic outlook in the community you serve?
- What governmental, political, or social changes might lend support or create challenges?
- What do demographic and enrollment trends suggest?

Paste your narratives from your workbook in the fields below.

Areas of Excellence

What does your institution do well?

The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) demonstrates a remarkable level of excellence across its culture, climate, and foundational academic practices, making these areas the school's greatest sources of pride. This success is built on an unwavering commitment to a positive, student-centered environment and a highly collaborative internal staff culture.

At the core of the school's success is its outstanding Culture and Climate. The institution has a cohesive Shared Purpose and Direction focused on the "whole-child" and preparing students for successful citizenship, an approach that enjoys high stakeholder alignment. This mission translates into an environment where Positive Relationships thrive, evidenced by a 93% favorability rating for creating a safe and positive environment. The school is intentional about individualized support: 75% of stakeholders agree there is a formal structure ensuring each student is "well-known by at least one adult advocate". This supportive culture, which promotes psychological safety, allows students to participate with high eagerness, confidence, and comfort taking risks in their lessons. Furthermore, the school demonstrates a high degree of fidelity in creating an inclusive environment, emphasizing the value of different cultures, backgrounds, and abilities, which is supported by dedicated analysis for the Indian Education for All (IEFA) program.

Complementing this student-focused climate is a strong Internal Staff Culture and Collaboration. The staff shows strength in Learning-Focused Relationships through the high-fidelity operation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which consistently show high yearly averages (above 4.5) for structural and supportive relational conditions. This distributed leadership structure is highly effective, as 82% of staff believe that learners' needs successfully drive the allocation of resources. Leaders actively affirm and influence this positive culture by formally recognizing teams for their strong sense of teamwork and dedication using awards like the Governor's Award Nominees. Non-academically, the school's Learner

Support is robust and is externally validated by compliance with IDEA regulations, and it provides systematic transition guidance through the MSDB LEAP Handbook.

In terms of Student Academic Achievement, the school should be most proud of its Instructional Effectiveness and the resulting consistent in-year academic growth. The primary strength is confirmed by the MSDB MAP Performance Data, which shows a consistent trend of positive academic growth experienced by students in both Reading and Math during the Fall-to-Spring academic year. This success is directly attributed to the staff's universal adherence to a high-fidelity explicit instruction model. Finally, the institution is adept at Resource Alignment and Utilization, using student performance data as the primary driver for curriculum review and renewal, ensuring the curriculum remains focused on enabling reliable academic progress.

Areas for Improvement

What areas have been identified for improvement?

The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) faces significant challenges in translating its positive culture and effective instructional delivery into consistent, long-term results. The areas needing the most improvement center on three interconnected issues: systemic data utilization, long-term academic attainment, and inconsistent instructional fidelity, compounded by weaknesses in external engagement and staff perception of leadership.

The most critical systemic weakness is the inconsistent and low fidelity of data-driven decision-making. This is not merely an academic issue but a culture and leadership challenge. The continuous improvement process is severely limited because staff faithfulness in using student data is poor. Only 36% of staff rate the systematic process for collecting and analyzing data as proficient or effective. This creates a system-wide data literacy gap that prevents the consistent and effective monitoring and adjustment of instruction. Reinforcing this gap, the fidelity of Consistent Instructional Fidelity is low; a recent observation cycle found that only 40% of classrooms were consistently applying the new specialized reading strategy with fidelity.

These internal instructional and cultural gaps directly translate into major issues in student academic performance. Despite generating consistent positive growth during the Fall-to-Spring academic year, the school struggles with sustained knowledge retention. This is evidenced by volatile and deteriorating Spring-to-Spring (year-over-year) trends in the MAP data, indicating a failure to permanently integrate and build upon skills over time. Ultimately, this leads to a major academic attainment gap, with the overall average ACT Composite score at 12.13, which is significantly below what is required for competitive post-secondary readiness. The current curriculum is not accumulating the depth of cumulative knowledge required to meet these end-point expectations. Furthermore, while students are engaged, the instructional environment suffers from a fidelity of implementation gap concerning Student Agency. Students are too often following a procedural lead (dependent compliance) rather than independently applying high-level critical thinking (independent cognitive rigor). Finally, two key non-academic areas need improvement. In terms of External Stakeholder Engagement, the school is not fully meeting expectations, demonstrated by low parental participation. Internally, Leadership processes face significant staff perception challenges regarding fairness, effectiveness, and communication. Only 59% of staff found instructional expectations to be clearly and consistently communicated, indicating a perception gap that must be closed to build staff confidence in leadership's expertise and processes.

Challenges

What challenges does your institution face? What challenges might your institution face in the coming years?

Challenges for the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) in the Coming Years

The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind faces significant challenges rooted in state and federal policy, broader societal trends, and the economic climate, in addition to its inherent mission of providing specialized education.

1. Political Context

The political and policy environment presents systemic risks to MSDB's funding stability and accountability mandates. Public Education Funding Instability:

The school is vulnerable to legislative changes that threaten the stability of general public education funds. This includes the national expansion of school choice programs, such as private school vouchers and Education Savings Accounts (ESAs), which are seen as creating a risk of deep cuts to public education funding and diverting resources.

Contraction in State Revenue:

MSDB must manage its budget while navigating a financial environment where state general fund revenue has been constrained by recent state legislative changes (specifically, the redirection of hundreds of millions of dollars in property tax revenue to a separate, non-general fund for public education).

Policy Debate on Accountability:

A constant tension exists between the need for MSDB to maintain robust, transparent accountability standards and state-level policy trends that may seek to weaken those objective systems, potentially obscuring data on school quality and student performance.

Advocacy and Legal Compliance:

The school must continuously ensure its practices align with specialized student protections, such as the principles outlined in the National Association of the Deaf's (NAD) Bill of Rights for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children, which mandates access to a critical mass of language peers, deaf adult role models, and dual language acquisition (ASL and English).

2. Societal Context

The school's mission is fundamentally challenged by the unique developmental barriers faced by its student population, as well as the demands of a rapidly modernizing world.

Communication and Language Barriers (Deaf/HOH):

The primary societal challenge for deaf students is overcoming barriers to interpersonal access. This involves addressing the unreliability of lip-reading (only 30–40% distinguishable) and ensuring that students who use ASL as their primary language do not experience delayed literacy and numeracy in English. The school must actively counter the risk of social isolation and ensure students have the necessary peer and adult language role models.

Environmental and Developmental Barriers (Blind/VI):

For visually impaired students, the challenge is overcoming barriers to environmental access and "incidental learning" (learning observationally). The school must provide constant adaptations for materials (Braille, large print, audio) and implement specialized training to close developmental gaps in motor skills and concept acquisition, which can be inhibited by a lack of visual information.

Technological Accessibility Gaps:

As educational systems increasingly adopt advanced technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR), MSDB faces the continuous challenge of ensuring these tools are fully adapted and accessible for students who rely on specialized input/output methods, preventing the new technology from creating new access gaps.

Pedagogical Modernization:

The school must move away from traditional, "one-size-fits-all" instruction to fully embrace adaptive, student-centered models like personalized learning and competency-based education, a complex task given the highly specialized nature of its curriculum.

3. Economic Context

The regional and state economic landscape creates operational hurdles, particularly concerning staffing and financial management.

Teacher and Specialist Shortages:

Montana's economy is characterized by a strong, tight labor market and persistent worker shortages. This exacerbates the existing, critical shortage of highly specialized staff (like qualified ASL instructors, certified teachers of the visually impaired, and specialized therapists), which makes recruitment, retention, and competitive compensation a top priority and significant budget strain for the school.

Wage Pressure:

While Montana has experienced nation-leading wage growth, keeping real wages ahead of inflation, this success translates into higher operational costs for MSDB, increasing the pressure to offer competitive salaries to attract and retain specialized educators and staff in a competitive labor market.

Student Performance Analysis

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind 230315 REMOTE AER (Jul 1, 2025 - Jun 30, 2026)
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, Great Falls, United States of America

Last Modified: 11/02/2025
Status: Open

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Student Performance Analysis

Student Performance Analysis

Below are steps you should have completed in your workbook for this analysis.

2. Identify and Evaluate Data Sources (Process)

In your workbook, you should have made a list of assessments that your institution uses to measure student performance. That list should include:

- Using data from summative assessments that support the mission of your institution (such as core academics or performance assessments specific to the purpose of the institution).
- Consider including comparison data to like institutions that have similar learner populations.

For each data source you listed, you should have included:

- The number of administrations you have for comparison, or describe when the data were collected (trend data).
- Any comments that will help you clean and classify the results into themes.

Type or copy and paste the description of your data sources from your workbook.

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of student academic growth and achievement at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) using three key assessment tools: the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), the Montana Assessment System (MAST), and the ACT. This analysis leverages three years of longitudinal data (2023, 2024, 2025) for the MAP and ACT assessments, and the inaugural year of state-mandated MAST data (2025). The findings are contextualized within the school's specialized mission: to foster the learning and growth of the whole child with a hearing and/or vision loss, preparing them to become successful citizens.

A. 2025 ACT Analysis (2023-2025 Longitudinal Data)

The ACT analysis, based on nine participating students, provides a critical benchmark against state and national college-readiness standards.

- Overall Performance: The MSDB students achieved an overall average Composite score of 12.13.
- State and National Comparison: This average is significantly lower than the Montana State Average of 19.5 and the National Average of 19.4. The MSDB score is 7.37 points below the state average.
- Sectional Scores: Sectional averages were highest in Reading (16.63) and English (16.50), followed by Math (14.00). Writing, based on seven students, was the lowest at 5.00.
- Context: The report explicitly notes that this variance should be considered within the context of the school's specialized mission and the unique educational needs of its student population.

B. 2025 MAST Analysis (2025 Data)

The 2024-2025 MAST Mathematics assessment is the first year of state-mandated data, providing a baseline for future longitudinal study. The data suggests a need for targeted instructional intervention as average scores across grade levels consistently lagged behind the state average.

- Grade 4 Mathematics: This grade level showed the most significant area for growth. The school's average scale score was 267, which is notably lower than the State of Montana's average of 308. All five tested students were rated at the Novice achievement level (100%). Relative strengths were observed in Comparing Decimals and Fractions (40%) and Solve Measurement Problems involving time or money (40%).

- **Grade 5 Mathematics:** The school's average scale score was 299, 7 points below the state average of 306. Achievement showed a bimodal split, with 50% of tested students scoring at the Novice level and 50% achieving Proficient status.
- **Grade 7 Mathematics:** This grade level also exhibited a strong bimodal distribution. The school's average scale score was 303, 6 points below the state average of 309. Achievement levels showed that 67% of students scored at the Novice level, while 33% achieved Advanced status.
- **Grade 4 ELA (Reading):** A highly positive trend was observed in the five assessed content clusters for Informational Reading, which showed consistent progression and no regression from the Beginning of Year to the End of Year.

C. 2025 MAP Analysis (2023-2025 Longitudinal Data)

The MAP data provides a three-year perspective on student academic growth, contrasting short-term in-year success with long-term retention challenges.

- **Positive Short-Term Growth:** Students demonstrated a consistent ability to make gains during the Fall-to-Spring academic year in Reading, Math, and Language Usage. A majority of students achieved positive growth in Reading from 2023-2025.
- **Retention Challenges:** The Spring-to-Spring (year-over-year) trend was much more volatile. In 2025, positive and negative growth were evenly split at 41% in Reading. Math saw a sharp and concerning increase in negative growth in the year-over-year comparison, rising to 50% in 2025.
- **Language Usage Strength:** Language Usage was the most stable assessment, maintaining a consistent majority of students achieving positive growth in the Fall-to-Spring comparison across all three years.
- **Instructional Focus:** Consistently recurring instructional priorities include strengthening foundational skills in K-5 and emphasizing complex text analysis and sustained math proficiency in 6-10.

Assessment Package Evaluative Criteria

Transfer the ratings for your institution's four Evaluative Criteria for Assessment Packages from your workbook.

EC1: Assessment Quality and Alignment

- **Level 4 - The array of assessments used by the institution to determine learners' performances include all those required by governmental or other agencies. The assessments are fully aligned to required curricula and adopted learning standards. Almost all assessments used demonstrate validity, reliability, absence of bias and instructional sensitivity*.**
- **Level 3 - The array of assessments used by the institution to determine learners' performance include all those required by governmental or other agencies. The assessments are mostly aligned to required curricula and adopted learning standards. Most assessments used demonstrate validity, reliability, absence of bias and instructional sensitivity*.**
- **Level 2 - The array of assessments used by the institution to determine learners' performance include some of those required by governmental or other agencies. The assessments are somewhat aligned to required curricula and adopted learning standards. Some assessments used demonstrate validity, reliability, absence of bias and instructional sensitivity*.**
- **Level 1 - The array of assessments used by the institution to determine learners' performance do not include those required by governmental or other agencies. The assessments are not aligned to required curricula and adopted learning standards. Few assessments used demonstrate validity, reliability, absence of bias and instructional sensitivity*.**

COMMENTS

EC2: Test Administration

- Level 4 - Almost all the assessments used by the institution to determine learners' performance have been administered with complete fidelity. The learners to whom these assessments were administered accurately represent the populations served by the institution. Evidence of appropriate accommodations have been provided for all assessments so that valid inferences can be made about all learners' performance regarding curricular outcomes.
- **Level 3 - Most of the assessments used by the institution to determine learners' performance have been administered with fidelity. In most instances, the learners to whom these assessments were administered represent the populations served by the institution. Evidence of appropriate accommodations have been provided for most assessments so that valid inferences can be made about most learners' performance regarding curricular outcomes.**
- Level 2 - Some of the assessments used by the institution to determine learners' performance have been administered with fidelity. In some instances, the learners to whom these assessments were administered represent the populations served by the institution. Some accommodations have been provided for assessments so that valid inferences can be made about some learners' performance regarding curricular outcomes.
- Level 1 - Few, if any, assessments used by the institution to determine learners' performance have been administered with fidelity. The learners to whom these assessments were administered are not representative of the populations served by the institution. Few accommodations have been provided for assessments so that valid inferences cannot be made about learners' performance regarding curricular outcomes.

COMMENTS

EC3: Results of Learning

- **Level 4 - Evidence of learning indicates no significant achievement gaps among subpopulations of learners, or the achievement gaps have substantially declined. Almost all trend data shows improvement in learner performance.**
- Level 3 - Evidence of learning indicates achievement gaps exist among subpopulations of learners, and these achievement gaps have noticeably declined. Most trend data shows improvement in learner performance.
- Level 2 - Evidence of learning indicates achievement gaps exist among subpopulations of learners, and these achievement gaps demonstrate a modest decline. Trend data shows neutral or minimally improving learner performance.
- Level 1 - Evidence of learning indicates achievement gaps exist among subpopulations of learners and that minimal or no change has occurred in these achievement gaps. Trend data shows declining learner performance.

COMMENTS

EC4: Academic Performance and Growth Outcomes

- Level 4 - Evidence clearly demonstrates exceptional student growth across multiple years and measures. Student achievement data demonstrates substantially higher performance than expected, with analyzed data showing strong mastery of grade-level content across multiple measures.
- **Level 3 - Evidence shows consistent student growth across multiple years and measures. Student achievement data demonstrates at or above expected performance, with analyzed data showing appropriate mastery of grade-level content.**
- Level 2 - Evidence shows inconsistent or limited student growth over time. Student achievement data demonstrated below expected performance, with limited analysis showing inconsistent mastery of grade-level content.
- Level 1 - Evidence shows minimal student growth and/or insufficient trend data. Student achievement data demonstrates substantially below expected performance, with poor analysis showing inadequate mastery of grade-level content.

COMMENTS

4a. Analyze and Synthesize Information-part 1

Your analysis and synthesis put the pieces of assessment information you amassed together to create a holistic "picture" of student performance in your organization in the form of themes. You should have used the following prompts and questions to guide your thinking and writing:

- Areas of Noteworthy Achievement
 - Provide specific results that demonstrate positive trend(s) in student performance over multiple years.
 - Which area(s) were above the expected levels of performance?
 - Which subgroup(s) showed a trend toward increasing performance?
 - Between which subgroups was the achievement gap closing?
 - Discuss why you believe these trends have occurred.
 - Which of the above reported findings are supported by other data sources (e.g., perception data, observation data)?
 - Based on assessment results, what improvement decisions/initiatives have been implemented to improve instruction and related programs (e.g., professional development)?
 - Based on assessment results, what positive outcomes have occurred as a result of improvements in instruction?

Enter your findings (answers to the prompts and question above) below or copy and paste from your workbook into the field below.

Across all three assessments, the data highlights the school's effectiveness in driving short-term, targeted academic progress. The most compelling evidence of positive trends is seen in the consistent Fall-to-Spring growth documented by the MAP assessment. This data confirms that in-year, focused instruction is effective, particularly in Language Usage, which maintained a majority of students achieving positive growth over the three-year period (2023-2025). This ability to respond to immediate instruction is further demonstrated by the Grade 4 ELA MAST results, where all five assessed clusters in Informational Reading showed consistent progression and no regression throughout the year. Furthermore, the school's continued participation in the state-mandated ACT, providing its specialized population the opportunity to engage with college-readiness benchmarks, demonstrates a positive systemic trend toward providing comprehensive and ambitious educational opportunities.

Given the unique learning challenges inherent in a specialized school for students with sensory disabilities, performance at the Proficient or Advanced level on state-mandated, grade-level tests is a strong indicator of achievement significantly above expected levels of performance for this student population. The 2025 MAST Mathematics results show exceptional pockets of high-level mastery:

- 50% of Grade 5 students achieved Proficient status.
- 33% of Grade 7 students achieved Advanced status.

This bimodal distribution demonstrates that a substantial percentage of MSDB students are not only capable of meeting the same rigorous state-mandated standards as their peers but are, in the case of Grade 7, achieving the highest possible mastery level. Additionally, the consistently high rate of positive growth in MAP's Fall-to-Spring window indicates that a

majority of students are consistently meeting or exceeding their individual, in-year growth targets, which represents performance above a static measure of expected achievement.

The academic data for the past five years reveals a complex but encouraging picture of student achievement, demonstrating the school's effectiveness in driving targeted, short-term growth while highlighting critical systemic challenges. The primary positive trend is the school's high effectiveness in generating short-term academic growth within a single academic year, evidenced by consistent Fall-to-Spring gains in MAP Reading and Language Usage and year-long progression in Grade 4 ELA MAST clusters. This positive outcome is directly supported by the findings of the coaching sessions documented by the reading grant consultant, which attributes instructional success to a strong, school-wide instructional environment built on the use of an explicit instruction model ("I Do, We Do, You Do") and a deep commitment to differentiation and accessibility. This approach has successfully created a positive, safe, and affirming classroom atmosphere, leading to high student eagerness and comfort in taking risks.

Furthermore, the AIR Needs Assessment validates this instructional strength, noting that staff consistently implement research-based, standards-aligned curriculum with differentiated instruction in literacy (Tier 1 practice). The 2025 stakeholder comprehensive needs assessment corroborates the high quality of instruction, particularly as perceived by external stakeholders, with Parents/Guardians giving a 100% Favorability Score for lessons promoting individual creativity and the use of digital tools. This instructional quality has translated into significant achievement spikes, such as students achieving Proficient (Grade 5) and Advanced (Grade 7) status in Mathematics on the state-mandated MAST assessment. The analysis of the MAP, MAST, and ACT data reveals a complex yet encouraging picture of student achievement at MSDB. The school has proven highly effective in driving short-term academic growth within a single academic year, as evidenced by consistent Fall-to-Spring gains in MAP Reading and Language Usage, and year-long progression in Grade 4 ELA MAST clusters. Most notably, the high-level mastery demonstrated on the MAST assessment, where students achieved Proficient (Grade 5) and Advanced (Grade 7) status in Mathematics, highlights the extraordinary potential and success of the school's specialized instruction.

4b. Analyze and Synthesize Information-part 2

You should have used the following prompts and questions to guide your thinking and writing:

- Areas in Need of Improvement

- Provide specific results that demonstrate any negative trend(s) in student performance.
- Which area(s) were below the expected levels of performance?
- Which subgroup(s) showed a trend toward decreasing performance?
- Between which subgroups was the achievement gap becoming greater?
- Discuss why you believe these trends have occurred.
- Which of the above reported findings are supported by other data sources (e.g., perception data, observation data)?
- Based on assessment results, what changes in instruction have you found to be ineffective and consequently discontinued?

Enter your findings (answers to the prompts and question above) below or copy and paste from your workbook into the field below.

Conversely, two major negative trends persist in student achievement: a systemic issue with long-term skill retention and the existence of significant foundational gaps. This is seen in the sharp increase in negative Spring-to-Spring growth in MAP Math and Reading (41-50%) and the consistently low ACT Composite score (12.13 vs. State 19.5). These academic gaps are directly linked to systemic weaknesses identified in the school's improvement initiatives. The comprehensive needs assessment identifies a fundamental weakness in using student data for instruction, which received the single lowest stakeholder favorability rating (36% Overall Favorability), with a majority of certified staff reporting they were "Unsure or Not Implemented" in this critical practice. This weakness is echoed in the MTSS Needs Assessment, which judged the overall implementation of the MTSS framework as generally low, specifically calling out data-based decision making (1.33 rating) and screening (1.33 rating) as the lowest-rated components. The instructional challenges from the reading coaching sessions also contribute to these long-term issues, noting that instruction suffers from excessive teacher prompting, which limits the transition to student independence and higher cognitive rigor needed for sustained retention and application of skills. This lack of systemic planning and data use is further underscored by the low favorability score for the process of curriculum review and renewal (36%), indicating a crucial area for future focus to translate successful short-term instruction into lasting academic success.

However, the data also points to two critical areas for improvement:

- **Skill Retention:** The sharp increase in negative Spring-to-Spring growth in MAP Math (rising to 50%) and Reading (41%) suggests a systemic issue with retaining and building upon skills over the summer or across grade levels.
- **Foundational Gaps:** The consistently lower performance on the ACT (Composite 12.13 vs. State 19.5) and the high percentage of students at the Novice level on the MAST reinforce the need to focus on strengthening foundational knowledge in K-5 and complex text analysis and sustained math proficiency in 6-10, as already identified by the MAP recommendations.

5. Interpret Findings, Prioritize, and Develop a Theory of Action

You have your information organized and neatly arranged under themes, and determined findings: that is, “what we do well, and where we need to improve.” Refer to the Accreditation Workbook for more information on writing findings. Consider the following suggestions:

- List all your findings' statements.
- Prioritize the findings statements:
 - Select the findings you feel are most important to begin your improvement process.
 - Select only the number of findings you have the capacity to address.
- Perform root cause analysis on the findings to determine how to address the improvement areas and sustain noteworthy achievements.
- Describe your intended results and next steps (theory of action).

Enter your findings (answers to the prompts and question above) below or copy and paste from your workbook into the field below.

ToA 1: Elevating Instructional Rigor and Student Independence

IF school leadership invests in and mandates targeted, sustained professional development and coaching that focuses on shifting classroom practice from high teacher-led scaffolding (e.g., excessive prompting) to evidence-based strategies that build student independence and cognitive rigor, THEN teachers will consistently design and facilitate learning experiences that require students to apply, analyze, and evaluate complex content rather than simply recall it. SO THAT students develop the sustained critical thinking and self-directed learning skills necessary to perform successfully on high-stakes assessments and demonstrate proficiency in long-term skill retention.

ToA 2: Establishing a Systemic, Data-Informed Curriculum Coherence Model

IF the school establishes a mandatory, collaborative, and cross-departmental system for curriculum review, renewal, and vertical alignment that is driven by student performance data and common assessment results, THEN grade-level and subject-specific teams will identify and effectively address crucial foundational knowledge gaps and ensure the curriculum is coherently sequenced without unnecessary repetition or significant gaps between grade levels. SO THAT the school dramatically reduces the instances of academic regression during non-instructional periods and translates effective short-term progress into reliable, year-over-year academic growth.

Theories of Action for Sustaining and Scaling Strengths

ToA 3: Maximizing Effective In-Year Instruction and Supportive Climate

IF school leadership formally identifies, codifies, and scales the elements of its existing successful instructional model, such as the use of explicit instruction (I Do, We Do, You Do), strong practices in differentiation and accessibility, and a consistently positive, affirming, and supportive classroom climate, THEN these high-leverage practices will become standard across all classrooms and departments. SO THAT the school maintains and strengthens its ability to meet or exceed individual student growth targets within a single academic year, leveraging its positive school culture to maximize student engagement and attendance.

6. Putting It All Together

Using the results of your efforts above, create a clear, concise document in the field below. Consider creating a narrative document that use the following outline:

Introduction: Briefly describe the assessments you used, indicating which ones are required by state or ministry regulation.

First section: Briefly present evidence you have analyzed and synthesized, highlighting methods of disaggregating data into meaningful subgroups to extract key insights.

Second Section: Discuss your findings from your analysis and synthesis of noteworthy achievements and areas for improvement.

Third section: Discuss your interpretations of the root causes of your findings and your theories of action guiding your continuous improvement going forward.

This has already been mentioned, but it bears repeating: For data to be useful to the personnel in your institution for continuous improvement, and useful to your Cognia Engagement Review team, the *analyses* of those data should be presented, not just the *raw results*.

Type or copy and paste your final analysis from your workbook into the field below.

Comprehensive Analysis of Student Growth and Assessment Performance (2023-2025)

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of student academic growth and achievement at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) using three key assessment tools: the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), the Montana Assessment System (MAST), and the ACT. This analysis leverages three years of longitudinal data (2023, 2024, 2025) for the MAP and ACT assessments, and the inaugural year of state-mandated MAST data (2025). The findings are contextualized within the school's specialized mission: to foster the learning and growth of the whole child with a hearing and/or vision loss, preparing them to become successful citizens.

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The ACT analysis, based on nine participating students, provides a critical benchmark against state and national college-readiness standards.

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Furthermore, the AIR Needs Assessment validates this instructional strength, noting that staff consistently implement research-based, standards-aligned curriculum with differentiated instruction in literacy (Tier 1 practice). The 2025 stakeholder comprehensive needs assessment corroborates the high quality of instruction, particularly as perceived by external stakeholders, with Parents/Guardians giving a 100% Favorability Score for lessons promoting individual creativity and the use of digital tools. This instructional quality has translated into significant achievement spikes, such as students achieving Proficient (Grade 5) and Advanced (Grade 7) status in Mathematics on the state-mandated MAST assessment. The analysis of the MAP, MAST, and ACT data reveals a complex yet encouraging picture of student achievement at MSDB. The school has proven highly effective in driving short-term academic growth within a single academic year, as evidenced by consistent Fall-to-Spring gains in MAP Reading and Language Usage, and year-long progression in Grade 4 ELA MAST clusters. Most notably, the high-level mastery demonstrated on the MAST assessment, where students achieved Proficient (Grade 5) and Advanced (Grade 7) status in Mathematics, highlights the extraordinary potential and success of the school's specialized instruction.

Conversely, two major negative trends persist in student achievement: a systemic issue with long-term skill retention and the existence of significant foundational gaps. This is seen in the sharp increase in negative Spring-to-Spring growth in MAP Math and Reading (41-50%) and the consistently low ACT Composite score (12.13 vs. State 19.5). These academic gaps are directly linked to systemic weaknesses identified in the school's improvement initiatives. The comprehensive needs assessment identifies a fundamental weakness in using student data for instruction, which received the single lowest stakeholder favorability rating (36% Overall Favorability), with a majority of certified staff reporting they were "Unsure or Not Implemented" in this critical practice. This weakness is echoed in the MTSS Needs Assessment, which judged the overall implementation of the MTSS framework as generally low, specifically calling out data-based decision making (1.33 rating) and screening (1.33 rating) as the lowest-rated components. The instructional challenges from the reading coaching sessions also contribute to these long-term issues, noting that instruction suffers from excessive teacher prompting, which limits the transition to student independence and higher cognitive rigor needed for sustained retention and application of skills. This lack of systemic planning and data use is further underscored by the low favorability score for the process of curriculum review and renewal (36%), indicating a crucial area for future focus to translate successful short-term instruction into lasting academic success.

However, the data also points to two critical areas for improvement:

- **Skill Retention:** The sharp increase in negative Spring-to-Spring growth in MAP Math (rising to 50%) and Reading (41%) suggests a systemic issue with retaining and building upon skills over the summer or across grade levels.
- **Foundational Gaps:** The consistently lower performance on the ACT (Composite 12.13 vs. State 19.5) and the high percentage of students at the Novice level on the MAST reinforce the need to focus on strengthening foundational knowledge in K-5 and complex text analysis and sustained math proficiency in 6-10, as already identified by the MAP recommendations.

ToA 1: Elevating Instructional Rigor and Student Independence

IF school leadership invests in and mandates targeted, sustained professional development and coaching that focuses on shifting classroom practice from high teacher-led scaffolding (e.g., excessive prompting) to evidence-based strategies that build student independence and cognitive rigor, THEN teachers will consistently design and facilitate learning experiences that require students to apply, analyze, and evaluate complex content rather than simply recall it. SO THAT students

develop the sustained critical thinking and self-directed learning skills necessary to perform successfully on high-stakes assessments and demonstrate proficiency in long-term skill retention.

ToA 2: Establishing a Systemic, Data-Informed Curriculum Coherence Model

IF the school establishes a mandatory, collaborative, and cross-departmental system for curriculum review, renewal, and vertical alignment that is driven by student performance data and common assessment results, THEN grade-level and subject-specific teams will identify and effectively address crucial foundational knowledge gaps and ensure the curriculum is coherently sequenced without unnecessary repetition or significant gaps between grade levels. SO THAT the school dramatically reduces the instances of academic regression during non-instructional periods and translates effective short-term progress into reliable, year-over-year academic growth.

Theories of Action for Sustaining and Scaling Strengths

ToA 3: Maximizing Effective In-Year Instruction and Supportive Climate

IF school leadership formally identifies, codifies, and scales the elements of its existing successful instructional model, such as the use of explicit instruction (I Do, We Do, You Do), strong practices in differentiation and accessibility, and a consistently positive, affirming, and supportive classroom climate, THEN these high-leverage practices will become standard across all classrooms and departments. SO THAT the school maintains and strengthens its ability to meet or exceed individual student growth targets within a single academic year, leveraging its positive school culture to maximize student engagement and attendance.

Learning Environment Observations Analysis

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind 230315 REMOTE AER (Jul 1, 2025 - Jun 30, 2026)
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, Great Falls, United States of America

Last Modified: 11/03/2025
Status: Ready for Review

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Learning Environment Observations Analysis

Learning Environment Observations Analysis

Learning Environment Observations Evaluative Criteria

Transfer the ratings for your institution's three Evaluative Criteria for Learning Environment Observations from your workbook.

EC1: Instrument Quality (rate as Level 4 if using Cognia's eleot, erel, or digital learning observation tool)

- Level 4 - The specific purpose of the instrument(s) used is clearly to measure learner engagement in learning environments. Sufficient information has been reviewed to ensure the instrument(s) is reliable and valid.
- Level 3 - The primary purpose of the instrument(s) used is to measure learner engagement in learning environments. Information has been reviewed to ensure the instrument(s) is reliable and valid.
- **Level 2 - The instrument(s) used is, at least in part, to measure learner engagement in learning environments. Some information has been reviewed to ensure the instrument(s) is reliable and valid.**
- Level 1 - The instrument(s) is not designed to measure learner engagement in learning environments.

EC2: Certification of Observers

- **Level 4 - Almost all observations were conducted by observers who were trained and certified in using the instrument.**
- Level 3 - Many observations were conducted by observers who were trained and certified in using the instrument.
- Level 2 - Some observations were conducted by observers who were trained and certified in using the instrument.
- Level 1 - Few observations were conducted by observers who were trained and certified in using the instrument.

EC3: Observations

- **Level 4 - The tool is used with fidelity for the time period indicated in the tool's instructions (e.g. "a minimum of 20 minutes per observation"). Data presented are from multiple observations conducted over an extended period of time, such as a school year. Observations represent a broad and representative range of content, grade level and time of observation (beginning, middle, end of lesson or period).**
- Level 3 - The tool is used for the time period indicated in the tool's instructions/guidelines (e.g. "a minimum of 20 minutes per observation"). Most data presented are from multiple observations conducted over an extended period of time, such as a school year. Observations represent a range of content, grade level and time of observation (beginning, middle, end of lesson or period).
- Level 2 - The tool is sometimes used in accordance with the instrument's instructions/guidelines. Some data presented are from multiple observations conducted over an extended period of time, such as a school year. Observations represent a range of content that includes at least core subject areas, grade level and time of observation (beginning, middle, end of lesson or period).
- Level 1 - The tool is rarely used in accordance with the instrument's instructions/guidelines. Data presented represent one administration of observations. Observations represent a limited range of content, grade level and time of observation (beginning, middle, end of lesson or period).

3. Select and Clean Data Sources

You may have several pages of charts, graphs, and tables. When selecting learning environment observation data to include, you should have considered the following criteria:

- Provided longitudinal results using the same instrument from multiple administrations, if available, to allow for analysis of trends.
- Disaggregated data by content, grade level, and time of observation (beginning, middle, end of lesson or period).

4. Analyze and Synthesize Information

Your analysis and synthesis put the pieces of information you amassed together to create a holistic “picture” of your organization in the form of themes. You should have used the following prompts and questions to guide your thinking and writing:

- Areas of Noteworthy Achievement
 - Which area(s) were above the expected levels of learner engagement?
 - Describe the area(s) that showed a positive trend in learner engagement.
 - Which area(s) indicated the overall highest learner engagement?
 - Which subgroup(s) showed a trend toward increasing learner engagement?
 - Which of the above reported findings were consistent with findings from other data sources?

Enter your findings from your workbook below.

The analysis found that two universal strengths create a powerful foundation for student learning. First, the consistent success in fostering a positive, safe, and affirming classroom atmosphere is undeniable. Educators universally establish excellent rapport with students and effectively utilize positive reinforcement systems, which translates directly into the most pervasive universal trend in learner engagement: a high level of eagerness, participation, and comfort demonstrated by students. Students feel comfortable taking risks and engaging freely in lessons, effectively minimizing initial behavioral barriers to engagement. Second, many teachers consistently adhere to an explicit instruction model, structured through the balanced lesson design (often the “I Do, We Do, You Do” format), with a core focus on foundational literacy skills such as phonics, sound-spelling, and High-Frequency Words. This explicit approach is supported by a strong commitment to differentiation and accessibility, evidenced by the use of individualized support, small-group work, and the modification of materials or use of assistive technology, along with other communication considerations such as Braille and American Sign Language.

The positive findings of teacher coaching cycles were reinforced by the Community Needs Assessment completed in the Fall of 2025 and supported by the student attendance data. The school's environment and core instructional framework represent significant strengths, establishing a powerful and nurturing foundation for student success. The consistent success in fostering a positive, safe, and affirming classroom atmosphere is undeniable (LEA). This is a foundational achievement, resulting in educators establishing excellent rapport with students and effectively using positive reinforcement. This climate minimizes behavioral barriers and encourages a high level of eagerness and participation. Students feel comfortable taking risks and engaging freely in lessons (LEA), a qualitative finding that is strongly validated by the consistent year-over-year increase in attendance (from 88.09% in 2324 to 92.78% in 2526), indicating students are increasingly willing to attend an environment they feel safe and connected to. The CNA further supports this, showing a 93% Favorability Score for maintaining facilities that contribute to a safe environment. Instructionally, many teachers consistently adhere to an explicit instruction model (LEA), structured via balanced lesson design (e.g., “I Do, We Do, You Do”), with a core focus on foundational literacy skills such as phonics and sound-spelling. This strong approach is paired with an institutional commitment to differentiation and individualized support, a strength confirmed by the CNA’s 86% Favorability Score for the provision of high-quality student support services (e.g., counseling and referrals).

- Areas in Need of Improvement
 - Which area(s) were below the expected levels of learner engagement?
 - Describe the area(s) that showed a negative trend in learner engagement.
 - Which area(s) indicated the overall lowest learner engagement?
 - Which subgroup(s) showed a trend toward decreasing learner engagement?
 - Which of the above reported findings were consistent with findings from other data sources?

Enter your findings from your workbook below.

Recurring Instructional Challenges: Moving from Dependent to Independent Engagement

Despite the significant success in securing general engagement, the analysis pinpoints a major recurring challenge that limits student independence and cognitive rigor: the issue of dependent engagement driven by excessive teacher prompting. While prompting successfully keeps students involved and ensures correct answers during guided practice, this over-reliance prevents the shift to true student independence. Students are attentive and engaged, but often wait for the teacher's next cue rather than initiating their own responses, problem-solving, or self-correction. Because of this, general engagement is high, but it is not consistently sustained during the transition to full independence and higher cognitive tasks. To address this, a key area for growth is refining the scaffolding process by reducing unnecessary teacher verbal support and increasing wait time, which are crucial strategies to move students from guided practice to genuine, sustained independence.

Closely related, instruction needs to be strengthened to ensure students move beyond surface-level participation to genuine, deep cognitive engagement and develop long-term retention. Teachers need to refine instruction to ensure students can independently apply Tier 2/academic vocabulary in new contexts. Additionally, the collaborative learning phase ("You Do Together") often lacks the specific structure or purpose required to maximize peer-to-peer learning, which can limit peer-to-peer teaching and the application of new skills. There is also a continuous need to transition students from foundational skills toward deeper reading comprehension and expanding their verbal language through promoting 3-4 exchange conversational loops.

Finally, the documents highlight specific logistical and specialized needs. For literacy-focused classrooms, the teaching and successful implementation of writing skills often presented a greater challenge compared to reading. In specialized, activity-based classes (e.g., Physical Education), teachers faced difficulty in integrating required content components, such as robust literacy or writing elements, into their lesson structures. Other logistical requirements included the need for consistent, daily delivery of Tier 3 reading intervention and the focused use of progress monitoring tools. Minor adjustments were also suggested, such as optimizing lesson pacing by reducing the length of explicit instruction and refining specific foundational routines (like correct phonics segmentation) to ensure clarity for all students.

Similar to the positive findings supported by the comprehensive needs assessment, the CNA also supports the needs of improvement that surfaced with the coaching cycles. The principal area needing improvement is the transition of students from dependent compliance to independent cognitive rigor (LEA). While the explicit instruction model is effective for foundation-building, coaching cycles reveal a pervasive trend of excessive teacher prompting and scaffolding (LEA). This practice, intended to support, inadvertently limits the shift to true student independence. The LEA stresses the need to move students beyond surface-level participation to genuine, deep cognitive engagement and long-term retention. This deficit is significantly corroborated by the CNA, which shows low favorability scores for key indicators of independence and higher-order thinking: instructional strategies requiring collaboration, self-reflection, and critical thinking skills scored only 47% Favorability. Furthermore, the expectation for students to work together to solve problems and to explain their thinking both scored a low 41% Favorability. This suggests a systemic gap in implementing practices that promote student autonomy. The LEA also noted that the collaborative learning phase (the "You Do Together") often lacks the specific structure or purpose required to maximize peer-to-peer learning. Finally, the LEA notes that the teaching and successful implementation of writing skills often presented a greater challenge compared to reading.

5. Interpret Findings, Prioritize, and Develop a Theory of Action

You have your information organized and neatly arranged under themes, and determined findings: that is, "what we do well, and where we need to improve." Refer to the Self-Assessment Workbook for more information on writing findings. Consider the following suggestions:

- List all your findings statements
- Prioritize the findings statements:
 - Select the findings you feel are most important to begin your improvement process.
 - Select only the number of findings you have the capacity to address.
- Perform root cause analysis on the findings to determine how to address the improvement areas and describe your intended results and next steps (theory of action).

Enter your priorities and theories of action (answers to the prompts and question above) from your workbook.

The comprehensive review of the learning environment, supported by instructional, community, and attendance data, yields four critical findings. First, the school has achieved a remarkable success in fostering a safe, positive, and affirming classroom environment. This is not only observed qualitatively in the Learning Environment Analysis (LEA), but is quantitatively proven by a consistent, three-year increase in average student attendance, rising from 88.09% to 92.78%, a tangible indicator that students feel comfortable and willing to attend. This safety is further supported by the Community Needs Assessment (CNA), which shows strong favorability scores for safe facilities and high-quality student support services.

Secondly, the instructional foundation is strong due to the consistent use of an explicit instruction model and a commitment to differentiation and personalized support. This is a critical strength noted in the LEA for foundational skill building and is backed by the CNA's high favorability for addressing individual learning needs.

Thirdly, the primary area for instructional improvement is the pervasive issue of dependent student engagement driven by excessive teacher prompting. This practice prevents students from transitioning to true cognitive rigor and independent problem-solving. The LEA's call to reduce scaffolding is heavily supported by the CNA data, which reports significantly low favorability scores (41% to 47%) for instructional strategies requiring critical thinking, collaboration, and self-reflection. Finally, the development of peer coaching infrastructure is an implied but critical need. The LEA notes the instructional gap in promoting independence, and the CNA's low 34% Favorability score for staff providing peer coaching to teachers suggests the school lacks the internal, collaborative system necessary for educators to refine and implement the advanced instructional strategies required to address the identified independence gap.

Theories of Action for Improving the Schools Education

ToA 1. Increasing Student Independence and Cognitive Rigor

If teachers strategically plan and execute scaffolding reduction protocols (moving students intentionally from explicit instruction to independent problem-solving), then their practice will shift from content-level prompting to monitoring independent work and providing targeted, metacognitive feedback that pushes students toward analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

ToA 2. Developing a Peer Coaching Infrastructure

If the school develops and implements a structured, non-evaluative peer coaching infrastructure that provides professional development on the coaching cycle and effective feedback skills, then teachers will regularly engage in collaborative cycles of observation, reflection, and feedback focused on implementing high-leverage practices, such as the scaffolding reduction protocols.

Theories of Action for Sustaining and Scaling Strengths

ToA 3. Positive Climate and Explicit Instruction

If teachers consistently apply the Explicit Instruction Model (the "I Do, We Do, You Do" structure, leveraging skilled direct modeling) within a consistently positive, safe, and affirming classroom climate (which includes encouraging risk-taking and using positive reinforcement systems), then students will feel safe, confident, and supported, leading to increased academic risk-taking and deeper engagement during the modeled and guided practice phases.

ToA 4. Differentiation and Foundational Skills

If teachers proactively and systemically use data from strong foundational skills instruction to deliver high-quality, targeted differentiation in small-group and individualized settings, then all students, regardless of need, will achieve mastery of foundational skills and be able to access and be productive with grade-level content through effective scaffolding and the use of assistive technologies.

Putting It All Together

Using the results of your efforts above, create a clear, concise document in the field below. Consider creating a narrative document that use the following outline:

First section: evidence you have analyzed and synthesized

Second section: findings from your analysis and synthesis

Third section: interpretations of the root cause of your findings and your theory of action

Type or copy and paste your final analysis from your workbook here.

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format (Stakeholder Subgroups)

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format

MSDB Student Enrollment 3-Year

Coaching Cycle Document Analysis

This comprehensive analysis of combined coaching cycle documents reveals a strong, unified instructional environment built on explicit teaching and differentiated practice, yet identifies a critical need to transition student participation from dependent compliance to independent cognitive rigor. The analysis of coaching cycle documents from 2021-2025 included information for twenty-four teachers. A total of one-hundred and fifty-two documents were analyzed for this analysis.

Achievement

The analysis found that two universal strengths create a powerful foundation for student learning. First, the consistent success in fostering a positive, safe, and affirming classroom atmosphere is undeniable. Educators universally establish excellent rapport with students and effectively utilize positive reinforcement systems, which translates directly into the most pervasive universal trend in learner engagement: a high level of eagerness, participation, and comfort demonstrated by students. Students feel comfortable taking risks and engaging freely in lessons, effectively minimizing initial behavioral barriers to engagement. Second, many teachers consistently adhere to an explicit instruction model, structured through the balanced lesson design (often the "I Do, We Do, You Do" format), with a core focus on foundational literacy skills such as phonics, sound-spelling, and High-Frequency Words. This explicit approach is supported by a strong commitment to differentiation and accessibility, evidenced by the use of individualized support, small-group work, and the modification of materials or use of assistive technology, along with other communication considerations such as Braille and American Sign Language.

The positive findings of teacher coaching cycles were reinforced by the Community Needs Assessment completed in the Fall of 2025 and supported by the student attendance data. The school's environment and core instructional framework represent significant strengths, establishing a powerful and nurturing foundation for student success. The consistent success in fostering a positive, safe, and affirming classroom atmosphere is undeniable (LEA). This is a foundational achievement, resulting in educators establishing excellent rapport with students and effectively using positive reinforcement. This climate minimizes behavioral barriers and encourages a high level of eagerness and participation. Students feel comfortable taking risks and engaging freely in lessons (LEA), a qualitative finding that is strongly validated by the consistent year-over-year increase in attendance (from 88.09% in 2324 to 92.78% in 2526), indicating students are increasingly willing to attend an environment they feel safe and connected to. The CNA further supports this, showing a 93% Favorability Score for maintaining facilities that contribute to a safe environment. Instructionally, many teachers consistently adhere to an explicit instruction model (LEA), structured via balanced lesson design (e.g., "I Do, We Do, You Do"), with a core focus on foundational literacy skills such as phonics and sound-spelling. This strong approach is paired with an institutional commitment to differentiation and individualized support, a strength confirmed by the CNA's 86% Favorability Score for the provision of high-quality student support services (e.g., counseling and referrals).

Need of Improvement

Recurring Instructional Challenges: Moving from Dependent to Independent Engagement

Despite the significant success in securing general engagement, the analysis pinpoints a major recurring challenge that limits student independence and cognitive rigor: the issue of dependent engagement driven by excessive teacher prompting. While prompting successfully keeps students involved and ensures correct answers during guided practice, this over-reliance prevents the shift to true student independence. Students are attentive and engaged, but often wait for the teacher's next cue rather than initiating their own responses, problem-solving, or self-correction. Because of this, general engagement is high, but it is not consistently sustained during the transition to full independence and higher cognitive tasks. To address this, a key area for growth is refining the scaffolding process by reducing unnecessary teacher verbal support and increasing wait time, which are crucial strategies to move students from guided practice to genuine, sustained independence.

Closely related, instruction needs to be strengthened to ensure students move beyond surface-level participation to genuine, deep cognitive engagement and develop long-term retention. Teachers need to refine instruction to ensure students can independently apply Tier 2/academic vocabulary in new contexts. Additionally, the collaborative learning phase ("You Do Together") often lacks the specific structure or purpose required to maximize peer-to-peer learning, which

can limit peer-to-peer teaching and the application of new skills. There is also a continuous need to transition students from foundational skills toward deeper reading comprehension and expanding their verbal language through promoting 3-4 exchange conversational loops.

Finally, the documents highlight specific logistical and specialized needs. For literacy-focused classrooms, the teaching and successful implementation of writing skills often presented a greater challenge compared to reading. In specialized, activity-based classes (e.g., Physical Education), teachers faced difficulty in integrating required content components, such as robust literacy or writing elements, into their lesson structures. Other logistical requirements included the need for consistent, daily delivery of Tier 3 reading intervention and the focused use of progress monitoring tools. Minor adjustments were also suggested, such as optimizing lesson pacing by reducing the length of explicit instruction and refining specific foundational routines (like correct phonics segmentation) to ensure clarity for all students.

Similar to the positive findings supported by the comprehensive needs assessment, the CNA also supports the needs of improvement that surfaced with the coaching cycles. The principal area needing improvement is the transition of students from dependent compliance to independent cognitive rigor (LEA). While the explicit instruction model is effective for foundation-building, coaching cycles reveal a pervasive trend of excessive teacher prompting and scaffolding (LEA). This practice, intended to support, inadvertently limits the shift to true student independence. The LEA stresses the need to move students beyond surface-level participation to genuine, deep cognitive engagement and long-term retention. This deficit is significantly corroborated by the CNA, which shows low favorability scores for key indicators of independence and higher-order thinking: instructional strategies requiring collaboration, self-reflection, and critical thinking skills scored only 47% Favorability. Furthermore, the expectation for students to work together to solve problems and to explain their thinking both scored a low 41% Favorability. This suggests a systemic gap in implementing practices that promote student autonomy. The LEA also noted that the collaborative learning phase (the "You Do Together") often lacks the specific structure or purpose required to maximize peer-to-peer learning. Finally, the LEA notes that the teaching and successful implementation of writing skills often presented a greater challenge compared to reading.

Findings

The comprehensive review of the learning environment, supported by instructional, community, and attendance data, yields four critical findings. First, the school has achieved a remarkable success in fostering a safe, positive, and affirming classroom environment. This is not only observed qualitatively in the Learning Environment Analysis (LEA), but is quantitatively proven by a consistent, three-year increase in average student attendance, rising from 88.09% to 92.78%, a tangible indicator that students feel comfortable and willing to attend. This safety is further supported by the Community Needs Assessment (CNA), which shows strong favorability scores for safe facilities and high-quality student support services.

Secondly, the instructional foundation is strong due to the consistent use of an explicit instruction model and a commitment to differentiation and personalized support. This is a critical strength noted in the LEA for foundational skill building and is backed by the CNA's high favorability for addressing individual learning needs.

Thirdly, the primary area for instructional improvement is the pervasive issue of dependent student engagement driven by excessive teacher prompting. This practice prevents students from transitioning to true cognitive rigor and independent problem-solving. The LEA's call to reduce scaffolding is heavily supported by the CNA data, which reports significantly low favorability scores (41% to 47%) for instructional strategies requiring critical thinking, collaboration, and self-reflection.

Finally, the development of peer coaching infrastructure is an implied but critical need. The LEA notes the instructional gap in promoting independence, and the CNA's low 34% Favorability score for staff providing peer coaching to teachers suggests the school lacks the internal, collaborative system necessary for educators to refine and implement the advanced instructional strategies required to address the identified independence gap.

Theories of Action for Improving the Schools Education

ToA 1. Increasing Student Independence and Cognitive Rigor

If teachers strategically plan and execute scaffolding reduction protocols (moving students intentionally from explicit instruction to independent problem-solving), then their practice will shift from content-level prompting to monitoring independent work and providing targeted, metacognitive feedback that pushes students toward analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

ToA 2. Developing a Peer Coaching Infrastructure

If the school develops and implements a structured, non-evaluative peer coaching infrastructure that provides professional development on the coaching cycle and effective feedback skills, then teachers will regularly engage in collaborative cycles

of observation, reflection, and feedback focused on implementing high-leverage practices, such as the scaffolding reduction protocols.

Theories of Action for Sustaining and Scaling Strengths

ToA 3. Positive Climate and Explicit Instruction

If teachers consistently apply the Explicit Instruction Model (the "I Do, We Do, You Do" structure, leveraging skilled direct modeling) within a consistently positive, safe, and affirming classroom climate (which includes encouraging risk-taking and using positive reinforcement systems), then students will feel safe, confident, and supported, leading to increased academic risk-taking and deeper engagement during the modeled and guided practice phases.

ToA 4. Differentiation and Foundational Skills

If teachers proactively and systemically use data from strong foundational skills instruction to deliver high-quality, targeted differentiation in small-group and individualized settings, then all students, regardless of need, will achieve mastery of foundational skills and be able to access and be productive with grade-level content through effective scaffolding and the use of assistive technologies.

Stakeholder Feedback Analysis

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind 230315 REMOTE AER (Jul 1, 2025 - Jun 30, 2026)
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, Great Falls, United States of America

Last Modified: 11/02/2025
Status: Open

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Stakeholder Feedback Analysis 3

Stakeholder Feedback Analysis

Stakeholder Feedback Analysis

Below are steps you should have used in this analysis.

1. Understand the Purpose for Your Analysis

You have made a careful analysis of your stakeholder perception or survey results. Here are some activities you should have considered:

- Agree to approach the process and analysis reporting with honesty and transparency.
- Determine the level of commitment of the personnel in your institution to using the results of this analysis to improve.
- Review the four Evaluative Criteria for Surveys and Perception Data.

2. Identify and Evaluate Data Sources

In your workbook, you should have made a list of all possible data sources (surveys, focus groups, etc.). That list should have included these data sources:

- The populations you have collected perception data from. Cognia requires that you collect at least learner perceptions, family perceptions, and teacher perceptions.
- The number of administrations of surveys or focus groups you have for comparison (trend data).
- Comments about the overall validity and reliability of the results and make note of potential areas for improvement.

In your workbook, you should have briefly described how the participants to whom these surveys were administered accurately represented all their respective populations. You could have included information like the size of the population, how participants were identified, the number of surveys administered, the number of responses received, and other information that may have impacted the analysis.

Enter your description of participants and method of collecting feedback here. You can copy and paste your response from your workbook or type directly into the field below.

Spring 2022 CNA OPI Result Format

Spring 2023 CNA OPI Result Format

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format

Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format (Stakeholder Subgroups)

Stakeholder Feedback Evaluative Criteria

Transfer the ratings for your institution's Stakeholder Feedback Evaluative Criteria from your workbook.

EC1: Item Quality (rate as Level 4 if using Cognia surveys)

- ☐ Level 4 - Items in almost all surveys and focus group protocols have been tested and proven as reliable and valid.
- ☒ **Level 3 - Items in most surveys and focus groups have been tested and proven as reliable and valid.**
- ☐ Level 2 - Items in some surveys and focus groups have been tested and proven as reliable and valid.
- ☐ Level 1 - Items in few or no surveys and focus groups have been tested and proven as reliable and valid.

EC2: Administration

- ☒ **Level 4 - Surveys were administered to all members of the total population of the institution.**
- ☐ Level 3 - Surveys were administered to most participants that represented the total population of the institution.

- Level 2 - Surveys were administered to some participants that represented the total population of the institution.
- Level 1 - Surveys were administered to a small group of participants that did not accurately represent the total population of the institution.

EC3: Number of Responses

- **Level 4 - The total response rate was 75% or more and all participant populations were well represented.**
- Level 3 - The total response rate was between 50% and 75% of all respondent populations. Almost all population groups were represented.
- Level 2 - The total response rate was between 25% and 50% of the survey group.
- Level 1 - The total response rate was between 0% and 25% of the survey group.

EC4: Equity of Respondents

- Level 4 - Results indicate no significant gaps exist among subpopulations of respondents.
- **Level 3 - Results indicate minimal gaps exist among subpopulations of respondents, and trend data indicate these gaps have noticeably declined.**
- Level 2 - Results indicate gaps exist among subpopulations of respondents, and these perception gaps demonstrate a modest decline.
- Level 1 - Results indicate gaps exist among subpopulations of respondents and that minimal or no change has occurred in these gaps.

3. Select and Clean Data Sources

It is likely you have considered the following criteria:

- Organized the items of your surveys under themes. You may have used Cognia's key characteristics (Culture, Leadership, Engagement, Growth), then added others. Cognia's surveys are already aligned to these key characteristics.
- Provided longitudinal results of the same questions from multiple administrations, if available, to allow for analysis of trends.
- Provided tables, graphs or other depictions that provide response data with longitudinal results that are disaggregated by appropriate subgroups (families, learners, teachers, etc.).

4. Analyze and Synthesize Information

Your analysis and synthesis put the pieces of information you amassed together to create a holistic "picture" of your organization in the form of themes. You should have used the following questions to guide your thinking and writing:

- Areas of Noteworthy Achievement
 - In which area(s) do stakeholders feel the institution is doing really well?
 - Which area(s) indicate the overall highest feedback ratings?
 - What successes are highlighted?
 - Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other data sources?

Enter your findings from your workbook below.

The Community Needs Assessment data highlights several areas of noteworthy achievement, demonstrating where stakeholders feel the school is performing well and indicating the overall highest feedback ratings. The school can successfully highlight its dedication to its core mission, the strength of its student support systems, and the positive outcomes of modern instructional practices. The areas of noteworthy achievement, demonstrated by high and consistent favorability scores (Proficient Implementation + Effective or Sustained Practice).

The data indicates that the school is achieving strong success in three key areas:

High-Quality Student Support Services: The school's provision of non-instructional services is the most consistently and highly rated area across the entire community. The school provides high-quality student support services (e.g., counseling, referrals, educational, and career planning) with an 86% Favorability Score in the Overall Report. This rating is strongly supported across groups, including 91% favorability from "Other Stakeholders" and 86% from MSDB Administration, demonstrating a reliable and effective function of the school.

Clarity and Commitment to the School's Purpose: There is extremely strong alignment and satisfaction regarding the school's guiding principles and mission. The school's purpose statement, which is based on shared values and beliefs that guide decision-making, received a remarkable 93% Favorability Score in the Overall Report. This success is particularly highlighted by Parents/Guardians, who gave it a perfect 100% favorability. Furthermore, the purpose statement's clarity itself shows a high degree of confidence, with 47% of overall responses rating it as "Effective or Sustained Practice."

Provision of Resources: The community generally agrees that the school is meeting the needs for essential learning materials and technology planning. The school provides sufficient material resources to meet student needs, earning an overall 76% Favorability Score. This is backed by strong scores from Certified Staff (83% Favorability) and Administration (71% Favorability). Additionally, the plan for the acquisition and support of technology shows high external support, with Other Stakeholders rating the plan with an 82% Favorability Score.

Instructional Creativity and Digital Tools: While staff self-ratings were lower, the Parent/Guardian group highly commends the quality of classroom instruction in modern areas. Parents gave a 100% Favorability Score for instructional strategies and learning activities that promote individual creativity and encourage problem-solving, as well as for the use of digital tools in lessons. This indicates a notable achievement in delivering engaging, high-quality instruction as experienced by the families.

• Areas in Need of Improvement

- In which area(s) do stakeholders feel the institution needs to improve?
- Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest feedback ratings?
- What needs for improvement are highlighted?
- Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other data sources?

Enter your findings from your workbook below.

The data from all stakeholder groups consistently identifies three critical areas that require immediate and comprehensive improvement, largely revolving around internal processes, data usage, and systemic planning. These areas show the lowest overall favorability scores, high rates of "Basic Implementation," and significant levels of uncertainty ("I Am Unsure or Not Implemented").

Data-Driven Instruction and Assessment Training. This is the area with the single lowest overall favorability score, indicating a fundamental weakness in using data to guide learning and instruction. **Staff Use of Student Data (Q34):** This is the lowest-scoring area, with only 36% Overall Favorability for the statement "All staff members use student data to address the unique learning needs of students". **Teacher Training to Use Data (Q13):** Supporting the low use of data, training is also seen as deficient, with an overall 39% Favorability Score for "Teachers receive training to use data to modify instructional practice". **Data Collection Process (Q11):** The systematic process for data collection and analysis also suffers, receiving only 43% Overall Favorability, with high percentages reporting "Basic Implementation" (36%) and "Unsure/Not Implemented" (29%).

Systematic Processes for Curriculum and Continuous Improvement. Stakeholders lack confidence or awareness in the school's formal, systemic processes for planning and renewal, which is essential for long-term growth. **Curriculum Review and Renewal (Q19):** This is another extremely low-scoring area, with only 36% Overall Favorability for "The school has a systematic process for curriculum review and renewal to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment". **Professional Learning Plan (Q54):** The professional learning plan is seen as insufficient in ensuring continuous improvement in student learning, scoring 49% Overall Favorability.

Continuous Improvement Process (Q23): The overall systematic and comprehensive process to ensure continuous improvement has a moderate 50% Overall Favorability.

Collaboration Time and Shared Responsibility. Issues related to the time allotted for collaboration and clarity of shared duties also emerged as a need for improvement, particularly among staff. **Master Schedule for Collaboration (Q49):** The

overall favorability for "The school's master schedule ensures sufficient time for collaboration among staff" is 52%. This score is driven down by Certified Staff (Teachers/Consultants), who report only 39% Favorability, indicating a major need for planning time. Focus of Collaboration (Q47): The quality of collaboration is also weak, with 53% Overall Favorability for collaboration being "focused on planning and monitoring instruction and student learning". Shared Responsibility (Q30): Promoting shared responsibility for student learning through policies and procedures received only 47% Overall Favorability, suggesting a lack of clarity in how all staff contribute to student success.

5. Interpret Findings, Prioritize, and Develop a Theory of Action

You have your information organized and neatly arranged under themes, and determined findings: that is, "what we do well, and where we need to improve." Refer to the Accreditation Workbook for more information on writing findings. Consider the following suggestions:

- List all your findings' statements.
- Prioritize the findings statements:
 - Select the findings you feel are most important to begin your improvement process.
 - Select only the number of findings you have the capacity to address.
- Perform root cause analysis on the findings to determine how to address the improvement areas, and describe your intended results and next steps (theory of action).

Enter your priorities and theories of action (answers to the prompts and question above) from your workbook.

The most salient finding in the Community Needs Assessment is the high level of perceptual divergence—a gap greater than 25%—between groups, which primarily occurs in two distinct themes: the perceived quality of Instructional Output versus Process Self-Assessment, and the Visibility of Internal Processes to External Stakeholders.

The first theme is exemplified by the drastic difference in evaluating instructional quality. Parents/Guardians consistently reported a 100% Favorability Score for lessons that promote creativity/problem-solving and the use of digital tools in instruction. This indicates that the educational outcomes, as observed by the students' primary caregivers, are exceptionally high and meet their expectations for a modern, engaging curriculum. However, the school's Administration rated the same practices significantly lower, at 43% and 57% favorability, respectively.

The second, and perhaps more systemic, theme is the near-total lack of awareness among "Other" Stakeholders (e.g., community partners, BPE members) regarding the school's internal, data-driven processes. This group reported 0% Favorability for key questions like Teacher Training to Use Data and the existence of a Systematic Data Collection Process. This contrasts sharply with Classified Staff who reported 60% and 50% favorability on these same items, respectively. The 60% discrepancy here demonstrates a communication breakdown; internal staff are aware of these processes, but external partners are not, leading to the perception that these fundamental systems are entirely absent. Similarly, Parents/Guardians gave 0% Favorability to the school's Systematic and Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Process, a 43% gap from the Administration's self-reported 43% favorability, confirming that crucial planning and improvement efforts are not being transparently shared with the community they serve.

The data reveals significant uncertainty and lack of awareness across the community regarding key operational and instructional systems, where more than seven people reported being "Unsure or Not Implemented" for specific questions. This level of uncertainty primarily centers on the formal processes that govern data use, curriculum, and continuous improvement, suggesting a major breakdown in communication and visibility of core systemic functions.

Equally concerning are the gaps in Systematic Planning and Renewal.

List of Finding Statements from the CNA Analysis

Areas of Noteworthy Achievement (Strengths)

High-Quality Student Support Services: The school's provision of non-instructional services (counseling, referrals, educational, and career planning) is the most consistently and highly rated area, with an 86% Overall Favorability Score.

Clarity and Commitment to the School's Purpose: There is extremely strong alignment and satisfaction regarding the school's mission, which received a remarkable 93% Overall Favorability Score. Parents/Guardians specifically gave this item a perfect 100% favorability.

Instructional Creativity and Digital Tools: Parents/Guardians gave a 100% Favorability Score for instructional strategies that promote individual creativity/problem-solving and for the use of digital tools in lessons.

Provision of Resources: The community generally agrees that the school is meeting the needs for essential learning materials, with a 76% Overall Favorability Score for sufficient material resources.

Technology Planning: The plan for the acquisition and support of technology shows high external support, with Other Stakeholders rating the plan with an 82% Favorability Score.

Critical Needs for Improvement (Weaknesses)

Data-Driven Instruction and Decision Making: This is the area with the single lowest overall favorability score.

Systematic Processes for Curriculum and Renewal: The process for curriculum review and renewal is an extremely low-scoring area, with only 36% Overall Favorability.

Lack of Staff Training on Data Use: Training is seen as deficient, with an overall 39% Favorability Score for "Teachers receive training to use data to modify instructional practice."

Insufficient Staff Collaboration Time: The master schedule is failing to provide sufficient time for collaboration, with Certified Staff (Teachers/Consultants) reporting only 39% Favorability for this item.

III. Perceptual Gaps and Systemic Uncertainty

Visibility of Internal Processes to External Stakeholders: There is a communication breakdown regarding internal processes.

High Internal Uncertainty in Data Use: 56% of Certified Staff (10 individuals) reported being "Unsure or Not Implemented" for the statement that all staff members use student data.

External Uncertainty in Systematic Planning: Core educational systems are essentially invisible to external partners.

Theory of Action

If the school implements a mandatory, intensive professional learning program for all staff on evidence-based practices for collecting, analyzing, and applying student data to modify instruction, then all staff members will consistently use this data to address unique learning needs.

If the school implements a strategic, comprehensive communication plan that proactively and transparently shares the purpose, process, and results of key internal functions with all external stakeholders, then the current communication breakdown will be resolved, resulting in a substantial increase in external partners' awareness and favorability for these core systemic processes.

If the school continues to ensure sufficient material resources to meet student needs and maintains a clear, well-supported plan for the acquisition and support of technology, then it will establish a reliable, well-equipped instructional infrastructure that eliminates resource scarcity as a barrier to educational improvement and freeing up staff to focus exclusively on systemic challenges, such as improving data-driven instruction and curriculum renewal.

Putting It All Together

Using the results of your efforts above, create a clear, concise document in the field below. Consider creating a narrative document that use the following outline:

First section: evidence you have analyzed and synthesized

Second section: findings from your analysis and synthesis

Third section: interpretations of the root cause of your findings and your theory of action

Type or copy and paste your final analysis from your workbook here.

EC1: 3

EC2: 4

EC3: 4

EC4: 3

The Community Needs Assessment data highlights several areas of noteworthy achievement, demonstrating where stakeholders feel the school is performing well and indicating the overall highest feedback ratings. The school can successfully highlight its dedication to its core mission, the strength of its student support systems, and the positive outcomes of modern instructional practices. The areas of noteworthy achievement, demonstrated by high and consistent favorability scores (Proficient Implementation + Effective or Sustained Practice).

The data indicates that the school is achieving strong success in three key areas:

High-Quality Student Support Services: The school's provision of non-instructional services is the most consistently and highly rated area across the entire community. The school provides high-quality student support services (e.g., counseling, referrals, educational, and career planning) with an 86% Favorability Score in the Overall Report. This rating is strongly supported across groups, including 91% favorability from "Other Stakeholders" and 86% from MSDB Administration, demonstrating a reliable and effective function of the school.

Clarity and Commitment to the School's Purpose: There is extremely strong alignment and satisfaction regarding the school's guiding principles and mission. The school's purpose statement, which is based on shared values and beliefs that guide decision-making, received a remarkable 93% Favorability Score in the Overall Report. This success is particularly highlighted by Parents/Guardians, who gave it a perfect 100% favorability. Furthermore, the purpose statement's clarity itself shows a high degree of confidence, with 47% of overall responses rating it as "Effective or Sustained Practice."

Provision of Resources: The community generally agrees that the school is meeting the needs for essential learning materials and technology planning. The school provides sufficient material resources to meet student needs, earning an overall 76% Favorability Score. This is backed by strong scores from Certified Staff (83% Favorability) and Administration (71% Favorability). Additionally, the plan for the acquisition and support of technology shows high external support, with Other Stakeholders rating the plan with an 82% Favorability Score.

Instructional Creativity and Digital Tools: While staff self-ratings were lower, the Parent/Guardian group highly commends the quality of classroom instruction in modern areas. Parents gave a 100% Favorability Score for instructional strategies and learning activities that promote individual creativity and encourage problem-solving, as well as for the use of digital tools in lessons. This indicates a notable achievement in delivering engaging, high-quality instruction as experienced by the families.

The data from all stakeholder groups consistently identifies three critical areas that require immediate and comprehensive improvement, largely revolving around internal processes, data usage, and systemic planning. These areas show the lowest overall favorability scores, high rates of "Basic Implementation," and significant levels of uncertainty ("I Am Unsure or Not Implemented").

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Accreditation Portfolio

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind 230315 REMOTE AER (Jul 1, 2025 - Jun 30, 2026)
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, Great Falls, United States of America

Last Modified: 11/03/2025
Status: Ready for Review

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Accreditation Portfolio

Accreditation Portfolio

Upload all supporting documentation within timeframes prescribed by Cognia.

The following are required to be completed and submitted prior to the Engagement Review:

- Cognia Assurances
- Executive Summary
- Self-Assessment Diagnostic
- Student Performance Diagnostic (not required for standalone Corporations, Education Service Organizations, Charter School Authorizers, or State Education Agencies)
- Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic
- Learning Environment Observation Analysis (not required for standalone Corporations, Education Service Organizations, Charter School Authorizers, or State Education Agencies)
- Accreditation Portfolio

Instructions

Select **Evidence Included** or **N/A** where evidence is not applicable to complete the Accreditation Portfolio.

Upload of evidence is required, with a focus on analyzed results rather than raw data. You may attach documents or links to documents in other locations accessible to the evaluator(s). You may also add comments that will help the evaluator(s) understand why you included or did not include certain documentation.

1. Student Performance

Upload documentation of or links to results referenced in the student performance diagnostic including achievement, graduation, attendance, disciplinary information, etc. over the past 2 to 3 years.

- ☒ **Evidence Included**
- ☐ No evidence available
- ☐ N/A – Not Applicable

COMMENTS

Measuring student performance has been a regular conversation at MSDB. The instructional staff at MSDB has committed to assessing students at grade level standards knowing that the students have basic needs to work on. The focus has shifted to more of an individualized focus on the student and making sure documented improvement for all students can be completed. MSDB continues to work with makers of assessments, offering our services to help make their assessments accommodate our students at a higher level. This is and will continue to be a major hurdle for MSDB moving into the future. MSDB is fortunate to have a high attendance rate, 100% graduation rate, and very little discipline problems. Most discipline problems tend to be a result of the student's disability and/or frustration with communication.

ATTACHMENTS

Please be sure to upload the files in the Attachments section at the end of the diagnostic.

2. Improvement Plan

Upload documentation of or links to improvement or strategic plan that include major initiatives of the institution (including goals, strategies) and documented results to date.

- ☒ **Evidence Included**
- ☐ No evidence available

COMMENTS

After the last Cognia review, MSDB pursued AER (Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired) accreditation and also participated in the state reading grant. This required MSDB to look at both the Cognia and AER accreditations for alignments while also incorporating the main components of the reading grant. The State of Montana then enacted the House Bill 190 of the 2023 session which requires state agencies to produce annual plans with specific formatting. Although the strategic plan did not change as a result of HB190, we did have to add state specific items in a different format.

ATTACHMENTS

Please be sure to upload the files in the Attachments section at the end of the diagnostic.

3. Curriculum

Upload documentation of or links to curriculum plan/map/scope and sequence.

- **Evidence Included**
- No evidence available
- N/A – Not Applicable

COMMENTS

MSDB has been active with the Golden Triangle Curriculum Consortium for several years. The school has a staff member that serves as a curriculum coordinator. We try to make sure that the coordinator and interested staff members of subject areas attend the curriculum update meetings of the consortium. MSDB is making a change to competency based learning. We are using our Journey of a Learner (JOL) to learn the process to make this shift. During the summer of 2025, a group of staff learned the process and worked with the JOL and ELA subjects to apply these concepts. During the training, scanning the standards with neuro learning strategies to develop year long contexts was emphasised. This provides the what and the why we are teaching the standards in the classroom. I can statements from developing self navigation tools that help guide students with their own learning were developed.

ATTACHMENTS

Please be sure to upload the files in the Attachments section at the end of the diagnostic.

4. Policies

Upload documentation of or links to policies governing the institution.

- **Evidence Included**
- No evidence available

COMMENTS

MSDB partnered with the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA) starting in the Spring of 2023 and ending in the Winter of 2024 to update the MSDB policy manual. The school had policies that had not been reviewed since the 1990s. Working with MTSBA helped make sure that MSDB had policies updated to reflect state legislation that had taken place over that time. The policy manual now cross references itself with other policies and legislation making it easy to support decisions being made. The 3000 and 5000 series of the manual still needs to be updated to reflect the correct dates of original adoption, last revised, rescinded, and/or last reviewed. After the dates are corrected (by end of 2025), then all changes from the 2025 legislative session will be brought to the Board of Public Education to update.

ATTACHMENTS

Please be sure to upload the files in the Attachments section at the end of the diagnostic.

5. Organizational Practices and Procedures

Upload documentation of or links to organizational practices and procedures (e.g., handbooks).

- **Evidence Included**
- No evidence available

COMMENTS

MSDB has handbooks that are available for parents/students, personnel, clubs/activities, and volunteers. These handbooks are to reflect the most current policies and procedures for the school. Many of the accounting processes are controlled by the State of Montana and not in the control of the school. Most of the handbooks are ready to be updated now that the school policy manual has been updated.

ATTACHMENTS

Please be sure to upload the files in the Attachments section at the end of the diagnostic.

6. Professional Learning Plan and Schedule

Upload a description of or links to the institution's professional learning plan and schedule, including strengths and limitations.

- **Evidence Included**
- No evidence available

COMMENTS

ATTACHMENTS

Please be sure to upload the files in the Attachments section at the end of the diagnostic.

7. Evaluation and Supervision Process

Upload a description of or links to the institution's evaluation and supervision process, including strengths and limitations.

- **Evidence Included**
- No evidence available

COMMENTS

MSDB has evaluation tools that have been developed and based on reliable evaluation systems. However, the tools are not getting used the way they are intended. The evaluations need to be done in each area. For some staff, they have not received formal evaluations. A practice that must change to assist with staff development. This will also allow for school level analysis to happen looking for positive and negative trends. In addition to the evaluation tools, the school is working on developing walkthrough tools for all areas of the school, not just classrooms. This will also lead itself to school level analysis to identify school trends of success and needs of improvement.

ATTACHMENTS

Please be sure to upload the files in the Attachments section at the end of the diagnostic.

8. Budget

Upload a copy of or links to the most recent budget.

- Evidence Included
- No evidence available

COMMENTS

MSDB participates in the State of Montana Agency Budget Process. The process starts with MSDB creating proposals for the Governor to consider putting in his biannual budget. The Governor then will propose his budget for the legislature to consider. Ultimately, the legislature decides what MSDBs budget will be for each two year period. MSDB has been focused on putting money into the schools infrastructure, both in capital projects and major repairs. This past session, MSDB lobbied to receive extra funding for school staffing based on quality educator payments. As a result of that effort and HB 252, MSDB now has one of the leading starting salaries for certain groups of staff.

ATTACHMENTS

Please be sure to upload the files in the Attachments section at the end of the diagnostic.

9. License to Operate

Only for non-public/private schools: upload a copy of or links to the institution's license to operate. All other institutions select **N/A – Not Applicable**.

- Evidence Included
- No evidence available
- N/A – Not Applicable

COMMENTS

ATTACHMENTS

Please be sure to upload the files in the Attachments section at the end of the diagnostic.

10. Quality Assurance and Oversight Process

Only for Systems: upload a description of or links to the quality assurance and oversight process for all schools in the system. All other institutions select **N/A – Not Applicable**.

- Evidence Included
- No evidence available
- N/A – Not Applicable

COMMENTS

ATTACHMENTS

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11. Assurances

Upload or provide links for the following Cognia Assurance(s): #5 - Audit Letter, #6 - Crisis Management Plan and #7 - Training Certificate. Provide any additional information/documentation specific to your institution type (optional).

- **Evidence Included**
- No evidence available

COMMENTS

MSDB has been working to improve safety measures on campus. We have been working with the State of Montana Workers Compensation and Risk Management Tort Defense to update the schools Emergency Action Plan and Safety Manual. For both of them, we cross reference best practices for schools with the state agencies, using the Montana Office of Public Instruction safety information. We also utilize Raptor Technology and Layers Solutions software to maximize safety measures.

ATTACHMENTS

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12. Other (optional)

Upload or provide links to any additional targeted information/documentation that would support the Engagement Review Team in evaluating the institution's adherence to standards. If no further evidence, select **N/A – Not Applicable**.

- **Evidence Included**
- N/A – Not Applicable

COMMENTS

ATTACHMENTS

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ATTACHMENT SUMMARY

Attachment Name	Description	Item(s)
 2024-2029 Curriculum Calendars	5-Year Rotation of GTCC Curriculum reviews and updates for the consortium.	3
 2025 AIR External Report MTSS Program MSDB	The uploaded file is a Needs Assessment Summary of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) program at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), conducted by the Center on MTSS at AIR. The assessment, carried out between November 2024 and May 2025, evaluated MTSS implementation using a Fidelity of Implementation Rubric, an Infrastructure Staff Survey, staff interviews, and team observations.	12
 2025 Fall Semester Classes - DHH CORE 2526	This document is a detailed Fall Semester 2025 class schedule for Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), organized as a matrix showing the class subject (e.g., CORE, ELA, Math, Vocational), the teacher responsible, and the specific students enrolled in each section throughout the school day.	12
 2025 Fall Semester Classes - VI CORE 2526	This document is a detailed Fall Semester 2025 class schedule for Visually Impaired (VI) at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), organized as a matrix showing the class subject (e.g., CORE, ELA, Math, Vocational), the teacher responsible, and the specific students enrolled in each section throughout the school day.	12
 2025 Governors Award Nominees	The document lists the 2025 Montana Governor's Award Nominees from the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), presenting the individual and team staff members nominated for excellence in performance, along with the criteria and a brief explanation of the internal selection process.	12
 2025 MSDB Culture of Learning	This document is the Culture of Learning Self-Assessment Summary for the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), which presents the results of a survey on institutional practices, professional staff support, learner well-being, and cultural fairness, highlighting a generally positive sentiment while noting areas for improvement, such as concerns regarding staff dissent, partiality in communication methods (like sign language), and the need for stronger collegiality.	12
 2025 MSDB Engagement of Learning	This document is the Culture of Engagement of Learning Self-Assessment Summary for the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), which presents the results of a staff survey indicating a strong positive sentiment toward instructional engagement, highlighting that a majority of respondents value the curriculum's emphasis on cultural diversity, the support provided for students to reach their potential, and the use of environments that foster creativity and lifelong skills.	12
 2025 MSDB Growth of Learning	This document is the Culture of Growth in Learning Self-Assessment Summary for the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), which presents the results of a staff survey indicating a generally positive view of leadership and educational strategies in promoting growth, highlighting that a majority of respondents feel leaders effectively utilize data for decision-making and promote action research among staff, though qualitative feedback notes a need for better clarity on intervention strategies and refinement of the instructional program evaluation process.	12
 2025 MSDB LEAP Handbook	This document is the LEAP (Living, Employment, Academic Planning) Program Handbook for the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), outlining the post-high school transition program's welcome, goals, entrance requirements, participant expectations and conduct, program components.	12
 2025 MSDB Leadership for Learning	This document is the Culture of Leadership for Learning Self-Assessment Summary for the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), which presents the results of a staff survey indicating a generally positive view of leadership's effectiveness in cultivating individual and collective leadership, but also highlights areas for improvement, such as lack of consensus on leaders' expertise in evaluating staff and a need for better communication regarding resource management and the governing body's commitment to learners.	12
 2025 MSDB Safety Manual	Document that is ever evolving to meet the changing needs of MSDB and safety of the students and staff. The manual mirrors what is required by the State of Montana with the Montana Safety Culture Act. MSDB has a volunteer committee that consists of various stakeholders that will be meeting 3-4 times per year to update the manual as needed. MSDB participates in the quarterly State of Montana safety meetings conducted by the Workman Compensation Group.	11
 2025 MT READS GRANT Application Materials	This document is the Montana READS Grant application for the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind (MSDB), seeking \$1,000,000 over four years (2025-2029) to address significant literacy gaps among its unique student population of Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) and Visually Impaired (VI) students.	12
 2025 Office of Public Instruction Special Education Monitoring Report	The document is a Special Education Compliance Monitoring Report for the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, issued by the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) on March 6, 2025.	12
 2025 Student Awards Program	This document outlines the 2025 Student Awards Program at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), listing various awards, their presenters, criteria, and the names of the student and community recipients.	12
 23-24 GTCC Effectiveness Report	Overall report for the Golden Triangle Curriculum Consortium for the school year 2023-2024. MSDB is a part of the GTCC and participates in the main activities.	3
 24-25 GTCC Effectiveness Report	Overall report for the Golden Triangle Curriculum Consortium for the school year 2024-2025. MSDB is a part of the GTCC and participates in the main activities.	3
 24-25 PD List for Teachers	Document listing the various professional developments taken by the staff.	6
 2425 Dufresne Nominees	This document lists the staff nominees for the 2024-2025 Dufresne Award, presented in alphabetical order with statements from their nominators, notes on past winners, and details on the selection process via a Google form.	12
 25-26 Annual Education Salaries	Document shows the average salaries for all staff working in the education department and program, plus school administration. In addition to the average salary, minimum/maximum salaries for each group are reported. Lastly, the report shows the average number of years of experience at MSDB for each group.	8
 26 and 27 Adopted MSDB Budget	The document reflects what was approved by the legislature for MSDB's budget. It contains the request made by the governor and MSDB. In addition, during the session, MSDB was able to lobby and have just over \$60,000 per year added to the budget for professional development specific for educational interpreters.	8
 Coaching Cycle Document Analysis	The analyzed coaching cycle documents reveal a strong instructional foundation characterized by a positive, safe, and affirming classroom environment and the consistent, successful use of the explicit "I Do, We Do, You Do" balanced lesson design to teach foundational literacy skills.	6, 7
 Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format	The Community Needs Assessment Summary from the Fall 2025 ThoughtExchange indicates a generally positive perception of the school's operations, curriculum, and student support among all stakeholders.	12
 Fall 2025 CNA ThoughtExchange Format (Stakeholder Subgroups)	The Community Needs Assessment Summary from the Fall 2025 ThoughtExchange indicates a generally positive perception of the school's operations, curriculum, and student support among stakeholders. This file contains the assessment broken down into the various stakeholder groups.	12
 Furthmyre Engagement Review Training	Certificate of Superintendent Furthmyre Completion of the Asynchronous Engagement Review Training.	11
 Job Description Examples- Custodian and DHH Teacher	This document contains two separate job descriptions for positions at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB): one for a Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing in the Education Department, which includes details on salary, benefits, and required pedagogy, and another for a Custodian 1 in General Services, outlining responsibilities, physical demands.	12
 MSDB 23-24 GTCC Attendance	List of MSDB staff that participated in GTCC activities for the 2023-2024 school year.	3

 MSDB 23-24 PIR Schedule by Committee	A brief summary of the document reveals it contains the MSDB PIR Week 23-24 (Professional Improvement/Inservice) schedule and a subsequent training evaluation.	6
 MSDB 24-25 GTCC Attendance	List of MSDB staff that participated in GTCC activities for the 2024-2025 school year.	3
 MSDB 24-25 Induction Program Evaluation	The document is a feedback form related to an Induction Program for 2024 - 2025. It contains qualitative feedback in the form of notes, comments, or short answers.	6
 MSDB 24-25 Induction and Mentoring Information	The document is a detailed guide for the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind's (MSDB) two-day New Staff Induction Program and subsequent Mentoring Program for the 2024-2025 school year.	6
 MSDB 24-25 PIR Schedule by Committee	This document outlines the two-day (PIR) Schedule for staff that takes place on Wednesday, August 21, 2024, and Thursday, August 22, 2024.	6
 MSDB 25 - 26 New Staff Induction Agenda	The document outlines the MSDB Induction Program Agenda, a two-day orientation for new staff.	6
 MSDB 25-26 PIR Schedule by Committee	This document outlines the Pupil Instruction Related (PIR) Schedule for the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), taking place from August 20-22, 2025.	6
 MSDB ACT Performance Data 2023-2025	Document is a combination of a variety of information. Reports provided by ACT are included for the past three years. An analysis of the ACT data is also included.	1
 MSDB Administration Evaluation Tool	Evaluation tool to be used for school administrators.	7
 MSDB Clubs and Organization Handbook 2023	This handbook outlines the procedures used for our clubs and organizations at MSDB.	5
 MSDB Cognia Year 1 Annual Plan Review	This document is the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) 2022-2023 Annual Improvement Plan Self Reflection (Year 1 of a three-year strategic plan), detailing the school's progress, successes, and necessary changes across four strategic themes: Organizational Effectiveness, Communication, Instructional Effectiveness, and Student Growth and Support.	2
 MSDB ELA Early Learning Standards Year Long Context	After identifying the what and the why of the standards, a year long context will be developed for each course. This will help staff align and plan to make sure standards are being covered while clustering the standards in logical groupings. This is an example that our Deaf and hard of hearing preschool put together.	3
 MSDB Educational Staffing Qualifications	This document provides a detailed list of eligible Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) educational and specialist staff, classifying them by Montana certification class (e.g., Teacher, Administrative, Specialist) with corresponding names and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) numbers, and includes copies of active state licenses for nurses, therapists, and audiologists.	7
 MSDB Emergency Action Plan 2025	Working draft of the emergency action plan that has been created to assist with training staff and students what proper protocol would be during a variety of emergencies. The committee is doing a great job working with our technology department making sure that the Layer Solutions software matches the EAP.	11
 MSDB Financial Compliance Audit Complete	The last full audit completed for the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind by the Montana Legislative Services. As mentioned in the assurances, the state legislature changed the way audits happen for state agencies.	11
 MSDB Financial Compliance Audit Summary	Two page summary for the last audit at MSDB.	11
 MSDB Governors Budget Proposal 25	The document shows what the governor put in his budget proposal for MSDB. It reflects what agency requests were supported by the governor as well as other budget considerations (such as inflationary issues, etc). Between submitting the MSDB proposal and the release of the governor's budget, school officials worked to have longevity pay added to the teachers union contract. This is reflected in the document.	8
 MSDB HB 151 2025 Legislative Session	Copy of HB 151 that helped MSDB become eligible for quality educator payment. MSDB worked with Representative Keogh to make this bill possible. This helped increase funding for MSDB for more staff.	8
 MSDB IEFA Examples 2024	This document provides a collection of monthly lesson examples (September through March) for implementing the Indian Education for All (IEFA) curriculum, detailing specific classroom activities such as reading poems and stories, discussing Native American history and culture, studying traditional games and shelters, utilizing BrainPOP videos, and engaging in research projects, alongside general guidance for teachers on the sensitivity, truth, and accuracy required for teaching IEFA concepts.	3
 MSDB Interpreter Evaluation Tool	Evaluation tool to be used for educational interpreters.	7
 MSDB JOL Year Long Context Summer 2025	An example of taking our JOL and creating a year long context for all the domains found in the JOL. I can statements identify which will be used to help create self navigation tools that the students and staff will use to create student agency over their learning.	3
 MSDB Journey of a Learner	MSDB spent over a year developing our Journey of a Learner (Portrait of a Graduate) utilizing stakeholders from all over the state. The stakeholders represented our specific disabilities groups, trades/employers, post secondary opportunities, parents, students, community members, staff members, and others wanting to be involved. This is the final version of our Journey of a Learner. We are using this as our starting subject to transition to competency based curriculum and education.	3
 MSDB Legislative Approved Infrastructure 2021 - Present	Document shows a list of all the infrastructure projects approved and supported by the legislature and governor since 2021. Additionally, it lists the approved budget of each.	8
 MSDB Legislative Budget Asks 25	MSDB identifies various areas in each budget program area for the governor to consider. This document shows what MSDB requested to be considered for their budget.	8
 MSDB MAP Performance Data 2023-2025	Document is a combination of a variety of information. Cleaned reports from the NWEA MAP reporting system for reading, math, and language are included. An analysis for each year (2023, 2024, 2025) is included with the MAP data.	1
 MSDB MAST Performance Data 2025	Document is a combination of a variety of information. All reports provided by the Montana OPI Reporting system for MAST are included for all grades tested in both Math and Reading. A grade level analysis is included for each MAST subject.	1
 MSDB Mentoring Report by Montana State June 2024	This report presents the findings from a June 2024 external review of the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) mentoring program. The review involved interviews with 15 staff members (six teachers, six para-educators, and three specialists), including both mentors and mentees.	6
 MSDB Neuro K-12 ELA Skills Progression - Lit Reading	Beginning work in ELA towards implementation of competency based curriculum. The first step our staff will be learning is to consider the various learning strategies that will be needed to learn the content and highlighting them within the standards themselves. This is an example of that work.	3
 MSDB Outreach Evaluation Tool	Evaluation tool to be used for outreach consultants.	7
 MSDB PLC Examples from World Cafe's	The file presents examples of staff Professional Learning Community (PLC) presentations, drawn from "World Cafe" sessions, at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB).	6

 MSDB PLC+ Characteristics of Effective PLCs Staff Averages	This document presents a table tracking the Yearly Averages for various Characteristics of Effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) across five years, from 2022 to 2026.	6
 MSDB Paraprofessional Evaluation Tool	Evaluation tool to be used for school paraprofessionals.	7
 MSDB Personnel Handbook 2020	This handbook serves as the procedural manual for working with the personnel staff at MSDB. It was updated in 2020. However, many of the policies in the update were outdated and have since been updated by vote of the Board of Public Education. This handbook will be updated in the summer of 2026.	5
 MSDB Policy Manual October 2025	MSDB policy manual has been updated and approved by the Board of Public Education in open meetings since 2023.	4
 MSDB Strategic Plan 22-25 Non Cognia Format	Improvement Plan that contains all the Cognia, AER, reading grant, and requirements of HB190.	2
 MSDB Strategic Plan Improvement Plan Annual Plan	Improvement plan that includes all the information from the last Cognia review. This plan was built from scratch utilizing stakeholders to refine the vision, mission, and beliefs. The entire plan was built with input from surveys and other stakeholder involvement. MSDB utilized the Cognia strategic planning service to complete this process.	2
 MSDB Student Enrollment 3-Year	Document shows the enrollment status for MSDB for the past 3 years as reported in Infinite Campus. The report does not include any information with regards to LEAP participants.	1
 MSDB Student Family Handbook 2014	This handbook serves as the procedural manual for working with students and families. However, it was updated in 2014. During the summer of 2026, this handbook will be updated with the new policies adopted by the Board of Public Education over the past couple of years. Management will then ensure that it is updated annually with any policy changes.	5
 MSDB Teacher Evaluation Tool	Evaluation tool to be used for teachers.	7
 MSDB Volunteer Handbook 2023	This handbook was created as a result of the AER accreditation process in 2023. This handbook outlines the process for using with stakeholders that are wanting to volunteer with the school	5
 Spring 2022 CNA OPI Result Format	The "Comprehensive Needs Assessment Spring 21-22 (abbreviated)" is a report for the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind (Mont Sch for Deaf Blind, LE9258) that evaluates various subcomponents of school quality based on a staff survey. The 21 respondents were primarily Instructional and Support Staff.	12
 Spring 2023 CNA OPI Result Format	The document "Comprehensive Needs Assessment Spring 22-23 (abbreviated)" for the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind (Mont Sch for Deaf Blind, LE9258), summarizes the results of a staff survey conducted on May 5, 2023. The majority of the 20 total respondents were Teachers (18 out of 20, or 90.00%). The assessment measured school quality across several subcomponents, categorized into sections like Climate, Communication, Program/Content Standards, and Instruction.	12
 Teacher Survey IEFA 2025	This document presents the results of the 2024-2025 Indian Education for All (IEFA) Survey administered to teachers at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB), displaying the percentage and number of participants who agree with their responsibility for IEFA, the frequency of lesson execution and lesson plan submission, professional development attendance, and staff's self-reported understanding of the seven Essential Understandings regarding Montana American Indians.	3

Assurances for Schools in the United States

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind 230315 REMOTE AER (Jul 1, 2025 - Jun 30, 2026)
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, Great Falls, United States of America

Last Modified: 10/31/2025
Status: Ready for Review

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Assurances for Schools in the United States

Assurances for Schools in the United States

Instructions

Please select Yes or No in response to each of the Assurances below. For any Assurance with a response of "No," please describe the steps that will be taken to bring the institution in compliance with the Assurance. Complete and send to workspace is required in advance of the Accreditation Engagement Review.

1. The institution has read, understands, and complies with the [Cognia Accreditation and Certification Policies and Procedures](#).

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

COMMENTS

If the Assurance is not met, please describe the steps that will be taken to bring the institution into compliance, in the Comments field below.

2. The institution complies with all applicable governmental laws or regulations.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

COMMENTS

If the Assurance is not met, please describe the steps that will be taken to bring the institution into compliance, in the Comments field below.

3. The institution adheres to ethical marketing and communication practices to transparently disclose current and accurate information to the public.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

COMMENTS

If the Assurance is not met, please describe the steps that will be taken to bring the institution into compliance, in the Comments field below.

4. The governing authority adheres to written policies that govern its conduct, decision making, ethics, and authority; and engages in training aligned to its roles and responsibilities.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

COMMENTS

If the Assurance is not met, please describe the steps that will be taken to bring the institution into compliance, in the Comments field below.

5. The institution annually submits all financial transactions for an annual audit conducted by an accounting authority external to the institution.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

COMMENTS

If the Assurance is not met, please describe the steps that will be taken to bring the institution into compliance, in the Comments field below.

MSDB is a state agency. The legislature passed House Bill 132 of the 68th Legislative Session and became effective April 19, 2023. This changed the way the state conducted audits based on different risk factors of each agency. MSDB is considered a low risk agency by the MT Legislative Audit Division and has not had a Financial Compliance Audit since April of 2021. The Audit Division has always been our external evaluator.

6. The institution annually reviews and implements written management plans for security, crisis, safety and health for onsite and virtual environments that includes expectations, communications protocols, and training for students, staff and stakeholders.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

COMMENTS

If the Assurance is not met, please describe the steps that will be taken to bring the institution into compliance, in the Comments field below.

7. The institution participates in required training related to accreditation or certification by timeframes prescribed by Cognia.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

COMMENTS

If the Assurance is not met, please describe the steps that will be taken to bring the institution into compliance, in the Comments field below.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

Great Falls, Montana

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WITH
INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

June 30, 2025 and 2024



KCOE
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Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

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June 30, 2025 and 2024

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.
Great Falls, Montana

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit organization (the Foundation), which comprise the statement of financial position as of June 30, 2025; the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended; and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Foundation as of June 30, 2025, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP).

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Foundation and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Other Matter

The June 30, 2024, financial statements were reviewed by us and our report thereon, dated March 21, 2025, stated we were not aware of any material modifications that should be made to those statements for them to be in accordance with GAAP. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit and does not provide a basis for the expression of an opinion on the financial statements as a whole.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

(Continued)

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not absolute assurance, and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Foundation's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

KCoe Isom, LLP

October 21, 2025
Missoula, Montana

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.**STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

June 30	Audited 2025	Reviewed 2024
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 455,667	\$ 211,737
Investments	2,789,128	2,656,275
Total Current Assets	3,244,795	2,868,012
Other Assets		
Restricted investments	699,256	665,293
Other assets	-	3,000
Total Other Assets	699,256	668,293
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 3,944,051	\$ 3,536,305
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 3,005	\$ 2,250
Net Assets		
Without donor restrictions:		
Undesignated	3,241,790	2,868,762
With donor restrictions:		
Purpose and time restrictions	192,060	161,340
Perpetual in nature	507,196	503,953
Total Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	699,256	665,293
Total Net Assets	3,941,046	3,534,055
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 3,944,051	\$ 3,536,305

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

	Audited		
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Year Ended June 30, 2025			
Revenue and Support			
Contributions and grants	\$ 291,909	\$ 110,345	\$ 402,254
Investment income - net	298,144	3,243	301,387
Net assets released from purpose restrictions	79,625	(79,625)	-
Total Revenue and Support	669,678	33,963	703,641
Expenses			
Program services:			
Direct support	166,753	-	166,753
Student activities	26,785	-	26,785
Supporting services:			
Fundraising and development	56,862	-	56,862
General and administrative	46,250	-	46,250
Total Expenses	296,650	-	296,650
Change in Net Assets	373,028	33,963	406,991
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	2,868,762	665,293	3,534,055
Net Assets - End of Year	\$ 3,241,790	\$ 699,256	\$ 3,941,046

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.**STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES**

(Continued)

	Reviewed		
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Year Ended June 30, 2024			
Revenue and Support			
Contributions and grants	\$ 199,628	\$ 260,841	\$ 460,469
In-kind contributions	3,000	-	3,000
Other revenue	9,025	-	9,025
Investment income - net	366,584	2,953	369,537
Net assets released from purpose restrictions	255,801	(255,801)	-
Total Revenue and Support	834,038	7,993	842,031
Expenses			
Program services:			
Direct support	371,907	-	371,907
Student activities	36,725	-	36,725
Supporting services:			
Fundraising and development	69,093	-	69,093
General and administrative	63,537	-	63,537
Total Expenses	541,262	-	541,262
Change in Net Assets	292,776	7,993	300,769
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	2,575,986	657,300	3,233,286
Net Assets - End of Year	\$ 2,868,762	\$ 665,293	\$ 3,534,055

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

Year Ended June 30, 2025	Audited			
	Supporting Services			Total
	Program	General and Administrative	Development and Fundraising	
Academic bowl	\$ 6,178	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,178
Accounting fees	-	13,915	-	13,915
Accreditation	11,463	-	-	11,463
Advertising	-	-	18,768	18,768
Cottage support	6,308	-	-	6,308
Development and fundraising	-	-	38,094	38,094
Fall celebration	2,010	-	-	2,010
Family learning weekend	7,113	-	-	7,113
Hearing evaluations	3,557	-	-	3,557
Holidays	668	-	-	668
In-kind expenses	3,000	-	-	3,000
Insurance	-	803	-	803
Northwest Association of Blind Athletes	11,500	-	-	11,500
Office expenses	-	5,935	-	5,935
Payroll taxes	-	1,717	-	1,717
Professional development	17,518	-	-	17,518
Salaries and wages	-	22,327	-	22,327
Special equipment and grant expenditures	100,284	-	-	100,284
Staff awards	5,307	-	-	5,307
Student activities	5,387	-	-	5,387
Student awards	1,451	-	-	1,451
Student support	3,013	-	-	3,013
Student trips	3,978	-	-	3,978
Technology and equipment	4,803	-	-	4,803
Travel	-	1,553	-	1,553
Total Expenses	\$ 193,538	\$ 46,250	\$ 56,862	\$ 296,650

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

(Continued)

Year Ended June 30, 2024	Reviewed			
	Program	Supporting Services		Total
		General and Administrative	Development and Fundraising	
Academic bowl	\$ 7,098	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,098
Accounting fees	-	33,150	-	33,150
Accreditation	11,870	-	-	11,870
Advertising	-	-	25,304	25,304
Cottage support	12,983	-	-	12,983
Development and fundraising	-	-	43,789	43,789
Expressions of silence	1,284	-	-	1,284
Family learning weekend	8,625	-	-	8,625
Family resource day	110	-	-	110
Hearing evaluations	2,815	-	-	2,815
Holidays	819	-	-	819
Insurance	-	803	-	803
Northwest Association of Blind Athletes	11,500	-	-	11,500
Office expenses	-	5,223	-	5,223
Payroll taxes	-	1,523	-	1,523
Professional development	26,899	-	-	26,899
Salaries and wages	-	21,209	-	21,209
Special equipment and grant expenditures	274,722	-	-	274,722
Spring celebration	3,424	-	-	3,424
Staff awards	5,867	-	-	5,867
Student activities	2,687	-	-	2,687
Student awards	649	-	-	649
Student support	8,493	-	-	8,493
Student trips	6,704	-	-	6,704
Summer camp	5,325	-	-	5,325
Technology and equipment	15,938	-	-	15,938
Travel	-	1,629	-	1,629
Yearbook	820	-	-	820
Total Expenses	\$ 408,632	\$ 63,537	\$ 69,093	\$ 541,262

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.
STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

Years Ended June 30	Audited 2025	Reviewed 2024
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Change in net assets	\$ 406,991	\$ 300,769
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:		
Unrealized gains on investments	(131,195)	(301,619)
Other assets	3,000	(3,000)
Accounts payable	755	462
NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	279,551	(3,388)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of investments	(641,444)	(675,124)
Proceeds from sale of investments	605,823	674,446
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(35,621)	(678)
Net Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents	243,930	(4,066)
Cash and Cash Equivalents - Beginning of Year	211,737	215,803
Cash and Cash Equivalents - End of Year	\$ 455,667	\$ 211,737

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Nature of Activities The Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc. (the Foundation) is organized with the purpose of benefiting children and youth with vision or hearing impairments who are students of, or served by, Montana School for the Deaf and Blind (hereinafter referred to as the School). In order to accomplish this purpose, the Foundation is authorized to accumulate and provide a fund—or funds—to be invested and reinvested; to use the income and principal thereof to create a pleasant, homelike setting for students living away from home; to provide programs and support to develop and enhance social skills; to provide career training and preparation; to encourage support and training of School graduates at the post-secondary level; to encourage family involvement in student educational and social development; and to provide other programs that enable students to take their rightful place as productive members of society.

Basis of Accounting The accompanying financial statements are presented in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP), as codified by the Financial Accounting Standards Board.

Basis of Presentation In accordance with GAAP, the Foundation reports information regarding its financial position and activities according to two classes of net assets:

Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions: Those resources not subject to donor-imposed restrictions. The Board of Directors has discretionary control over these resources. Designated amounts represent those net assets that the Board of Directors has set aside for a particular purpose and shall be segregated in the accounting records as "board-designated" funds. There were no board-designated net assets at June 30, 2025 and 2024.

Net Assets With Donor Restrictions: Those resources subject to donor-imposed restrictions that will be satisfied by action of the Foundation or by the passage of time.

Revenues are reported as increases in net assets without donor restrictions unless use of the related assets is limited by donor-imposed restrictions. All donor-restricted support is reported as an increase in net assets with donor restrictions. When a restriction expires (that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished), net assets with donor restrictions are reclassified as net assets without donor restrictions and reported on the statements of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Gains and losses on assets or liabilities are reported as increases or decreases in net assets without donor restrictions unless their use is restricted by explicit donor stipulation or by law. Management's policy is to classify support as net assets without donor restrictions if the restrictions are met within the same fiscal year.

Use of Estimates The preparation of financial statements in conformity with GAAP includes the use of estimates that affect the financial statements and disclosures. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

Cash and Cash Equivalents For purposes of the statements of cash flows, the Foundation considers all highly liquid investments with an initial maturity of 90 days or less to be cash equivalents.

Concentration of Credit Risk Cash and cash equivalents are deposited at several financial and brokerage institutions and are potentially exposed to concentrations of custodial credit risk. From time-to-time, certain bank and brokerage accounts that are subject to Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and Securities Investor Protection Corporation coverage may exceed their insured limits.

Income Tax Status The Foundation is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the *Internal Revenue Code*, and therefore, has no provision for federal and state income taxes.

Contributed Services and Materials Contributed services are reported in the financial statements for voluntary donations of services when those services: (1) create or enhance nonfinancial assets, or (2) require specialized skills provided by individuals possessing those skills, and are services that would be typically purchased if not provided by donation.

Donated materials are recorded at their fair value at the date of the gift. The Foundation does not impose time restrictions for gifts of long-lived assets. In-kind contribution revenue and the corresponding expenses are included in the financial statements at fair value. As a result, in the absence of donor-imposed restrictions, gifts of long-lived assets are reported as revenue without donor restrictions.

Functional Allocation of Expenses The financial statements report certain expense categories that are attributable to either program services or support functions. There were no expenses that required an allocation between categories.

Reclassifications Certain amounts in the prior-year financial statements have been reclassified for comparative purposes to conform with the presentation in the current-year financial statements. These reclassifications do not affect prior-year changes in net assets and net assets as reported in the prior-year financial statements.

Evaluation of Subsequent Events Management has evaluated subsequent events through October 21, 2025, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

2. LIQUIDITY

The Foundation's financial assets available within one year of the statement of financial position date for general expenditures were as follows:

June 30	Audited 2025	Reviewed 2024
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 455,667	\$ 211,737
Investments	3,488,384	3,321,568
Total Financial Assets	3,944,051	3,533,305
Amounts not available to be used within one year:		
Restricted investments	(699,256)	(665,293)
Financial Assets Available to Meet General Expenditures Within One Year	\$ 3,244,795	\$ 2,868,012

At June 30, 2025, the Foundation had working capital of \$3,241,790, and 561 days cash on hand. At June 30, 2024, the Foundation had working capital of \$2,865,762, and 143 days cash on hand.

The Foundation's endowment funds consist of donor-restricted endowments. As described in note 8, the endowment has a spending rate of 6% that is transferred to operations subsequent to each year. \$9,727 of appropriations from the endowment will be available within 12 months after June 30, 2025. \$8,860 of appropriations from the endowment were available within 12 months after June 30, 2024.

As part of the Foundation's liquidity management, it has a policy to structure its financial assets to be available as its general expenditures, liabilities, and other obligations come due.

3. INVESTMENTS

Under GAAP, investments are stated at fair value. Fair value is defined as the exchange price that would be received for an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants on the measurement date.

Valuation techniques used to measure fair value maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs, using the market value approach. Following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for investments measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at June 30, 2025 and 2024.

Fixed-Income Bonds: Valued using pricing models maximizing the use of observable inputs for similar securities. This includes face value on yields currently available on comparable securities of issuers with similar credit ratings.

Fixed-Income Treasury Bills and Notes: Valued at par value.

Equity Securities: Common stocks are valued at the closing price reported on the active market in which the individual securities are traded.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

As required under GAAP, investments are classified within the level of lowest significant input considered in determining fair value.

GAAP also establishes a fair value hierarchy, which prioritizes the valuation of inputs into three broad levels as described below.

Level 1: Quoted prices in active markets as of the measurement date.

Level 2: Quoted prices that are not active, quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets or inputs other than quoted prices that are observable (either directly or indirectly) for substantially the full-term of the asset or liability.

Level 3: Significant unobservable prices or inputs for which there is little or no market activity for the asset or liability at the measurement date.

The Foundation's investments are summarized below:

				Audited	
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets (Level 1)	Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)	Cost	Cumulative Appreciation (Depreciation)
June 30, 2025					
Debt securities:					
Alternative and other fixed-income bonds	\$ -	\$ 536,134	\$ -	\$ 570,058	\$ (33,924)
Emerging markets fixed-income bonds	-	98,156	-	99,187	(1,031)
U.S. corporate investment grade fixed-income bonds	-	229,763	-	248,423	(18,660)
U.S. government treasury bills and notes	-	337,559	-	335,773	1,786
Equity securities:					
Emerging markets equity	111,548	-	-	102,675	8,873
International equity	381,844	-	-	285,781	96,063
U.S. large-cap equity	1,386,554	-	-	915,032	471,522
U.S. mid-cap equity	260,050	-	-	176,197	83,853
U.S. small-cap equity	146,776	-	-	110,311	36,465
Total	\$ 2,286,772	\$ 1,201,612	\$ -	\$ 2,843,437	\$ 644,947

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

					Reviewed
	Quoted Prices in Active Markets (Level 1)	Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)	Cost	Cumulative Appreciation (Depreciation)
June 30, 2024					
Debt securities:					
Alternative and other fixed-income bonds	\$ -	\$ 518,136	\$ -	\$ 563,998	\$ (45,862)
Emerging markets fixed-income bonds	-	99,098	-	120,070	(20,972)
U.S. corporate high yield fixed-income bonds	-	64,581	-	69,102	(4,521)
U.S. corporate investment grade fixed-income bonds	-	161,788	-	176,139	(14,351)
U.S. government treasury bills and notes	-	315,055	-	301,164	13,891
Equity securities:					
Emerging markets equity	107,010	-	-	111,014	(4,004)
International equity	341,246	-	-	292,325	48,921
U.S. large-cap equity	1,343,292	-	-	909,589	433,703
U.S. mid-cap equity	240,810	-	-	166,993	73,817
U.S. small-cap equity	130,552	-	-	97,422	33,130
Total	\$ 2,162,910	\$ 1,158,658	\$ -	\$ 2,807,816	\$ 513,752

The tables above show investments' unrealized gains, losses, and fair values at June 30, 2025 and 2024. At June 30, 2025 and 2024, there were four and six securities in an unrealized loss position, respectively. Management has evaluated these securities and believes the loss position to be temporary, as a result of the current market and interest rate environment, and not from any particular credit quality of any of the specific securities. Investments shown as restricted on the statements of financial position are held in endowment funds established for various purposes.

The following table summarizes securities in an unrealized loss position:

				Audited
June 30, 2025	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Loss	
Debt securities:				
For more than 12 months	\$ 1,040,627	\$ 987,230	\$ (53,397)	
Less than 12 months	99,188	98,156	(1,032)	
Total	\$ 1,139,815	\$ 1,085,386	\$ (54,429)	

				Reviewed
June 30, 2024	Cost	Fair Value	Unrealized Loss	
Debt securities:				
For more than 12 months	\$ 1,117,384	\$ 1,030,853	\$ (86,531)	
Equity securities:				
Less than 12 months	111,014	107,010	(4,004)	
Total	\$ 1,228,398	\$ 1,137,863	\$ (90,535)	

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

Restricted Investments

Restricted investments are limited in use by donor-imposed restrictions. See note 8 for additional disclosures related to the restricted investments included in the Foundation's endowment.

Net investment income consisted of the following:

June 30		Audited 2025		Reviewed 2024
Dividends and interest	\$	115,116	\$	107,077
Unrealized gain on debt securities		19,983		59,902
Unrealized gain on equity securities		111,212		241,717
Realized gain (loss) on equity securities		77,451		(18,088)
Investment fees		(22,375)		(21,071)
Totals	\$	301,387	\$	369,537

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

4. NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets with donor-imposed purpose restrictions of the Foundation consisted of the following:

June 30	Audited 2025	Reviewed 2024
Backpacks	\$ 446	\$ 446
Bulletin boards	140	140
Bowling alley	7,386	-
Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Braille training	1,793	1,793
Cobb Foundation	23,568	21,568
Cottage remodel project	14,438	16,838
Deaf mentor training	321	321
Easter	222	222
Expressions of silence	4,768	4,568
Folding paper machine	405	-
Food program	1,000	1,000
General scholarship	4,100	4,100
Goal ball	25,961	-
Hall of Fame case	1,698	1,698
Karen Cox grant	5	5
Kral-Knuth Award scholarship	200	200
Lending library	57,881	57,881
Lending library maintenance	1,500	1,500
Library	516	107
Literacy pro development	6	6
Loaf and Jug scholarship	1,000	1,000
Magnifiers	-	987
Montana Professional Teaching Foundation grant	9	9
Music department	1,299	-
Physical therapy department	200	-
Playground repairs	3,382	3,382
Pool/Pool equipment	-	156
Prison Braille program	1,256	1,256
Parent Teacher's House Association	9,044	9,844
Richard Augon award	746	646
Ruth Matthews award	1,875	875
Silent weekend	7	7
Smartboards	8,711	8,711
Stage and lighting	12,221	12,539
Student council trip	120	120
Super bowl party	180	180
Untangling the dots	1,700	1,700
Video project	553	553
Visually impaired performers	2,485	1,925
White Cane Day	318	-
Weight room	-	4,457
Yearbook	600	600
Totals	\$ 192,060	\$ 161,340

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

Net assets were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the purpose of the restrictions specified by donors as follows:

June 30	Audited 2025	Reviewed 2024
Academic bowl	\$ 100	\$ -
Backpacks	-	7,330
Bowling alley	52,832	70,300
Cottage remodel project	2,400	2,915
Expressions of silence	-	1,284
Family learning weekends	-	7,196
Family resource day	-	125
Folding paper machine	95	-
General student activities	100	-
Goal ball	13,899	-
Lion's project	-	8,981
Magnifiers	987	-
Music department	3,700	-
Pool/Pool equipment	155	2,844
Parent Teacher's House Association	800	-
Richard Augon award	-	104
Stage and lighting	-	153,977
Student awards	100	-
Summer camps	-	546
Super bowl party	-	99
Visually impaired games	-	100
Weight room	4,457	-
Totals	\$ 79,625	\$ 255,801

Net assets with donor restrictions that are invested in perpetuity of the Foundation were as follows:

June 30	Audited 2025	Reviewed 2024
Anonymous	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Bob and Jane Becker	1,700	1,700
Dick and Joan Bennett Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust's	2,427	2,427
Merritt Estate	473,813	470,570
Montana Community Foundation	6,156	6,156
Royal and Norma Johnson	600	600
Ryan scholarship fund	20,000	20,000
Totals	\$ 507,196	\$ 503,953

According to Robert Merritt's will (Merritt Estate), 75% of the income earned from the corpus of the amount donated to the Foundation can be spent annually. The remaining balance of the income, 25%, must be added to corpus each year. The amount added to the corpus for the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, was \$3,243 and \$2,953, respectively.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

A recap of the Merritt Estate balance is as follows:

June 30		Audited 2025		Reviewed 2024
Original donation - fiscal year ended June 30, 1991	\$	326,122	\$	326,122
Loss on sale of stock donated through estate		(27,552)		(27,552)
Income allocated to corpus during fiscal years ended June 30, 1991, to June 30, 2025, and 2024		172,000		169,047
Current year's income allocation		3,243		2,953
Balances	\$	473,813	\$	470,570

The income is calculated based upon the overall percentage of investment income and realized gains and losses to total investments held at RBC Wealth Management multiplied by the balance in the Merritt Estate.

5. CONTRIBUTED NONFINANCIAL ASSETS

There were no in-kind contributions for the year ended June 30, 2025. In-kind contributions included on the statements of activities include artwork in the amount of \$3,000 for the year ended June 30, 2024. The artwork was valued using the estimated selling price provided by the artist. The in-kind artwork contribution was donated by the Foundation for an auction during the year ended June 30, 2025, and is included in program expenses on the statements of activities. The in-kind artwork contributions for June 30, 2024, were held by the Foundation and classified as other assets on the statements of financial position.

6. DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING EXPENSE

The Foundation expended \$56,862 and \$69,093 during the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively, on development and fundraising. Expenses incurred include: advertising, fees, dues, travel, meals and entertainment, postage, and supplies.

7. ADVERTISING

The Foundation advertises through its newsletter and by updating and maintaining its website. The production and development costs of these activities are expensed as incurred. There was \$18,768 and \$25,304 of advertising costs for the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

8. ENDOWMENT

The Foundation's endowment funds are included in one investment pool. This investment pool consists of donor-restricted endowment funds. As required by GAAP, net assets associated with endowment funds are classified and reported based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

Interpretation of Relevant Law

The Board of Directors of the Foundation has interpreted the Montana Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (MUPMIFA) as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift as of the gift date of the donor-restricted endowment funds absent explicit donor stipulations to the contrary.

As a result of this interpretation, the Foundation classifies as net assets with donor restrictions that are perpetual in nature: (a) the original value of gifts donated to the permanent endowment, (b) the original value of subsequent gifts to the permanent endowment, and (c) accumulations to the permanent endowment made in accordance with the direction of the applicable donor gift instrument at the time the accumulation is added to the fund.

The remaining portion of the donor-restricted endowment fund that is not classified in net assets with donor restrictions that are perpetual in nature is classified as net assets with donor restrictions, subject to purpose or time restrictions, until those amounts are appropriated for expenditure by the Foundation in a manner consistent with the standard of prudence prescribed by MUPMIFA.

In accordance with MUPMIFA, the Foundation considers the following factors when making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted endowment funds:

- (1) The duration and preservation of the fund;
- (2) The purpose of the Foundation and the donor-restricted endowment fund;
- (3) General economic conditions;
- (4) The possible effect of inflation and deflation;
- (5) The expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments;
- (6) Other resources of the Foundation; and
- (7) The investment policies of the Foundation.

Endowment Spending Policy

Spending Policy and How the Investment Objectives Relate to Spending Policy The Foundation has a policy of appropriating a spending distribution annually. The target spending rate is 6% of fair market value of the Foundation's investments. According to the smoothing rule, the proposed Foundation spending ceiling in a given year sums to 60% of the previous year spending plus 40% of the targeted long-term spending rate applied to the market value of the previous year.

The proposed spending ceiling determined by the formula is adjusted for inflation based on the previous year's Consumer Price Index. If the proposed spending ceiling exceeds the targeted spending rate of 6%, the Foundation could spend up to, or above, the ceiling with Board of Directors approval. In establishing this policy, the Foundation considered the donor's intent of the fund purpose as well as the long-term expected return on its endowment. Accordingly, over the long term, the Foundation expects the current spending policy to allow its investment pool to grow.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

Spending Policy and How the Investment Objectives Relate to Spending Policy This policy is consistent with the donor's objective to maintain the purchasing power of the endowment assets, as well as to provide additional real growth through new gifts and investment return.

Return Objectives and Risk Parameters The Foundation has adopted investment and spending policies for endowment assets that are designed to provide a predictable stream of funding to programs supported by its endowment, while seeking to maintain the purchasing power of the endowment assets. Accordingly, the Foundation's investment policy is designed to produce investment returns that exceed the sum of its spending policy, investment fees, and estimated long-term inflation.

Strategies for Achieving Objectives To satisfy its long-term objectives, the Foundation relies on a total return strategy in which investment returns are achieved through both capital appreciation (realized and unrealized) and current yield (interest and dividends). The Foundation targets a diversified asset allocation that places a greater emphasis on equity-based investments to achieve its long-term return objectives within prudent risk constraints.

Funds With Deficiencies

From time to time, the fair value of assets associated with individual donor-restricted endowment funds may fall below the level that the donor or MUPMIFA requires the Foundation to retain as a fund of perpetual duration. Deficiencies result from unfavorable market fluctuations that occur after the investment of restricted contributions that are perpetual in nature. There were no such deficiencies at the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024. In accordance with GAAP, deficiencies of this nature are reported in net assets with donor restrictions.

Endowment Activity

Changes in endowment net assets were as follows:

						Audited	
	Without Donor Restrictions		With Donor Restrictions		Total		
	Undesignated	Board-Designated	Purpose or Time Restrictions	Perpetual in Nature			
Balance - July 1, 2024	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 503,953	\$	503,953	
Investment income	9,727	-	-	3,243		12,970	
Appropriations	(9,727)	-	-	-		(9,727)	
Balance - June 30, 2025	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 507,196	\$	507,196	

						Reviewed	
	Without Donor Restrictions		With Donor Restrictions		Total		
	Undesignated	Board-Designated	Purpose or Time Restrictions	Perpetual in Nature			
Balance - July 1, 2023	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 501,000	\$	501,000	
Investment income	8,860	-	-	2,953		11,813	
Appropriations	(8,860)	-	-	-		(8,860)	
Balance - June 30, 2024	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 503,953	\$	503,953	

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

(Continued)

Endowment net asset composition by type of fund was as follows:

					Audited	
June 30, 2025	Undesignated	Board- Designated	Purpose or Time Restrictions	Perpetual in Nature	Total	
Donor-restricted: Endowment fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 507,196	\$ 507,196	

					Reviewed	
June 30, 2024	Undesignated	Board- Designated	Purpose or Time Restrictions	Perpetual in Nature	Total	
Donor-restricted: Endowment fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 503,953	\$ 503,953	

9. SPLIT-INTEREST AGREEMENTS

Some donors enter into trust or other arrangements under which the Foundation has a beneficial interest. The Foundation has either a remainder interest or a "lead interest," where distributions are received during the term of the agreement. Frequently, the term of the agreement is for the remaining life of an individual(s) designated by the donor. For irrevocable agreements where the Foundation has control of the assets, assets are recorded at their estimated fair market value upon notification of the beneficial interest, provided that reliable information is available. A liability for payments to other beneficiaries is estimated at the present value of the expected future payments to beneficiaries. For irrevocable agreements where the Foundation does not have control over the assets (generally held in an outside trust), the present value of the Foundation's beneficial interest is recorded as beneficial interests in trusts held by others, provided that reliable information is available. For revocable agreements where the Foundation has control over the assets, the assets are recorded as a refundable advance and included in the liability to external beneficiaries. Revocable interests where the Foundation does not have control over the assets are considered conditional promises to give, and, accordingly, are not recorded.

The Foundation is a 10% income beneficiary of the Schmitz Trust. At this time, there is an undeterminable amount forthcoming from the trust and an unknown date of receipt.

The Foundation is also a beneficiary of the Proctor Trust. The Foundation is to receive \$100 annually for the Christmas Fund. At this time, there is an undeterminable amount forthcoming from the trust and an unknown date of receipt.

10. RELATED PARTIES

The Superintendent of the School is on the Board of Directors for the Foundation. The Foundation's mission is to serve the students and programs of the School. Payments of \$2,330 and \$3,612 were made directly to the School during the years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively. However, all program service activities are considered to directly or indirectly benefit the School and its students.

51130 School for the Deaf & Blind ORG Budget Summary - No A Accruals

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2026 through 05 (Nov)/2026

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

Business Unit	(All)
Program Year	2026
FY_BudPer	(All)
Month	(All)
Source of Auth	(All)
Fund Type	(All)
Org	(All)
Account	(All)
Acct Lvl 2	(All)
Account Type	E
Project	(All)
Ledger	(All)

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OBPP Program Fund	Subclass	Acct Lvl 1	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	Balance
01 ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM			284,578.00	160,346.36	124,231.64
01100 General Fund			284,578.00	160,346.36	124,231.64
300H1 ADMINISTRATION			26,981.00	11,770.29	15,210.71
	62000 Operating Expenses		26,981.00	11,770.29	15,210.71
300H5 STATE ITSD (RST)			257,597.00	148,576.07	109,020.93
	62000 Operating Expenses		257,597.00	148,576.07	109,020.93
02 GENERAL SERVICES			335,252.91	128,469.55	206,783.36
01100 General Fund			335,252.91	128,469.55	206,783.36
305F4 FY2024 CARRYFORWARD			1,060.91	0.00	1,060.91
	62000 Operating Expenses		10.41	0.00	10.41
	63000 Equipment & Intangible Assets		1,050.50	0.00	1,050.50
305H1 GENERAL SERVICES			334,192.00	128,469.55	205,722.45
	62000 Operating Expenses		271,577.00	128,469.55	143,107.45
	68000 Transfers-out		1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
	69000 Debt Service		61,615.00	0.00	61,615.00
03 STUDENT SERVICES			236,813.00	51,198.73	185,614.27
01100 General Fund			202,084.00	53,737.45	148,346.55
310H1 STUDENT SERVICES			202,084.00	53,737.45	148,346.55
	62000 Operating Expenses		202,084.00	53,737.45	148,346.55
03167 National School Lunch			34,729.00	(2,538.72)	37,267.72
310H1 STUDENT SERVICES			34,729.00	(2,538.72)	37,267.72
	62000 Operating Expenses		34,729.00	(2,538.72)	37,267.72
04 EDUCATION			397,290.00	156,282.07	241,007.93
01100 General Fund			327,290.00	150,752.22	176,537.78
315H1 EDUCATION			266,290.00	133,411.27	132,878.73
	62000 Operating Expenses		266,290.00	133,411.27	132,878.73
315H8 INTERPRETER PROF DEV (OTO)			61,000.00	17,340.95	43,659.05
	62000 Operating Expenses		61,000.00	17,340.95	43,659.05
03064 EHA, Part B			70,000.00	5,529.85	64,470.15
315H1 EDUCATION			70,000.00	5,529.85	64,470.15
	62000 Operating Expenses		70,000.00	5,529.85	64,470.15
Grand Total			1,253,933.91	496,296.71	757,637.20

51130 School for the Deaf & Blind ORG Budget Summary - No A Accruals

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2026 through 05 (Nov)/2026

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

Business Unit	(All)
Program Year	2026
FY_BudPer	(All)
Month	(All)
Source of Auth	(All)
Org	(All)
Fund Type	(All)
Account	(All)
Acct Lvl 2	(All)
Account Type	E
Project	(All)
Ledger	(All)

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OBPP Program Fund	Subclass	Acct Lvl 1	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	Balance
01 ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM			877,829.00	342,138.26	535,690.74
01100 General Fund			874,435.00	342,138.26	532,296.74
300H1 ADMINISTRATION			616,838.00	193,562.19	423,275.81
	61000 Personal Services		589,857.00	181,791.90	408,065.10
	62000 Operating Expenses		26,981.00	11,770.29	15,210.71
300H5 STATE ITSD (RST)			257,597.00	148,576.07	109,020.93
	62000 Operating Expenses		257,597.00	148,576.07	109,020.93
02050 School Trust Interest/Income			3,394.00	0.00	3,394.00
300H1 ADMINISTRATION			3,394.00	0.00	3,394.00
	61000 Personal Services		3,394.00	0.00	3,394.00
02 GENERAL SERVICES			727,434.91	243,362.28	484,072.63
01100 General Fund			727,434.91	243,362.28	484,072.63
305F4 FY2024 CARRYFORWARD			1,060.91	0.00	1,060.91
	62000 Operating Expenses		10.41	0.00	10.41
	63000 Equipment & Intangible Assets		1,050.50	0.00	1,050.50
305H1 GENERAL SERVICES			726,374.00	243,362.28	483,011.72
	61000 Personal Services		392,182.00	114,892.73	277,289.27
	62000 Operating Expenses		271,577.00	128,469.55	143,107.45
	68000 Transfers-out		1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
	69000 Debt Service		61,615.00	0.00	61,615.00
03 STUDENT SERVICES			2,290,049.00	604,595.62	1,685,453.38
01100 General Fund			2,255,320.00	607,134.34	1,648,185.66
310H1 STUDENT SERVICES			2,255,320.00	607,134.34	1,648,185.66
	61000 Personal Services		2,053,236.00	553,396.89	1,499,839.11
	62000 Operating Expenses		202,084.00	53,737.45	148,346.55
03167 National School Lunch			34,729.00	(2,538.72)	37,267.72
310H1 STUDENT SERVICES			34,729.00	(2,538.72)	37,267.72
	62000 Operating Expenses		34,729.00	(2,538.72)	37,267.72
04 EDUCATION			7,023,161.00	2,077,957.54	4,945,203.46
01100 General Fund			6,548,740.00	2,072,427.69	4,476,312.31
315H1 EDUCATION			6,485,607.00	2,055,086.74	4,430,520.26
	61000 Personal Services		6,219,317.00	1,921,675.47	4,297,641.53
	62000 Operating Expenses		266,290.00	133,411.27	132,878.73
315H8 INTERPRETER PROF DEV (OTO)			61,000.00	17,340.95	43,659.05
	62000 Operating Expenses		61,000.00	17,340.95	43,659.05
315Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION			2,133.00	0.00	2,133.00
	61000 Personal Services		2,133.00	0.00	2,133.00
02050 School Trust Interest/Income			302,341.00	0.00	302,341.00
315H1 EDUCATION			302,341.00	0.00	302,341.00
	61000 Personal Services		302,341.00	0.00	302,341.00
03012 E.C.I.A. Chapter I			52,861.00	0.00	52,861.00
315H1 EDUCATION			52,861.00	0.00	52,861.00
	61000 Personal Services		52,861.00	0.00	52,861.00

03064 EHA, Part B		119,219.00	5,529.85	113,689.15
315H1 EDUCATION		119,202.00	5,529.85	113,672.15
	:61000 Personal Services	49,202.00	0.00	49,202.00
	:62000 Operating Expenses	70,000.00	5,529.85	64,470.15
315Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION		17.00	0.00	17.00
	:61000 Personal Services	17.00	0.00	17.00
Grand Total		10,918,473.91	3,268,053.70	7,650,420.21

PAYROLL TOTALS

		General Fund	School Trust	General Fund	General Fund	General Fund	School Trust	IDEA Pre-school & Part B	IDEA Outreach	
		PGM 1	PGM 1	PGM 2	PGM 3	PGM 4	PGM 4	PGM 4	PGM 4	
		01100	02050	01100	01100	01100	02050	03012	03064	
Budget		\$589,857.00	\$3,394.00	\$392,182.00	\$2,053,236.00	\$6,221,450.00	\$302,341.00	\$52,861.00	\$49,219.00	\$9,664,540.00
PPE:										
	6/27/2025	(\$2,635.00)		(\$2,635.00)	(\$14,231.82)	(\$30,563.18)				(\$50,065.00)
1	7/11/2025	(\$20,205.98)		(\$13,172.42)	(\$55,389.98)	(\$181,366.78)				(\$270,135.16)
2	7/25/2025	(\$23,497.47)		(\$14,903.77)	(\$55,959.52)	(\$207,299.12)				(\$301,659.88)
3	8/8/2025	(\$23,458.35)		(\$14,252.82)	(\$57,458.76)	(\$228,646.23)				(\$323,816.16)
4	8/22/2025	(\$20,738.78)		(\$14,309.61)	(\$64,336.61)	(\$345,710.37)				(\$445,095.37)
5	9/5/2025	(\$24,085.66)		(\$15,452.61)	(\$83,595.58)	(\$248,327.44)				(\$371,461.29)
6	9/19/2025	(\$23,427.26)		(\$14,241.47)	(\$76,804.09)	(\$239,199.09)				(\$353,671.91)
7	10/3/2025	(\$23,425.31)		(\$14,269.86)	(\$81,207.78)	(\$236,975.32)				(\$355,878.27)
8	10/17/2025	(\$20,318.09)		(\$11,655.17)	(\$64,412.75)	(\$203,587.94)				(\$299,973.95)
9	10/31/2025									\$0.00
10	11/14/2025									\$0.00
11	11/28/2025									\$0.00
12	12/12/2025									\$0.00
13	12/26/2025									\$0.00
14	1/9/2026									\$0.00
15	1/23/2026									\$0.00
16	2/6/2026									\$0.00
17	2/20/2026									\$0.00
18	3/6/2026									\$0.00
19	3/20/2026									\$0.00
20	4/3/2026									\$0.00
21	4/17/2026									\$0.00
22	5/1/2026									\$0.00
23	5/16/2026									\$0.00
24	5/29/2026									\$0.00
25	6/12/2026									\$0.00
26	6/26/2026									\$0.00
TOTAL PAYROLL:		(\$181,791.90)	\$0.00	(\$114,892.73)	(\$553,396.89)	(\$1,921,675.47)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$2,771,756.99)
BALANCE		\$408,065.10	\$3,394.00	\$277,289.27	\$1,499,839.11	\$4,299,774.53	\$302,341.00	\$52,861.00	\$49,219.00	\$6,892,783.01 * TIES TO GL
8 AVERAGE PAYROLL		(\$22,723.99)	\$0.00	(\$14,361.59)	(\$69,174.61)	(\$240,209.43)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$346,469.62)
18 ESTIMATED PAYROLL		(\$409,031.78)	\$0.00	(\$258,508.64)	(\$1,245,143.00)	(\$4,323,769.81)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$6,236,453.23)
PROJECTED FYE BAL:		(\$966.67)	\$3,394.00	\$18,780.63	\$254,696.11	(\$23,995.28)	\$302,341.00	\$52,861.00	\$49,219.00	\$656,329.78 Total with Grants

FOUR PROGRAM TOTAL: \$248,514.78



THE MSDB STUDENT LIFE NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 2025

VOLUME 5, NO. 2



UPDATE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT LIFE

It has been a very nice fall and our campus is so colorful with the different shades of Autumn at MSDB. Students have been involved with many after school activities and clubs. Our students and staff attended the annual Griz game in Missoula last month. This was sponsored by our MSDB Foundation and the GrizKidz organization. We also hosted a goalball weekend on our campus as students are making preparations to attend tournaments in Washington and Colorado Springs.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

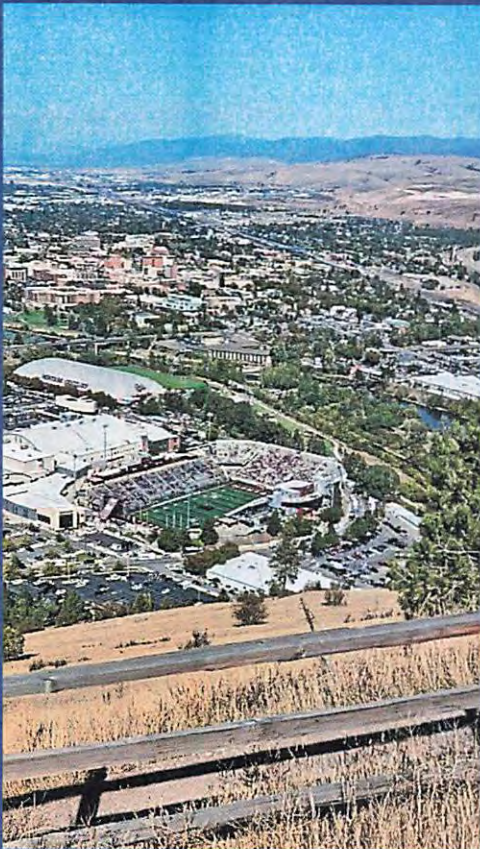
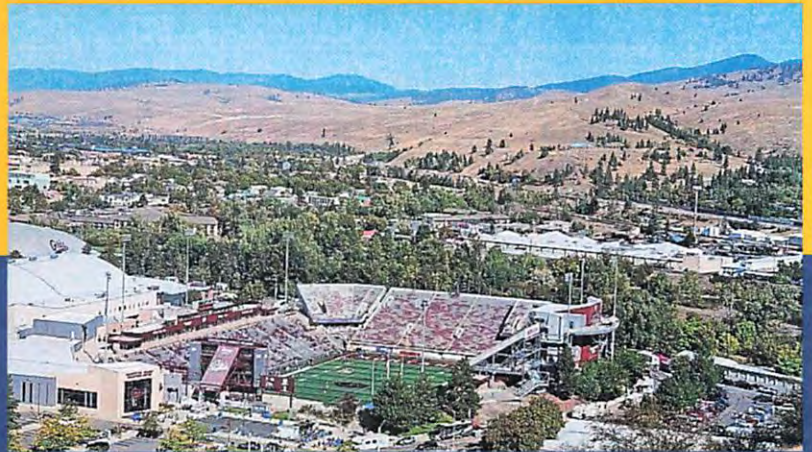
A Beautiful Hike to the "M"

By Darreck Hale

What a wonderful day that the students and staff had together on September 20th.

This experience will be a day that is easily remembered. While sitting outside the coliseum for a Griz game, we decided to climb a fun trail that zigzags to the Missoula M. Many of the students and staff were excited to go to the top and learn more about its history. The M sits on a mountain called Mount Sentinel at 600 feet above the city of Missoula. This M has become a special landmark that was built in Missoula in 1908. Students from the University of Montana decided to build this by carrying stones to the top to shape a legendary symbol.

As we climbed, the students and staff talked about how beautiful it was to hike on the mountain. At this height, we could see the marching band and the team preparing for a wonderful football game. When we reached the top, we all smiled and enjoyed the view of the entire city of Missoula. As a group, we sat on the edge of the giant M and took a group photo. We all hope to remember this day and the time we got to spend together. As we slowly hiked to the bottom, we all agreed that it will be amazing to do this again next year.



Hiking to the "M"

By Elijah

We started by getting our Griz shirts and hats. Then, we got to hike to the M! We got to see an amazing view! Then, we hiked back down. It was super amazing!



My experience at the Griz Football Game

By Morris



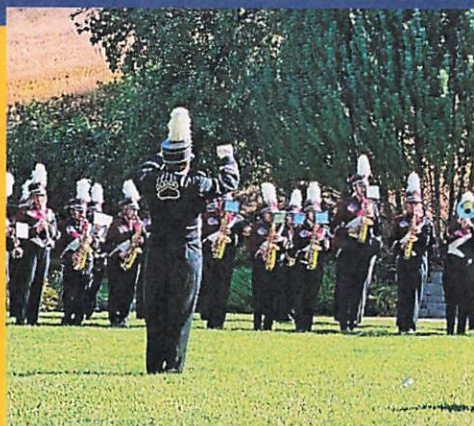
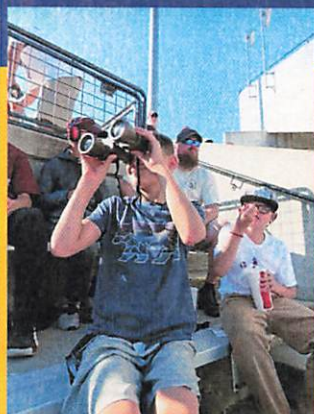
I woke up at 6 AM in the morning, got ready, ate breakfast, and joined with other students on the big, nice bus going to Missoula. When we got to the Griz campus, I played with the other students, and then we had lunch before walking over to the Griz stadium. We were given a \$20 card for snacks and drinks. We ate and watched the game. Griz won! So we got to go down on the fields, meet the players, and get autographs. We went back to the bus for the long drive back home to the cottage, and I slept good!

Our Trip to Missoula

By Myra



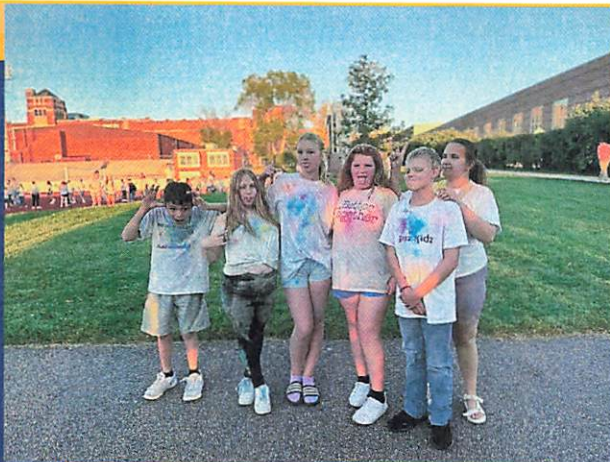
We left the cottages on a big bus. I watched movies on the trip to Missoula. We got to Missoula, and we went to a parking lot and ate lunch. Then we went hiking up the big mountain and went to the Griz Game. It was fun!



Griz Game

By AJ Kauffman

Jim, the Director of Student Life, sets up the Griz Game every year through Griz Kidz in Missoula, MT. It's for the cottage and day students to experience the Montana Grizzlies, which is a really unique experience. It's fun to see the smiles on their faces when Grizzlies get a touchdown or make an unexpected play. Every time Griz wins, the students are able to go down on the football field and get autographs and pictures from the Griz football players. It is a really special, interactive experience that the students can share with their friends and families - and talk about the fun they have. The cottage staff are able to have the experience of interacting with the students at the game; it is a once in a lifetime experience for everyone. We even sat near the Boom Crew, which was explosive fun. Thank you, Jim and Griz Kidz, for the most incredible, fun experience!



Color Run

By Marissa

We did a color run, and it was fun! I hung out with Lilly. It was fun to run with her, and we laid on the ground to get more color on our clothes. Ayvia and Myra were running, too. It was fun to do the run. It was the best experience I've had so far!!!!

You're "It" - Ball Tag in the Gym

By Carter

Ball tag is where one person has the ball and has to tag other. Whoever gets hit by the ball is "it."

So it was Morris, Madison, Ayvia, Lily, David, and me. I had the ball first and was trying to tag Morris. We played for 15 minutes. It was a really nice day outside, a beautiful Autumn day. We had so much fun and played for hours until we got tired and hungry and headed back to the cottage for dinner



Kicking Off 4-H

By Megan DeSilva

We're excited to kick off another year of 4-H! Right now, we're connecting with volunteers and exploring staff expertise and interests, so we can choose some great projects for our students. Siblings are also welcome to join if they'd like to participate. Since it's now after October 1st, the next step is for parents to register their students. You'll need to complete the online registration form and pay the \$20 club dues. You can register your student at the following website:

https://www.montana.edu/extension/cascade/4hpages/4h_Enrollmentpage.html

If you have any questions, please contact Megan DeSilva at mdesilva@msdb.k12.mt.us.

We're looking forward to a fun and meaningful year!





Making Strawberry Jam

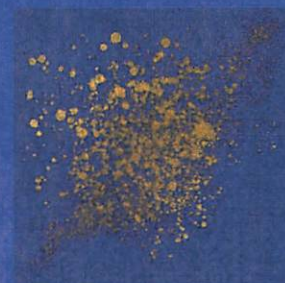
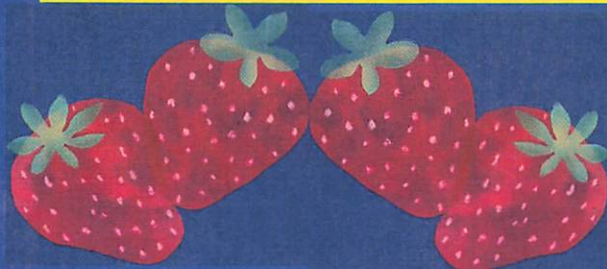
By Lilly

Hi, I'm Lilly, and I'm a sophomore. I'm going to talk about making jelly jam!

Kline asked me to make jelly jam with her. We were thinking about what kind we wanted to make, and I said, "Why not strawberry?" She said, "Yes, we can make it!"

So we started making it, and then some other girls came up to us and asked, "What are you guys doing?" I said, "Oh, we're just making strawberry jam." They said, "Oh, that's nice."

When we finished, we had to leave it out for 30 minutes and then put it in the refrigerator.

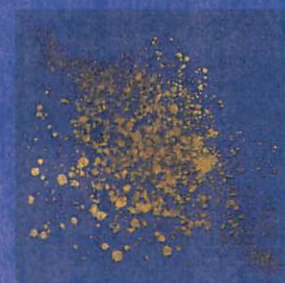


Strawberry Jam

By Alissa Kline

I have memories of learning how to fish from my dad or learning how to cook and sew from my mom. Do you have special memories from when you were growing up? Our desire in the Cottage is to create those kinds of memories with our students and we hope that while they are creating lasting memories, they are developing life skills as well.

A few of the girls in Shoshone Cottage recently learned how to make refrigerator strawberry jam. They started from scratch by washing and preparing the strawberries. Then, they worked together to follow the recipe instructions and cook the jam. The jam turned out really well, and the girls are already thinking about what other flavors of jam they would like to try making. Through this process, they built happy, lasting memories and at the same time, learned cooking skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.



Cottage Jobs

By Megan DeSilva

We offer on-campus jobs for high school students while they're staying in the cottages. Students can choose how many hours they'd like to work and how often, and I do my best to match their jobs to their schedules. Most of our students work in the Snack Shack. Check out the list below to see each student's job assignment for this quarter:

	Ayvia	Beverage Inventory Clerk & Office Assistant
	David	Custodial Engineer
	Lilly	Pop Stocker
	Madison	Food Inventory Clerk & Pop Stocker
	Marissa	Warehouse Worker

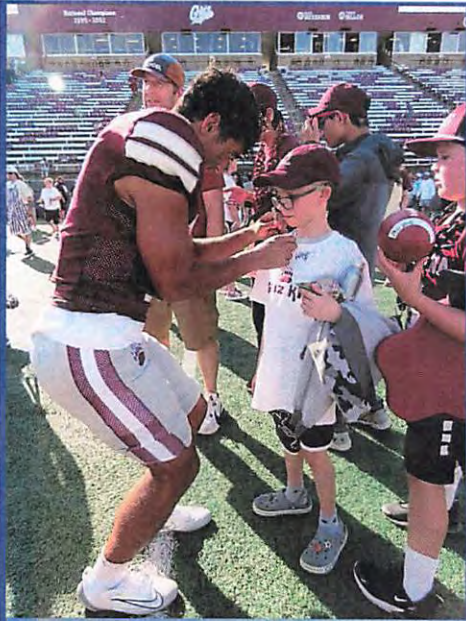
Weekly Student Life Activities

- **EOS (Mon/Wed)**
- **Goal Ball (Tues and Thurs)**
- **Flying Hooves-Elem. (Tues)**
- **Moving Mustangs (Tues 2x/mo)**
- **Computer Club (Tues 2x/mo)**
- **Student Life Social Hour (Wed)**
- **Student Council (Wed)**
- **Snack Shack (Wed/Fri)**
- **Flying Hooves-MS/HS (Thurs)**
- **Gaming Club (Fri)**
- **Alley Cats Bowling Club (Sun)**

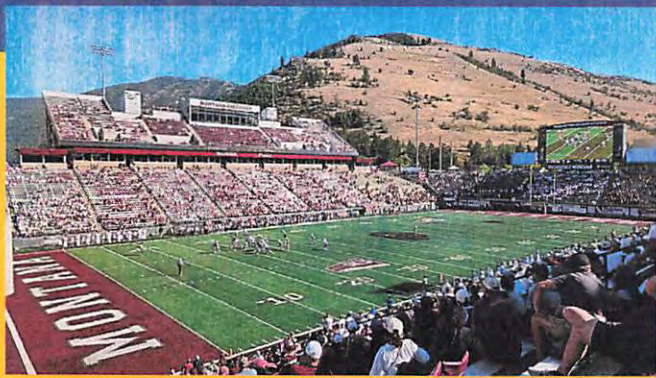
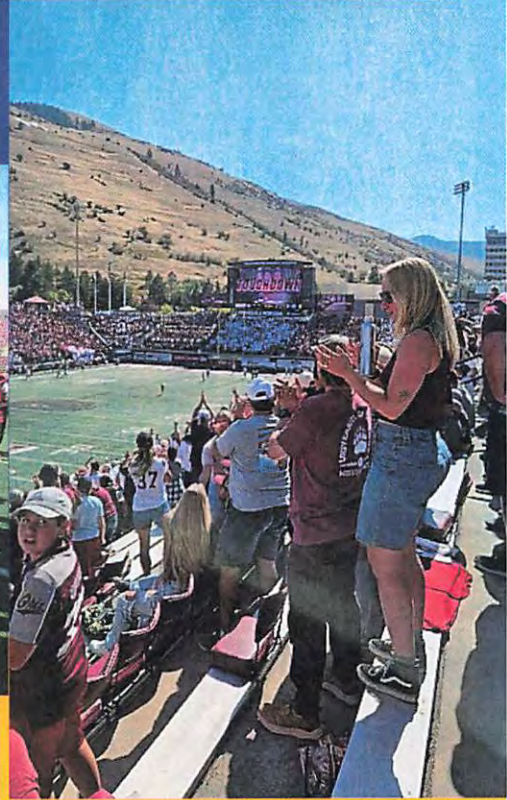
ALLEY CATS BOWLING

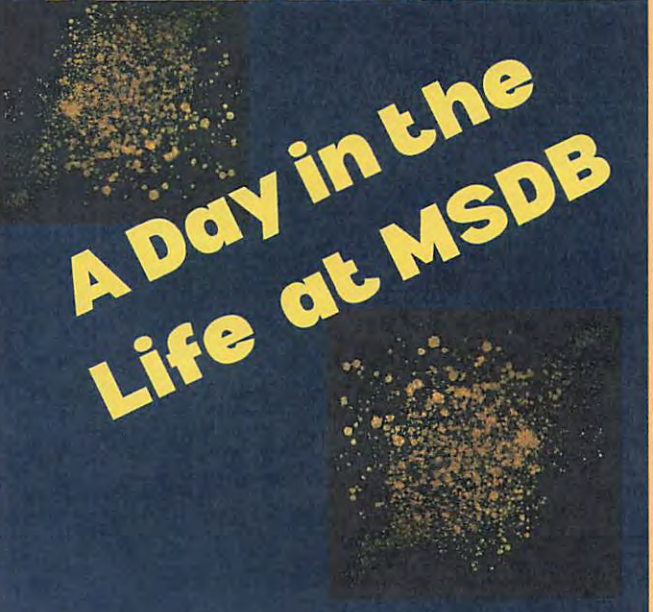
RANK	PLAYERS	GAME #	1	2	3	4
01.	 AYVIA	98	114	107	74	
02.	 MARISSA	64	53	55	80	
03.	 MADDY	60	42	115	148	
04.	 MYRA			73	75	
05.	 LILLY			82		

MSDB BOWLING CLUB



Griz Kidz Griz Game







**A Day in the
Life at MSDB**

**9089 Mont Sch for
Deaf & Blind District**

3911 Central Avenue, Great Falls, MT 59405
Generated on 11/04/2025 01:00:30 AM Page 1 of 1

Student Enrollment Summary Report

Effective Date: 11/04/2025 Enrollment Types: P, S, N
Total Race/Ethnicities: 5 of 7 Total Schools: 2
Race/Ethnicity Source: Federal Male/Female/Total: 18/18/36

Student Population by Race/Ethnicity and Grade Level (Male/Female/Total)

MT Sch For Deaf & Blind El

Grade	1:Hispanic/Latino	2:American Indian or Alaska Native	3:Asian	4:Black or African American	5:Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6:White	7:Two or more races	Total
01	-	-	-	-	-	1/1/2	-	1/1/2
03	-	-	-	-	-	2/1/3	-	2/1/3
05	-	-	-	-	-	2/3/5	-	2/3/5
06	-	-	-	-	-	1/0/1	1/1/2	2/1/3
07	-	-	-	-	-	0/1/1	-	0/1/1
08	-	-	1/0/1	-	-	0/2/2	-	1/2/3
KG	-	0/1/1	-	-	-	-	-	0/1/1
PK	1/0/1	-	-	-	-	2/2/4	-	3/2/5
PS	0/1/1	-	-	-	-	-	-	0/1/1
All Grades	1/1/2	0/1/1	1/0/1	-	-	8/10/18	1/1/2	11/13/24

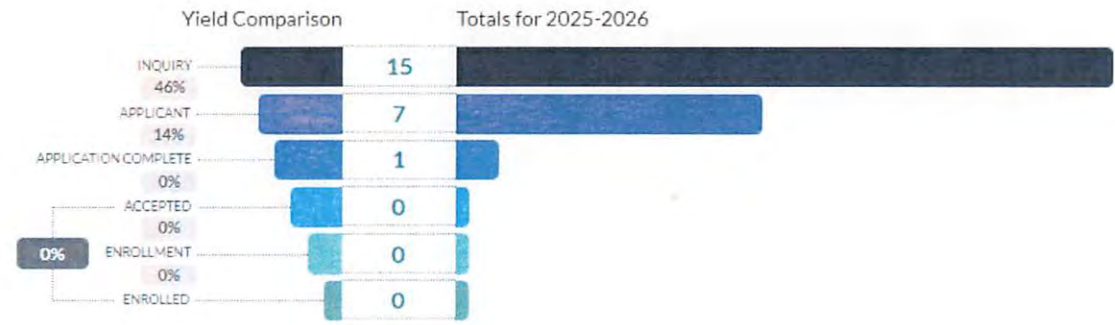
MT Sch For Deaf & Blind HS

Grade	1:Hispanic/Latino	2:American Indian or Alaska Native	3:Asian	4:Black or African American	5:Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6:White	7:Two or more races	Total
09	-	-	1/0/1	-	-	-	-	1/0/1
10	-	1/0/1	-	-	-	0/2/2	-	1/2/3
11	-	1/0/1	-	-	-	1/1/2	-	2/1/3
12	-	1/0/1	-	-	-	2/2/4	-	3/2/5
All Grades	-	3/0/3	1/0/1	-	-	3/5/8	-	7/5/12

Student Population Excluding White not of Hispanic Origin

School	Total	Percentage
MT Sch For Deaf & Blind El	6	25.00%
MT Sch For Deaf & Blind HS	4	33.33%
Total	10	27.78%

November 2025



Admissions

INQUIRY			APPLICANT			APPLICATION COMPLETE			ACCEPTED		
Inquiry	0		Applicant	6		Application Complete	1		Accepted	0	
Inquiry Completed	7		Application Withdrawn By Parent	0		Review In Progress	0		Did Not Enroll	0	
Inactive Inquiry	0		Collecting Educational Documents	0		Waitlisted	0		Enrollment Date Selected	0	
Inquiry Referred To Outreach	1		Collecting Medical Documents	0		Applicant Ineligible For Services	0		Parent Declined	0	
						Current Ten Day In Process	0				
						Document Review In Progress	0				
						Ten Day Observation Scheduled	0				





❖ **ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE – (Item 6)**

Renee Rasmussen

ITEM 6

INITIAL REVIEW AND WORK SESSION OF
EARLY LITERACY AND NUMERACY
ADVISORY COUNCIL'S
RECOMMENDATIONS PERTAINING TO
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
STANDARDS

McCall Flynn



Montana Early Literacy and Numeracy Advisory Council

Recommendations to the Montana Board of Public Education

November 19, 2025

Title 10, Chapter 63
Early Childhood Education Standards

10.63.101 APPLICATION AND PROCEDURES

- (1) The early childhood education standards are focused on developmentally appropriate supports and strategies to enhance learning outcomes for a child between the ages of 3 and 5 for preschool programs and between the ages of 4 and 5 for early literacy-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten. Use of these standards for a public preschool program is subject to the funding limits of 20-7-117(2) and 20-9-311(7)(a), MCA. Use of these standards for early literacy-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten is subject to the provisions of Title 20, chapter 7, part 18, MCA.
- (2) The trustees of a school district, pursuant to Title 20, chapter 6, MCA, may establish a public early childhood education program to meet the unique developmental needs for children between the ages of 3 and 5 for preschool programs and between the ages of 4 and 5 for early literacy-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten. When early childhood education programs are established they must be an integral part of the public school and must be governed according to the following accreditation standards for the early childhood education standards of early learning content and accreditation in coordination with the standards outlined for schools within ARM Title 10, chapter 55, excluding 10.55.601, 10.55.602, 10.55.603, 10.55.704, 10.55.705, 10.55.709, 10.55.710, 10.55.712, 10.55.715, and ARM Title 10, chapter 55, subchapters 10 through 21. For the purposes of the accreditation process detailed in ARM 10.55.606, early childhood education programs will be assessed on the program's assurance standards only.
- (3) Early childhood education programs shall meet this chapter's curriculum, instruction, and program delivery standards, supporting children's development of the knowledge and skills outlined in the content standards in ARM 10.63.110, which describe the expectations for what young children should know, understand, and be able to do across the four core developmental domains of learning upon entrance to kindergarten.
- (4) Montana's early childhood education standards shall be reviewed and revised on a recurring schedule with input from representatives of accredited schools.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.102 DEFINITIONS

- (1) For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms apply:
- (a) "Accreditation" means certification by the Board of Public Education that a school meets the adopted standards of the Board of Public Education for a specified school year.
 - (b) "Assessment" means the gathering, organizing, and evaluation of information about student learning in order to monitor and measure student learning, the effectiveness of the instructional program, and to inform local policies and decisions.
 - (c) "Developmental domain" means the broad, interrelated categories or dimensions of early childhood development reflective of early childhood education children's learning and growth. The four core domains include social and emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.
 - (d) "Early childhood curriculum" means an articulated educational plan for young children, which is grounded in research-based understandings of child development and developmentally appropriate practices. Curriculum guides the teaching process from identifying what to teach, including early content standards in each of the four developmental domains and how to teach, including developing learning experiences based upon individual and group outcomes, and assessing what was learned then using this data to inform future planning and teaching. For early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten, the curriculum must embrace the four developmental domains while focusing on the subject subjects of literacy and numeracy with a goal of establishing a trajectory leading to reading or math proficiency at the end of third grade.
 - (e) "Learning center" means a self-contained area of the classroom featuring a wide variety of hands-on materials that children can choose and use independently which are organized around a curriculum area (science, math, art, music, dramatic play, literacy) or a specific kind of play material (blocks, sensory, manipulative).
 - (f) "Paraprofessional" means an adult with the qualifications detailed in ARM 10.63.105 who works under the direct supervision of a teacher and who may work independently in a teacher's absence, but for the majority of the time works directly with the teacher in the same space with the same group of students.
 - (g) "Teacher" means a licensed individual as defined in ARM 10.55.602, with primary responsibility for a group or class of early childhood education students.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.103 LEADERSHIP

- (1) The early childhood education program leadership shall effectively implement policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program management so all students, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.
- (2) Professional development for early childhood education educators as required by ARM 10.55.714 should be tailored to early childhood development and learning.
- (3) Professional development completed by elementary (K-8) educators providing early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions should be tailored to such interventions. The elementary (K-8) educators providing early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions, the employing districts, and accredited educator preparation providers, pursuant to ARM 10.58.102, are encouraged to collaborate to develop professional development options that support attainment of qualifications leading to an early childhood education (P-3) endorsement.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.104 TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR PUBLIC PRESCHOOL AND EARLY ~~LITERACY~~-TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

- (1) Teachers shall be assigned at the levels for which they are licensed and endorsed in accordance with state statutes and Board of Public Education rules.
- (2) Teachers with an early childhood (P-3) endorsement shall be considered to be appropriately licensed, endorsed, and assigned to teach in an accredited preschool program.
- (3) While teachers with an early childhood (P-3) endorsement are encouraged, teachers with either an early childhood (P-3) endorsement or an elementary (K-8) endorsement shall be considered to be appropriately licensed, endorsed, and assigned to teach early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten. Teachers with an elementary (K-8) endorsement who are teaching early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten are encouraged to pursue professional development as outlined in 10.63.103 to ensure delivery of high-quality early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.105 EARLY CHILDHOOD PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- (1) Early childhood paraprofessionals must have:
 - (a) completed two years of study at an institution of higher education; or
 - (b) obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
 - (c) a high school diploma and meet a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to assist in the delivery of the curriculum, instruction, and program delivery standards to support students' development of the knowledge and skills outlined in the early learning content standards.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.106 EARLY CHILDHOOD PARAPROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

- (1) Early childhood paraprofessionals shall be under the direct supervision of a licensed teacher who is responsible for instruction and assessment of students.
- (2) Early childhood paraprofessionals assigned to assist students with special education needs shall be under the supervision of the teacher.
- (3) The supervising teacher shall be available while an early childhood paraprofessional is fulfilling his or her responsibilities and shall not be simultaneously assigned to another teaching duty or preparation time.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.107 CLASS SIZE

- ~~(1) There must be one appropriately licensed and endorsed teacher for ten-10 students, with an early childhood paraprofessional for any additional students over ten, for up to no more than 18 total students in a classroom with two adults.~~
- ~~(1)(2) With classrooms exceeding 10 students, an early childhood paraprofessional is required at a rate of one hour per day, per student overload up to 16 students. At 16-18 students, a minimum of one appropriately licensed and endorsed teacher and one early childhood paraprofessional are required. The school district must assign qualified human resources that comply with all fingerprint and background check requirements when exceeding maximum class sizes at a rate of 1 1/2 hours per day,~~

~~per student overload. An overload of five students per classroom is considered excessive.~~

~~(2)(3) School districts are encouraged to exceed these standards for classrooms exceeding 10 students with additional staffing beyond the requirements of (2).~~

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.109 ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY

- (1) A child must have reached three years of age before the districts' official start date of the preschool program or have been enrolled by special permission by the board of trustees.
- (2) A child who is 4 years of age or older on or before September 10th of the year in which the child is to participate in early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten and who has not completed kindergarten and who is determined through the evaluation methodology process outlined in ARM 10.54.901 or ARM 10.54.903 to be below a trajectory leading to reading or math proficiency at the end of third grade is eligible for enrollment in early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.110 EARLY LEARNING DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAINS AND CONTENT STANDARDS

- (1) The following early learning developmental domains represent the foundational skills all students need to be successful learners. The development of communication, language, and literacy skills supports the growth in all other domains of development. All developmental domains are applicable for public preschool programs and early targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten.
 - (a) The language domain includes communication and comprehension in oral and written language.
 - (i) Language instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:
 - (A) receptive language, wherein students use listening and observation skills to make sense of and respond to spoken language and other forms of communication; enter into the exchange of information around what is seen, heard, and

- experienced; and begin to acquire an understanding of the concepts of language that contribute to learning;
 - (B) expressive language, wherein students develop skills in using sounds, facial expressions, gestures, and words, such as to help others understand their needs, ask questions, express feelings and ideas, and solve problems;
 - (C) social language, wherein students develop skills to interact and communicate with others in effective ways; and
 - (D) support for dual language speakers, wherein students receive support in their home language(s) while becoming proficient in English.
 - (ii) Literacy instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:
 - (A) written language, wherein students build an understanding and interest in the symbols, sounds, and rhythms of written language and develop awareness that the printed word can be used for various purposes;
 - (B) written communication, wherein students develop interest and skill in using symbols as a meaningful form of communication;
 - (C) print awareness, wherein students build an understanding that print carries a message through symbols and words and that there is a connection between sounds and letters (the alphabetic principle); and
 - (D) speech development, wherein students develop an awareness of the sounds of letters and the combination of letters that make up words and use this awareness to manipulate syllables and sounds of speech.
- (b) The social and emotional domain includes culture, family, community as well as social and emotional development.
 - (i) Culture, family, and community skills instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:
 - (A) an awareness of and appreciation for similarities and differences between themselves and others;
 - (B) an awareness of the functions and diverse characteristics of families; and
 - (C) an understanding of the basic principles of how communities function, including work roles and commerce.
 - (ii) Social development skill instruction includes opportunities for students to:
 - (A) develop trust, emotional bonds, and interact comfortably with adults;
 - (B) interact and build relationships with peers; and
 - (C) develop skills in cooperation, negotiation, and empathy.
 - (iii) Emotional development skills instruction includes opportunities for students to:

- (A) develop an awareness and appreciation of self as a unique, competent, and capable individual;
 - (B) demonstrate a belief in their abilities;
 - (C) manage internal states, feelings, and behavior, and develop the ability to adapt to diverse situations and environments; and
 - (D) express a wide and varied range of feelings through facial expressions, gestures, behaviors, and words.
 - (c) The physical domain includes development of motor skills and instruction in health, safety, and personal care.
 - (i) Motor skills instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:
 - (A) small muscle strength, coordination, and skills;
 - (B) large muscle strength, coordination, and skills; and
 - (C) use of their senses to explore the environment and develop skills through sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound.
 - (ii) Health, safety, and personal care skills instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:
 - (A) personal health and hygiene skills as they develop and practice self-care routines;
 - (B) healthy eating practices by eating a variety of nutritional foods;
 - (C) healthy behaviors through physical activity; and
 - (D) an awareness and understanding of safety rules as they learn to make safe and appropriate choices.
 - (d) The cognitive domain includes approaches to learning.
 - (i) Approaches to learning skills instruction include opportunities for students to develop:
 - (A) curiosity through imagination, inventiveness, originality, and interest as they explore and experience new things;
 - (B) initiative and self-direction through engagement in new tasks and to take risks in learning new skills or information;
 - (C) persistence and attentiveness with the ability to focus their attention and concentration to complete tasks and increase their learning;
 - (D) reflection and interpretation skills in thinking about their learning in order to inform their future decisions; and
 - (E) reasoning skills in causation, critical and analytical thinking, problem solving, and representational thought.
- (2) The following early learning content standards are aligned to the Montana K-12 Content Standards and highlight what students should know, understand, and be able to do upon entering kindergarten. All early learning content standards are applicable for public preschool programs while only the English Language Arts and Literacy and Mathematics and Numeracy Content Standards apply to early

targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten.

- (a) English Language Arts and Literacy standards include:
 - (i) early reading, wherein students develop an understanding, skill, and interest in alphabet knowledge using the symbols, sounds, and rhythms of written language;
 - (ii) print development and writing, wherein students demonstrate interest and skill in using symbols as a meaningful form of communication;
 - (iii) speaking and listening, wherein students use phonemic and phonological awareness to identify and play with individual sounds in spoken words; and
 - (iv) language, wherein students develop the ability to communicate with others to build relationships, share meaning, and express needs.
- (b) Mathematics and numeracy standards include:
 - (i) number sense and operations, wherein students develop the ability to think and work with numbers, to understand their uses, and describe their relationships through structured and everyday experiences;
 - (ii) measurement concepts, wherein students use measurement instruments to explore and discover measurement relationships and characteristics, such as length, quantity, volume, distance, weight, area, and time;
 - (iii) mathematical skills in data analysis, wherein students count, sort, and compare objects;
 - (iv) initial algebraic thinking and operations, wherein students identify, describe, produce, and create patterns using mathematical language and materials; and
 - (v) geometric and spatial reasoning, wherein students build the foundation for recognizing, creating, and manipulating shapes, and learning spatial reasoning and directional words as they become aware of their bodies and personal space in their physical environment.
- (c) Creative arts standards include:
 - (i) creative movement wherein students produce rhythmic movements spontaneously and in imitation with growing technical and artistic abilities;
 - (ii) drama, wherein students show appreciation and awareness of drama through observation, imitation, and participation in simple dramatic plots;
 - (iii) music, wherein students engage in a variety of musical or rhythmic activities; and
 - (iv) visual arts, wherein students demonstrate a growing understanding and appreciation for the creative process and visual arts.
- (d) Science standards include:

- (i) scientific thinking and the use of the scientific methods through investigation using their senses to observe, manipulate objects, ask questions, make predictions, and develop conclusions and generalizations;
 - (ii) an understanding of and compassion for living things;
 - (iii) an understanding of the physical world, the nature and properties of energy, and nonliving matter;
 - (iv) an understanding of the earth and planets; and
 - (v) an understanding of engineering as the process that assists people in designing and building.
- (e) Social studies standards include:
 - (i) an understanding of the concept of historical time, including past, present, and future;
 - (ii) knowledge of geographical places and regions by understanding that each place has its own unique characteristics and the reciprocal effect individuals have with the world around them; and
 - (iii) awareness of their natural world, including the environment and our interdependence on the natural world.
- (f) Technology standards include:
 - (i) an understanding of technology with awareness of technological tools and developmentally appropriate exploration of the ways to use these resources.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
 Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.111 CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

- (1) The early childhood curriculum, as defined in ARM 10.63.102, shall:
 - (a) contain a written philosophy and framework, grounded in research-based understandings of child development, to provide a clear, coherent focus for planning students' experiences;
 - (b) informing instruction through observation and documentation of children's strengths, interests, and needs in their play, work, and behavior;
 - (c) guide the learning process and daily plans for learning through the selection of materials and equipment to enhance development and learning in the early learning developmental domains, including social and emotional, physical, language, and cognition; and encourage integration of applicable early learning content areas, including literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, creative expression and the arts, and technology;
 - (d) include planned opportunities for active exploration, discovery, and social interaction;
 - (e) plan for students' engagement in play each day; and
 - (f) be implemented in a manner reflective of students' family and community lives while being responsive to diversity, including gender, age, language,

culture, and ability, including opportunities for students and families to learn about the distinct and unique heritage of American Indians, particularly Montana Indian tribes, in a culturally responsive manner (20-1-501, MCA).

- (2) School districts shall develop early childhood education programs to include an ongoing and systematic written assessment plan which includes protocols for:
 - (a) monitoring the progress of students toward achieving content standards and learning in the developmental domains using formative and summative approaches that include universal screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments;
 - (b) administration of assessments and interpretation of assessment results;
 - (c) providing disaggregated data to educators and teams to inform instructional planning and decision making;
 - (d) involving families as partners in linguistically and culturally responsive ways to inform decisions about students' needs; and
 - (e) assessing the effectiveness of the instructional program that guides adjustments for improvement.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.112 INSTRUCTION

- (1) The early childhood education program shall ensure developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and effective teaching strategies that enhance students' development and learning of the early learning content standards in ARM 10.63.110 through the program's curriculum.
- (2) The early childhood education instructional program shall:
 - (a) use both content and child development knowledge to create learning opportunities and to engage young learners in meaningful, planned, and purposeful experiences related to the curriculum goals and content standards;
 - (b) use a variety of effective approaches and strategies which include opportunities for both teacher and student-initiated interactions and activities;
 - (c) support children's development by providing opportunities for all children to play with and learn from each other;
 - (d) use knowledge of each student's development to enhance instruction, modify strategies and materials, and adjust supports and challenges as students gain competence, understanding, and skills;
 - (e) build upon student's language, understanding of concepts, and increase vocabulary;

- (f) integrate knowledge of students' families and the community to build relationships that foster integral connections with the curriculum and learning experiences;
- (g) use cultural and community resources in the classroom to enhance student learning and development; and
- (h) work as a team to implement learning plans, including plans for students with special needs.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
 Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.113 PHYSICAL AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- (1) The early childhood education program shall ensure an appropriate and well-maintained safe and healthful physical environment that:
 - (a) is designed to protect student health and safety;
 - (b) allows for supervision of students primarily by sight;
 - (c) provides sanitization according to state and federal health standards;
 - (d) follows state and federal guidelines for meals and snacks; and
 - (e) provides safe, supervised, and adequate outside play space with age-appropriate equipment and safe, adequate indoor space for each child.
- (2) The early childhood education program shall ensure a safe and healthful learning environment by:
 - (a) providing a written predictable but flexible schedule that provides intentionally planned routines and transitions; and
 - (b) providing daily indoor and outdoor activities, including:
 - (i) planned learning center time where students have individual choice of activities;
 - (ii) daily opportunities to learn and play individually, in small groups, and as a whole group; and
 - (iii) use of developmentally appropriate materials and equipment.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
 Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.114 CHILD GUIDANCE

- (1) Child guidance means employing a variety of strategies to foster self-regulation, respect for others, problem solving, and social and emotional development in an ongoing interactive process and helps students learn how to communicate with others in developmentally appropriate ways. To ensure appropriate child guidance, the early childhood education program shall:

- (a) use positive behavior supports to ensure the social, emotional, and cultural development of each student;
- (b) provide a positive climate to ensure equality, inclusion, and citizenship;
- (c) develop relationships with the student and the student's family in ways that are linguistically and culturally sensitive;
- (d) provide opportunities for students to be contributing members of the classroom community;
- (e) provide clear behavioral expectations, including the use of effective methods to prevent and redirect misbehavior; and
- (f) partner with families and other professionals for students with challenging behavior to develop and implement an individualized plan that fosters the child's inclusion and success.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
 Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.115 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- (1) The early childhood education program staff shall establish and maintain collaborative relationships with each child's family and community to foster student's development in all settings.
- (2) To ensure collaborative relationships between the community, school, and families, early childhood education programs shall have protocols which:
 - (a) establish intentional practices designed to foster strong reciprocal relationships with families;
 - (b) ensure that families are an integral part of the decision-making team through communication and family conferences which promote dialogue and partnership regarding their student's educational goals and services;
 - (c) collaborate with families to help students participate successfully in early childhood settings;
 - (d) ensure that all families, regardless of family structure, socioeconomic, racial, religious, and cultural diversity, gender, abilities, or preferred languages are included in their child's educational experience;
 - (e) assist families in locating, contacting, and using community resources that support the student's well-being, development, and goals;
 - (f) promote awareness and understanding of the unique legal and political structures of Montana Tribal Nations in order to best meet the needs of Indian students and families;
 - (g) collaborate with community-based programs to ensure that parents and families have the resources they need to be involved in their student's education, growth, and development; and
 - (h) provide access to health screenings and referrals for all students in the program.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803,
MCA

❖ ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – (Items 7-11)

ITEM 7

ACTION AND INFORMATION ON
RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT AND
ENCOURAGE FAFSA COMPLETION PRIOR
TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Dr. Angela McLean



Board of Public Education

BOARD MEMBERS

APPOINTED MEMBERS:

Dr. Tim Tharp, Chair
Savage

Dr. Ron Slinger, Vice Chair
Miles City

Madalyn Quinlan
Helena

Julia Maxwell
Marion

Renee Rasmussen
Clancy

Lisa Schmidt
Conrad

Dr. Hannah Nieskens
Cardwell

Lydia Comstock, Student Rep.
Great Falls

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:

Clayton Christian,
Commissioner of
Higher Education

Susie Hedalen,
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

Greg Gianforte,
Governor

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

McCall Flynn

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Montana Board of Public Education affirms that educational opportunity is essential to the well-being of Montana's students, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, Montana's high schools play a vital role in helping students explore and prepare for the full range of postsecondary and career options available in Montana, including pathways through colleges, universities, apprenticeships, and workforce training programs; and

WHEREAS, completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a key step in accessing financial aid, including grants, scholarships, work-study programs, the upcoming Workforce Pell, and federal student loans, that can make higher education and workforce training more affordable for Montana families; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, Montana's FAFSA completion rate was 44 percent, compared to the national average of 54 percent, leaving an estimated \$12 million in financial aid unclaimed by Montana students; and

WHEREAS, the Montana University System's proposed Direct Admissions initiative will help simplify the college exploration process by proactively informing high school students of the in-state postsecondary options for which they already qualify, without requiring any application fee or obligation to enroll;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montana Board of Public Education shall work with the Montana Board of Regents and the Superintendent of Public Instruction to encourage all Montana public high schools to strengthen students' and families' understanding of, and completion of, the FAFSA by incorporating FAFSA awareness into financial literacy curriculum and hosting FAFSA completion events; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana Board of Public Education shall support the Montana University System's Direct Admissions initiative to help students and families better understand their postsecondary opportunities in Montana; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Montana Board of Public Education encourages the Montana Office of Public Instruction and the Montana Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education to assist interested school districts in these efforts through technical assistance, data-sharing protocols, and outreach to families and communities.

RESOLVED BY THE MONTANA BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION ON
NOVEMBER 19, 2025.

Dr. Tim Tharp
Chairperson
Board of Public Education

ITEM 8

**ACTION ON THE PROPOSED NOTICE OF
ADOPTION PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING
IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 53, ENGLISH
LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY
CONTENT STANDARDS, AND AUTHORIZE
FILING OF THE NOTICE WITH THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLICATION
IN THE MONTANA ADMINISTRATIVE
REGISTER**

Madalyn Quinlan



**MONTANA
ADMINISTRATIVE
REGISTER**



BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

NOTICE OF ADOPTION

MAR NOTICE NO. 2025-242.2

Summary

Adoption of NEW RULE 1 (10.53.414) through NEW RULE 13 (10.53.426) and repeal of ARM 10.53.401 through 10.53.413 pertaining to English Language Arts and Literacy Content Standards.

Previous Notice(s) and Hearing Information

On August 8, 2025, the Board of Public Education (board) published MAR Notice No. 2025-242.1 pertaining to the public hearing on the proposed adoption and repeal of the above-stated rules in Issue Number 15 of the 2025 Montana Administrative Register.

On August 29, 2025, the board held a public hearing to consider the proposed rulemaking.

Final Rulemaking Action – Effective July 1, 2027

ADOPT AS PROPOSED

The agency has adopted the following rules as proposed:

NEW RULE (10.53.414) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR LITERACY PRACTICE FOR GRADES K-12

NEW RULE (10.53.415) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR KINDERGARTEN

NEW RULE (10.53.416) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR FIRST GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.417) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR SECOND GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.418) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR THIRD GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.419) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR FOURTH GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.420) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR FIFTH GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.421) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR SIXTH GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.422) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR SEVENTH GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.423) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR EIGHTH GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.424) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR NINTH AND TENTH GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.425) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS FOR ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH GRADE

NEW RULE (10.53.426) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY STANDARDS GLOSSARY

REPEAL AS PROPOSED

The agency has repealed the following rules as proposed:

10.53.401 COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING

10.53.402 COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR WRITING

10.53.403 COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING

10.53.404 COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR LANGUAGE

10.53.405 READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

10.53.406 READING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT

10.53.407 READING STANDARDS: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

10.53.408 WRITING STANDARDS

10.53.409 SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

10.53.410 LANGUAGE STANDARDS

10.53.411 READING STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN HISTORY/ SOCIAL STUDIES

10.53.412 READING STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

10.53.413 WRITING STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

Statement of Reasons

No comments were received.

Contact

McCall Flynn
(406) 444-6576
bpe@mt.gov

Rule Reviewer

McCall Flynn

Approval

Dr. Tim Tharp

Board Chair

ITEM 9

ACTION ON VARIANCE TO STANDARDS REQUESTS AND RENEWALS

- Initial Applications
- Renewal Applications

**Ellery Bresler
Crystal Andrews**

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: November 19-21, 2025

Presentation	Recommend Approval of the 2025-26 Initial and Renewal Variances to Standards (VTS) applications.
Presenter	Crystal Andrews Ellery Bresler
Position Title	Accreditation and Licensure Senior Manager Accreditation and Licensure Data Analyst Office of Public Instruction
Overview	This presentation provides the Board of Public Education recommendations from Superintendent Hedalen to approve Initial and Renewal Variance to Standards. The primary report is attached.
Requested Decision(s)	Approval of the eighteen Variances to Standards applications.
Related Issue(s)	None
Recommendation(s)	Action 1: Approve State Superintendent Hedalen's recommendation of the thirteen requests for Initial Variances to Standards. Action 2: Approve State Superintendent Hedalen's recommendations of the five requests for Renewal of Variances to Standards.





Variance to Standards Initial Application Summary SY 2025-2026

1. Billings Public Schools - Skyview High School 9-12 (SC: 1628), Billings West High School 9-12 (SC: 1251), Billings Sr High School 9-12 (SC: 1250), Billings Early College School 9-12 (SC: 3005)

a. 10.55.905 2(h) – Graduation Requirements

- i. Application Request: To obtain a one-year extension beyond July 2025, to provide adequate time for the class of 2026 to complete existing pathways without specific completion of 10.55.905 2(h) while ensuring that all subsequent graduating classes (2027 and beyond) remain on track to meet the new requirement.
- ii. Requirement: One-half credit in economics or financial literacy as a graduation requirement. The BPE granted a statewide delay until July 1, 2025, which impacts the graduating class of 2026.
- iii. Workable Reasons: The variance provides time to phase in expanded course offerings. The district has grown from 3 qualifying courses to 6 within two years, with 2 more planned in the next year.
- iv. BPS has nearly 17,000 students; the impacted classes (2026 & 2027) total 2,648 students, scheduling them into half-credit courses at one time would have required 18 additional full-time staff members, which is impractical given staffing shortages and prior budget reductions. Reassigning that many current staff members to focus entirely on these courses would have significantly impacted the course options for the graduating classes of 2024 and 2025.
- v. The initial request is for two years

2. Billings Public Schools - Billings Multilingual Academy High School 9-12 (SC: 3004), Billings Multilingual Academy Middle School 6-8 (SC: 3003)

a. 10.55.902 – Basic Education Program: Middle School

- i. Application Request: To operate a hybrid schedule to support ELLs. Students spend ½ day at BMA receiving instruction in English, Language Arts, mathematics, and social studies. The other ½ day,

students are enrolled in their neighborhood middle or high school where they participate in all other required courses – such as science, health enhancement/PE, world languages, career and technical education, the arts, and graduation requirements.

- ii. Requirement: Basic education program standards for junior high, middle schools, and 7th and 8th-grade programs. The rule specifies curriculum alignment with state standards, the integration of literacy and American Indian cultural heritage.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: The variance leverages a coordinated hybrid structure between BMA and students' neighborhood schools.
 - iv. While at their neighborhood schools, students access the full range of courses, extracurricular, counseling, and library services required under accreditation standards.
 - v. The initial request is for two years.
- b. 10.55.904 – Basic Education Program: High School
- i. Application Request: To operate a hybrid schedule to support ELLs. Students spend ½ day at BMA receiving instruction in English, Language Arts, mathematics, and social studies. The other ½ day, students are enrolled in their neighborhood middle or high school where they participate in all other required courses – such as science, health enhancement/PE, world languages, career and technical education, the arts, and graduation requirements.
 - ii. Requirement: A basic educational program for high schools requiring a minimum of 20 coursework units for students in grades 9-12 state content standards.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: The variance leverages a coordinated hybrid structure between BMA and students' neighborhood schools. While at their neighborhood schools, students access the full range of courses, extracurricular, counseling, and library services required under accreditation standards.
 - iv. While at their neighborhood schools, students access the full range of courses, extracurricular, counseling, and library services required under accreditation standards.
 - v. The initial request is for two years.
- c. 10.55.905 – High School Course Offerings
- i. Application Request: To operate a hybrid schedule to support ELLs. Students spend ½ day at BMA receiving instruction in English, Language Arts, mathematics, and social studies. The other ½ day, students are enrolled in their neighborhood middle or high school where they participate in all other required courses – such as science, health enhancement/PE, world languages, career and

technical education, the arts, and graduation requirements.

- ii. Requirement: 20 high school units for graduation, with 13 specific units mandated. These include (4) English language arts, (2) math, (2) social studies (with ½ unit of civics or government), (2) science, (1) health enhancement/physical education, ½ unit in economics or financial literacy, which can be fulfilled within social studies, math, or CTE requirements.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: The variance leverages a coordinated hybrid structure between BMA and students' neighborhood schools. While at their neighborhood schools, students access the full range of courses, extracurricular, counseling, and library services required under accreditation standards.
 - iv. While at their neighborhood schools, students access the full range of courses, extracurricular, counseling, and library services required under accreditation standards.
 - v. The initial request is for two years.
- d. 10.55.905 – High School Course Offerings
- i. Application Request: To operate a hybrid schedule to support ELLs. Students spend ½ day at BMA receiving instruction in English, Language Arts, mathematics, and social studies. The other ½ day, students are enrolled in their neighborhood middle or high school where they participate in all other required courses – such as science, health enhancement/PE, world languages, career and technical education, the arts, and graduation requirements.
 - ii. Requirement: 20 high school units for graduation, with 13 specific units mandated. These include (4) English language arts, (2) math, (2) social studies (with ½ unit of civics or government), (2) science, (1) health enhancement/physical education, ½ unit in economics or financial literacy, which can be fulfilled within social studies, math, or CTE requirements.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: The variance leverages a coordinated hybrid structure between BMA and students' neighborhood schools. While at their neighborhood schools, students access the full range of courses, extracurricular, counseling, and library services required under accreditation standards.
 - iv. While at their neighborhood schools, students access the full range of courses, extracurricular, counseling, and library services required under accreditation standards.
 - v. The initial request is for two years.

3. Billings Public Schools - Billings Opportunity School 9-12 (SC: 3006)

- a. 10.55.904 – Basic Education Program Offerings: High School
 - i. Application Request: To access academic requirements through a combination of on-site instruction, online learning facilitated by a BOS instructor, and through hybrid scheduling with area high schools, including the Billings Career Center.
 - ii. Requirement: A basic educational program for high schools requiring a minimum of 20 coursework units for students in grades 9-12 state content standards.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: The schedule of the BOS coincides with the accredited, comprehensive area high schools.
 - iv. Students at the BOS have access to shuttle bus services provided by the Billings Public Schools.
 - v. The initial request is for two years.
- b. 10.55.905 - High School Course Offerings
 - i. Application Request: To access academic requirements through a combination of on-site instruction, online learning facilitated by a BOS instructor, and through hybrid scheduling with area high schools, including the Billings Career Center.
 - ii. Requirement: 20 high school units for graduation, with 13 specific units mandated. These include (4) English language arts, (2) math, (2) social studies (with ½ unit of civics or government), (2) science, (1) health enhancement/physical education, ½ unit in economics or financial literacy, which can be fulfilled within social studies, math, or CTE requirements.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: The schedule of the BOS coincides with the accredited, comprehensive area high schools. Students at the BOS have access to shuttle bus services provided by the Billings Public Schools.
 - iv. The initial request is for two years.

4. Billings Public Schools - Billings Early College School 9-12 (SC: 3005)

- a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Service
 - i. Application Request: To operate on a hybrid schedule.
 - ii. Requirement: (1) The school library shall be housed in a central location, and each school shall have a licensed and endorsed library media specialist at the following ratio: (2) Schools of fewer than 126 students shall employ or contract with a licensed and endorsed school library media specialist. (3) If a school has fewer than 126 students, the district may utilize a consortium,

multidistrict agreement, or interlocal cooperative to secure these services.

- iii. Workable Reasons: Students attend area high schools and have access to transportation systems (shuttle service) through Billings Public Schools.
- iv. The initial request is for two years.
- b. 10.55.904 – Basic Education Program Offerings: High School
 - i. Application Request: To offer programs through a hybrid schedule.
 - ii. Requirement: A basic educational program for high schools requiring a minimum of 20 coursework units for students in grades 9-12 state content standards.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: Students attend area high schools and have access to transportation systems (shuttle service) through Billings Public Schools.
 - iv. The initial request is for two years.
- c. 10.55.905 – Basic Education Program Offerings: High School
 - i. Application Request: To offer programs through a hybrid schedule.
 - ii. Requirement: 20 high school units for graduation, with 13 specific units mandated. These include (4) English language arts, (2) math, 2) social studies (with ½ unit of civics or government), (2) science, (1) health enhancement/physical education, ½ unit in economics or financial literacy, which can be fulfilled within social studies, math, or CTE requirements.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: Students attend area high schools and have access to transportation systems (shuttle service) through Billings Public Schools.
 - iv. The initial request is for two years.

5. Cascade Public Schools - Cascade Elementary PK-5 (SC: 0158), Cascade 6-8 (SC: 1661), Cascade High School 9-12 (SC: 0157)

- a. 10.55.709 – Assignment of Library Media Specialist
 - i. Application Request: To contract a licensed library media specialist (0.01 FTE) to oversee a library media specialist paraprofessional.
 - ii. Requirement: (1)(a) .5 FTE for schools with 126-250 students; (2) Schools with fewer than 126 students shall employ or contract with a licensed and endorsed school library media specialist.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: The variance is workable due to the small enrollment and shared resources. The licensed librarian will provide mentoring and support to the paraprofessional.
 - iv. Cascade's retired librarian is willing to return on a limited basis to

meet the requirements of the variance.

- v. This initial request is for two years.

6. Clancy Elementary - Clancy School District (SC: 0452), Clancy Elementary PK-5 (SC: 0606), Clancy Middle School 6-8 (SC: 1713)

a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Specialist

- i. Application Request: To employ one full-time (1.0 FTE) Library Media Specialist serving PK-8 students.
- ii. Requirement: 1.001 FTE Library Media Specialist
- iii. Workable Reasons: The district's single full-time Library Media Specialist is sufficient to meet the needs of 380 PK-8 students on a single campus. The 0.001 FTE shortfall due to grade reconfiguration does not impact service delivery. Current staffing, scheduling, and facility access ensure that library programming remains robust, accessible, and instructional in nature.
- iv. The full-time librarian meets the requirements of ARM 10.55.1101, providing consistent instruction in literacy, research, and digital skills.
- v. This is an initial request for two years.

b. 10.55.704 – Assignment of District Superintendents

- i. Application Request: To operate with one full-time principal and one full-time, on-site superintendent who also performs principal duties. The district requests a variance to maintain this model without adding an additional administrator.
- ii. Requirement: (1)(d) School systems with 31 or more FTE licensed staff shall employ a full-time (1.0 FTE) licensed superintendent who shall devote full time to administration and supervision not to exceed a total assignment of 1.0 FTE; and no individual superintendent assigned pursuant to the ratios in (1) may be assigned as more than 1.0 FTE.
- iii. Workable Reasons: The district's current administration structure, consisting of a full-time principal and an on-site superintendent who shares principal duties, is supported by enrollment size, facility layout, and scheduling needs. This structure provides comprehensive leadership coverage. This model has been effective over time and is supported by existing staffing and operational resources.
- iv. The full-time principal and on-site superintendent jointly manage behavior, instructional support, and family engagement, creating a

responsive and stable leadership team that sustains a positive learning environment.

- v. This initial request is for two years.

c. 10.55.705 – Administrative Personnel: Assignment of School

Administrators/Principals

- i. Application Request: To operate with one full-time principal and one full-time, on-site superintendent who also performs principal duties. The district requests a variance to maintain this model without adding an additional administrator.
- ii. Requirement: (2) (c) 1.0 FTE licensed principal shall be assigned to schools with enrollments of 250 to fewer than 550 students.
- iii. Workable Reasons: The district's current administration structure, consisting of a full-time principal and an on-site superintendent who shares principal duties, is supported by enrollment size, facility layout, and scheduling needs. This structure provides comprehensive leadership coverage. This model has been effective over time and is supported by existing staffing and operational resources.
- iv. The full-time principal and on-site superintendent jointly manage behavior, instructional support, and family engagement, creating a responsive and stable leadership team that sustains a positive learning environment.
- v. This initial request is for two years.

7. Elysian Elementary - Elysian Elysian Middle School 6-8 (SC: 1831), Elysian School PK-5 (SC: 1295) – Pending Board Approval on November 4th

a. 10.55.705 – Administrative Personnel: Assignment of School

Administrators/Principals

- i. Application Request: To have a 1.0 FTE Principal serve as the administrator for a combined student population of 450, all housed in one building.
- ii. Requirement: 1.0 FTE principal for the elementary school (population 303) and a 0.25 FTE principal for the middle school (population 127).
- iii. Workable Reasons: Elysian School District does have a Superintendent in the same building, which allows for administrative support when needed.
- iv. While the in-building Superintendent could fill the 0.25 FTE position in the Middle School as Principal and cover the Superintendent role

for the district, the principal position is counted as certified staff which pushes the certified staff FTE from 30.5 to 31.75. This statistic does not allow for a split Superintendent role within the district.

- v. The initial request is for two years.

8. Frontier Elementary - Frontier School PK-6 (SC: 1411), Frontier 7-8 (SC: 1757)

a. 10.55.710 – Assignment of School Counseling Staff

- i. Application Request: To operate with a contracted counselor at .75 FTE.
- ii. Requirement: ******(1) A minimum equivalent of one full-time counselor for each 400 elementary (K-8) students shall be provided. The counselor/student ratio shall be prorated.
- iii. Workable Reasons: The current contracted counselor previously worked at halftime. This year the counselor is working at 75% of the time to be available to students. Currently, a teacher is working towards a counseling degree and has been providing counseling support within the scope of the guidance counselor practicum.
- iv. Frontier School and Frontier 7-8 has experienced an unexpected increase in enrollment, due to a state tuition bill, causing standard issues with the current contracted counselor of 17 years.
- v. The initial request is for two years.

9. Hardin Public Schools – The Big Horn Academy (SC: 3036)

a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Services (2) Schools of fewer than 126 students shall employ or contract with a licensed and endorsed school library media specialist.

- i. Application Request: To utilize the library services of Hardin High School in lieu of hiring a part-time librarian.
- ii. Requirement: 0.001 FTE for schools with enrollment of less than 126 students.
- iii. Workable Reasons: Big Horn Academy is located near the Hardin High School campus, which employs a full-time library media specialist. The Hardin High School library is open throughout the day allowing equitable access to all students.
- iv. This is an initial request for two years.

10. Helena Flats Elementary - Helena Flats School PK-6 (SC: 0432)

a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Services (1) The School library shall be housed in a central location, and each school shall have a licensed and endorsed library

media specialist at the following ratio: (b) 1 FTE for schools with 251-500 students.

- i. Application Request: To be permitted to adhere to Section 1(a) .5 FTE for schools with 126-250 students and NOT be required to hire an additional 0.5 FTE. Helena Flats School currently has 256 enrolled students.
- ii. Requirement: 1 FTE library media specialist for schools with 251-500 students.
- iii. Workable Reasons: The overage of 6 enrolled students does not create a situation that is difficult for current library media specialists to handle as the school is within the parameters outlined in ARM 10.55.712 – Class Size- Elementary. The entire school district is housed in a single building.
- iv. Additionally, the school predicts that the student enrollment will decrease to under the 251-500 ratio.
- v. This is an initial request for two years.

11. Lewiston Public Schools - Central MT CTE Academy 9-12 (SC: 3030)

- a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Services, K-12, (1) The School library shall be housed in a central location, and each school shall have a licensed and endorsed library media specialist at the following ratio: (2) Schools of fewer than 126 students shall employ or contract with a licensed and endorsed school library media specialist.
 - i. Application Request: To utilize the services of the 1.0 FTE librarian employed at Fergus High School. (86 ½ time students, FY26)
 - ii. Requirement: To employ or contract with a licensed and endorsed school library media specialist.
 - iii. Workable Reasons: Most courses at the Central MT CTE Academy are housed on the Fergus High School campus where students have access to school resources, including the library and a full-time librarian.
 - iv. Central MT CTE Academy is a new school. The combined enrollment of Fergus High School and Central MT CTE Academy is 362 students, which includes 86 part time enrolled students in the CTE Academy. Combined, the enrollment of both schools falls within the 10.55.709 – Library Media Services, K-12 Accreditation Standards: (b) 1 FTE for schools with 251-500 students. Fergus High School employs a 1.0 FTE Librarian. By utilizing shared resources between schools, the proposed variance to this standard will provide the necessary support.

- v. This is an initial request for two years.

12. Lewiston Public Schools - Lewistown 7-8 (SC: 1410), *Lewistown Public Schools (K-12 System) (LE: 0258)

- a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Services, K-12, (1) The school library shall be housed in a central location, and each school shall have a licensed and endorsed library media specialist at the following ratio: (a) .5 FTE for schools with 126-250 students.
 - i. Application Request: To utilize a highly qualified paraprofessional to meet the educational needs of students requiring library services.
 - ii. Requirement: .5 FTE for Schools with 126-250 students.
 - iii. Workable Reasons:
 - Lewistown Junior High is using a highly qualified paraprofessional to maintain the library and meet the standards. The paraprofessional's assignment is approximately .5 FTE dedicated to library media services. The paraprofessional utilizes the mentorship of certified librarians in the district for assistance.
 - iv. Lewistown Junior High has not been able to acquire a .5 FTE certified Librarian. The highly qualified paraprofessional has served in the position for several years and the library services provided has more than met the educational needs of the school and the students. Enrollment projections indicate the junior high will remain under 250 students.
 - v. This is an initial request for two years.
- b. 10.55.704 – Administrative Personnel: Assignment of District Superintendents (2) School systems with 100 or more FTE licensed staff shall employ a full-time curriculum coordinator to supervise the educational program and alignment of standards, assessment, curriculum, instruction, and instructional materials. The curriculum coordinator shall hold a Class 3 administrative license. Those districts with fewer than 100 FTE licensed staff and no full-time curriculum coordinator shall employ the services of a consortium, multidistrict collaborative, or interlocal cooperative, or a part-time, designated curriculum coordinator.
 - i. Application Request: To proceed through FY26 without a full-time curriculum coordinator. Lewistown Public Schools has exceeded the 100 licensed FTE (102, FY26) and will not be able to comply with 10.55.704, Section 2. Due to downward trend in student enrollment, Lewistown Public Schools will most likely fall below the 102 FTE **soon**.

- ii. **Requirement:** 1 FTE Curriculum Coordinator holding a Class 3 administrative license for school systems with 100 or more FTE licensed staff.
- iii. **Workable Reasons:** The district has a process to meet the needs of the curriculum review, assessment and adoption. A diverse committee, chaired by a licensed school administrator, reviews, revises, and recommends curriculum changes and adoption. The committee is comprised of teacher representatives of all grade levels, members of the board of trustees and administrators. Curriculum meetings are posted and open to the public. This district process has been effective for the past several years.
- iv. The current process Lewistown Public School utilizes for curriculum review and adoption meets all the established standards in 10.55.603-Curriculum and Assessment. Additionally, due to a downward trend in student enrollment, Lewistown Public Schools will most likely fall below the 102 FTE soon.
- v. This is an initial request for two years.

13. Marion Elementary - Marion School PK-6 (SC: 0455), Marion School 7-8 (SC: 1697)

- a. 10.55.709 Library Media Specialist, K-12, (1)(a) .5 FTE for schools with 126-250 students.
 - i. **Application Request:** To have library services, resource management, and literacy support provided by qualified staff under the direct supervision of the Superintendent/Principal.
 - ii. **Requirement:** .5 FTE for Schools with 126-250 students.
 - iii. **Workable Reasons:**
 - School has a plan to transition into compliance with a current 4th grade teacher who has committed to pursuing library licensure. This teacher plans to take the required coursework and Praxis this academic year. Thus, the school plans to have a certified library media specialist by the next academic year.
 - iv. Marion School District has been unable to fill the library media specialist position for the year 2025-2026.
 - v. This is an initial request for two years.



Variance to Standards Renewal Application Summary SY 2025-2026

1. Eureka Public Schools – Eureka Elementary (SC: 0710) & Eureka Middle School 5-8 (SC: 1724)

- a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Services K-12
- b. 10.55.710 – Assignment of School Counseling Staff
 - i. Application Request: A 1.0 librarian FTE for both the elementary school and the middle school. A paraprofessional is used when the librarian is unavailable. A half time, licensed counselor who divides time between elementary and middle school. A “**highly qualified**” paraprofessional is used to supplement counseling services.
 - ii. The requirement is one full-time librarian and counselor for both schools.
 - iii. This is a renewal request for three years.

2. Hellgate Elementary - Hellgate Lower 2-3 (SC: 1573), Hellgate Primary PK-1 (SC: 1863), Hellgate Intermediate 4-6 (SC: 1859)

- a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Services K-12, 2 FTE for schools with 1001-1500 students.
 - i. Application Request: Two full-time, certified librarians on staff. Additionally, the schools have one library paraprofessional who holds a **current teaching license (MT FCS 5-12)** and has been providing library services for three years. There are four educational buildings housing students on a 43-acre campus. All buildings are separated by 100-150 yards.
 - ii. The requirement is two full-time licensed and endorsed library media specialists for each school.
 - iii. This is a renewal request for three years.

3. Independent Elementary - Independent School PK-6 (SC: 1304)

- a. 10.55.704 – Assignment of District Superintendents
- b. 10.55.705 – Assignment of School Administrators/Principals
 - i. Application Request: One administrator to serve as both the Superintendent (0.5 FTE) and Principal (1.0 FTE) in place of the standard requirement for separate positions.
 - ii. The requirement is a Superintendent (0.5 FTE) and a Principal (1.0 FTE).
 - iii. This is a renewal request for three years.

4. Shelby Public Schools - Shelby Elementary School PK-5 (SC: 1176)

- a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Services, K-12
 - i. Application Request: A .5 librarian and a full-time paraprofessional
 - ii. The requirement is a 1.0 librarian for schools with 251-500 students (currently at 241)
 - iii. This is a renewal request for three years.

5. Three Forks Public Schools - Three Forks Elementary PK-5 (SC: 0482), Three Forks 6-8 (SC: 1658), Three Forks High School 9-12 (SC: 0483)

- a. 10.55.709 – Library Media Services, K-12
 - i. Application Request: Permit 2 FTE Library Media Specialists for all three schools which are housed together in one building totaling 763 students.
 - ii. The requirement is that each school shall have a licensed and endorsed library media specialist at the following ratio: 1.5 FTE for schools with 501-1000 students.
 - iii. This is a renewal request for three years.

ITEM 10

ACTION AND PRESENTATION ON THE CORRECTIVE PLANS FOR SCHOOLS IN DEFICIENT STATUS FOR ACCREDITATION

ACTION ITEMS:

- Superintendent Victoria Falls Down,
Lame Deer Public Schools
- Superintendent Wes Young, Lustre
Christian High School

**Crystal Andrews
Ellery Bresler**

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: November 19-21, 2025

Presentation	Recommend Approval of the Corrective Plans for SY 2024-25
Presenter	Crystal Andrews Ellery Bresler
Position Title	Accreditation and Licensure Senior Manager Accreditation and Licensure Data Analyst Office of Public Instruction
Overview	This presentation provides information to the Board of Public Education (BPE) for consideration of the corrective plans for the 2024-2025 Accreditation Report. The two remaining schools in deficient status will present their plans. The state superintendent recommends approval of the corrective plans as presented. The report is attached.
Requested Decision(s)	Action Item
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	Approval of the two remaining corrective plans for the 2024-2025 school year.





SY 2025-26 Remaining Corrective Plans

Contents

Lame Deer Public Schools – Lame Deer School: Corrective Plan 2

Lame Deer Public Schools – Lame Deer 7-8: Corrective Plan 6

Lustre Christian High – Lustre Christian HS: Corrective Plan..... 9



Lame Deer Public Schools – Lame Deer School: Corrective Plan

The reason the school is in a corrective plan: Student Performance Standards (SPA-SPB)

Please describe your systematic procedure and timeline for resolving deviations:

Conduct regular item analysis on formative and summative assessments, every 3 weeks. Teachers and Data Coach will be responsible to monitor this timeline.

- * Progress Monitoring

- * Periodic walk-throughs throughout the day and/or week. Focus on complete implementation of PBE strategies and differentiated instruction.

- * Performance Growth Targets. Use NWEA/Interim Data to track progress, Improvement indicator projected for Spring 2026.

Define the specific area requiring improvement and identify the underlying reasons contributing to the accreditation status of advice or deficiency through data and root cause analysis:

Areas of focus: 1. Data-Driven Instruction 2. Proficiency Based Education (PBE) 3. Tiered Support and Interventions 4. Professional Learning Community (PLC) 5. Student Ownership and Feedback 6. Family Engagement.

Root causes include gaps in conceptual understanding, Mis-alignment between assessment items and proficiency targets, lack of actionable formative feedback, and inconsistency in instructional practices.

Outline the specific steps to address the area of improvement. (Examples: professional development, resource allocation for staffing or materials, collection of relevant evidence/data, etc.):

Areas of focus: 1. Data-Driven Instruction: Apply a system where teacher regularly collect, analyze and use data to about student learning, behaviors and performance to make informed decisions to improve pedagogy. 2. Proficiency Based Education (PBE) Align learning targets and success criteria with Montana content Standards. Reteaching using flexible pacing for students who do not meet proficiency. 3. Tiered Support and Interventions: Interventions for non-proficient students



based on assessments data. 4. Professional Learning Community (PLC) Grade-level PLC's analyze student work and develop collaborative environment where teacher share expertise and use data to guide improvement. The goal is to foster a culture of continuous learning and mutual support which we hope will increase student learning and teacher efficacy. 5. Student Ownership and Feedback: Use student-friendly rubric and self assessment tools aligned with success criteria. 6. Family Engagement: Communicate proficiency progress to families through academic updates and student portfolios. Community involvement in presenting a culturally responsive pedagogy.

Identify responsible parties and deadlines for corrective action:

The individuals responsible:

Focus Area #1: Teachers, Data Coach and Administrator. Ongoing, with progress monitoring every three weeks. Identify misconceptions and adjust instruction. Improve validity and reliability of assessments.

Focus Area #2: Teachers, August 2025, Bi-weekly, Clear path for student Mastery. or exceed proficiency.

Focus Area #3: Title I resource staff, September 2025, Implement targeted interventions for non-proficient students based on assessment data. Increase student growth.

Focus Area #4: Instructional leader, Monthly meetings, (Aug.- May), Build collective teacher efficacy. Focus Area # 5: Student Ownership and Feedback: All teachers will be responsible, beginning October 2025, Increase student engagement and responsibility.

Focus Area #6: Counselor with collaboration with teachers, the will be done quarterly, Families are informed and involved in student progress or lack of it.

Resources Needed: Continuous access to AI Tools for items analysis, Ongoing professional development on PBE, Time for PLC collaboration, Intervention materials and staff training for effective implementation of district curriculum. Curriculum Coordinator/Principal monitor effective use of curriculum and adequate supply. Professional development will aligned with the improvement plan.

Describe how progress will be tracked and monitored:

The individuals responsible:

Focus Area #1: Teachers, Data Coach and Administrator. Ongoing, with progress monitoring every three weeks. Identify misconceptions and adjust instruction. Improve validity and reliability of assessments.

Focus Area #2: Teachers, August 2025, Bi-weekly, Clear path for student Mastery. or exceed proficiency.

Focus Area #3: Title I resource staff, September 2025, Implement targeted interventions for non-proficient students based on assessment data. Increase student growth.



Focus Area #4: Instructional leader, Monthly meetings, (Aug.- May), Build collective teacher efficacy. Focus Area # 5: Student Ownership and Feedback: All teachers will be responsible, beginning October 2025, Increase student engagement and responsibility.

Focus Area #6: Counselor with collaboration with teachers, the will be done quarterly, Families are informed and involved in student progress or lack of it.

Resources Needed: Continuous access to AI Tools for items analysis, Ongoing professional development on PBE, Time for PLC collaboration,

Intervention materials and staff training for effective implementation of district curriculum. Curriculum Coordinator/Principal monitor effective use of curriculum and adequate supply. Professional development will aligned with the improvement plan.

Provided evidence that the local board of trustees has approved this plan:

YES



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6
COMBINED ELEMENTARY/HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, August 28, 2025 12:00 PM

SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARDROOM

I. Call meeting to order, Roll Call & Pledge of Allegiance

II. Delegations to address the board

III. Agenda Items

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Consider recommendation to approve the Trustees Financial Summary for Lame Deer Elementary/JH for the 2024-2025 SY. (Elementary only) | (Action) |
| 2. Consider recommendation to approve the Trustees Financial Summary for Lame Deer High School for the 2024-2025 SY. | (Action) |
| 3. Consider recommendation to approve Lame Deer Schools Budget for the Elementary & JH for the 2025-2026 SY. (Elementary only) | (Action) |
| 4. Consider recommendation to approve Lame Deer Schools High School Budget for the 2025-2026 SY. | (Action) |
| 5. Consider recommendation to approve Out of District applicants. (Elementary only) | (Action) |
| 6. Consider recommendation to approve OPI Corrective Plan of Action. (7-12) | (Action) |

IV. Adjournment	(Action)
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Lame Deer Public Schools – Lame Deer 7-8: Corrective Plan

The reason the school is in a corrective plan: Student Performance Standards (SPA-SPB)

Please describe your systematic procedure and timeline for resolving deviations:

Conduct regular item analysis on formative and summative assessments, every 3 weeks. Teachers and Data Coach will be responsible to monitor this timeline.

- * Progress Monitoring

- * Periodic walk-throughs throughout the day and/or week. Focus on complete implementation of PBE strategies and differentiated instruction.

- * Performance Growth Targets. Use NWEA/Interim Data to track progress, Improvement indicator projected for Spring 2026.

Define the specific area requiring improvement and identify the underlying reasons contributing to the accreditation status of advice or deficiency through data and root cause analysis:

Areas of focus: 1. Data-Driven Instruction 2. Proficiency Based Education (PBE) 3. Tiered Support and Interventions 4. Professional Learning Community (PLC) 5. Student Ownership and Feedback 6. Family Engagement.

Root causes include gaps in conceptual understanding, Mis-alignment between assessment items and proficiency targets, lack of actionable formative feedback, and inconsistency in instructional practices.

Outline the specific steps to address the area of improvement. (Examples: professional development, resource allocation for staffing or materials, collection of relevant evidence/data, etc.):

Areas of focus: 1. Data-Driven Instruction: Apply a system where teacher regularly collect, analyze and use data to about student learning, behaviors and performance to make informed decisions to improve pedagogy. 2. Proficiency Based Education (PBE) Align learning targets and success criteria with Montana content Standards. Reteaching using flexible pacing for students who do not meet proficiency. 3. Tiered Support and Interventions: Interventions for non-proficient students based on assessments data. 4. Professional Learning Community (PLC) Grade-level PLC's analyze student work and develop collaborative environment where teacher share expertise and use data to guide improvement. The goal is to foster a culture of continuous learning and mutual support which we hope will increase student learning and teacher efficacy. 5. Student Ownership and Feedback:



Use student-friendly rubric and self assessment tools aligned with success criteria. 6. Family Engagement: Communicate proficiency progress to families through academic updates and student portfolios. Community involvement in presenting a culturally responsive pedagogy.

Identify responsible parties and deadlines for corrective action:

The individuals responsible:

Focus Area #1: Teachers, Data Coach and Administrator. Ongoing, with progress monitoring every three weeks. Identify misconceptions and adjust instruction. Improve validity and reliability of assessments.

Focus Area #2: Teachers, August 2025, Bi-weekly, Clear path for student Mastery. or exceed proficiency.

Focus Area #3: Title I resource staff, September 2025, Implement targeted interventions for non-proficient students based on assessment data. Increase student growth.

Focus Area #4: Instructional leader, Monthly meetings, (Aug.- May), Build collective teacher efficacy. Focus Area # 5: Student Ownership and Feedback: All teachers will be responsible, beginning October 2025, Increase student engagement and responsibility.

Focus Area #6: Counselor with collaboration with teachers, the will be done quarterly, Families are informed and involved in student progress or lack of it.

Resources Needed: Continuous access to AI Tools for items analysis, Ongoing professional development on PBE, Time for PLC collaboration, Intervention materials and staff training for effective implementation of district curriculum. Curriculum Coordinator/Principal monitor effective use of curriculum and adequate supply. Professional development will aligned with the improvement plan.

Describe how progress will be tracked and monitored:

-Progress Monitoring: Track Benchmark scores and classroom assessment data quarterly.

-Walkthrough observations: Focused on implementation of PBE strategies and differentiated instruction.

-Performance growth targets: Use NWEA/Interim data to track improvement by Spring 2026

Conclusion: This corrective plan aims to turn around the deficiency status in Grades 7-8 and elevate Grades 9-12 beyond Advice status through systematic use of item analysis and sustainable PBE practices with collaboration and commitment of staff and leadership, we believe all students can succeed.

Provided evidence that the local board of trustees has approved this plan:

YES



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6
COMBINED ELEMENTARY/HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, August 28, 2025 12:00 PM

SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARDROOM

I. Call meeting to order, Roll Call & Pledge of Allegiance

II. Delegations to address the board

III. Agenda Items

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Consider recommendation to approve the Trustees Financial Summary for Lame Deer Elementary/JH for the 2024-2025 SY. (Elementary only) | (Action) |
| 2. Consider recommendation to approve the Trustees Financial Summary for Lame Deer High School for the 2024-2025 SY. | (Action) |
| 3. Consider recommendation to approve Lame Deer Schools Budget for the Elementary & JH for the 2025-2026 SY. (Elementary only) | (Action) |
| 4. Consider recommendation to approve Lame Deer Schools High School Budget for the 2025-2026 SY. | (Action) |
| 5. Consider recommendation to approve Out of District applicants. (Elementary only) | (Action) |
| 6. Consider recommendation to approve OPI Corrective Plan of Action. (7-12) | (Action) |

IV. Adjournment	(Action)
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Corrective Action Plan for Lame Deer High School (Grades 7-12)

Presented by:

Based on: Item Analysis Results and PBE Seminar Insights (Lockwood)

I. Rationale

Recent school performance data shows:

- **Grades 7 and 8: Deficient Status**
- **Grades 9-12: Advice Status**

Root causes include:

- Gaps in conceptual understanding
- Misalignment between assessment items and proficiency targets
- Lack of actionable formative feedback
- Inconsistency in instructional practices

II. Goals

1. **Improve student achievement** by addressing deficiencies in content mastery.
2. **Enhance instructional alignment** using Item Analysis.
3. **Implement Proficiency-Based Education (PBE)** to ensure mastery learning.
4. **Establish teacher collaboration** to strengthen data-driven instruction.

III. Strategies and Action Steps

Focus Area	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcome
1. Data-Driven Instruction	Conduct regular item analysis on formative and summative assessments.	Teachers with Data Coach/Admin	Every 3 weeks	Identify misconceptions and adjust instruction
	Use item analysis results to revise or remove low-quality test items.	All Teachers	Ongoing	Improve validity and reliability of assessments
2. Proficiency-Based Education (PBE)	Align learning targets and success criteria with Montana Content Standards.	Teachers	August 2025	Clear path for student mastery
	Re-teach using flexible pacing for students who do not meet proficiency.	Teachers	Bi-weekly	All students reach or exceed proficiency
3. Tiered Support & Interventions	Implement targeted interventions for non-proficient students based on assessment data.	Title I/Resource Staff	September 2025	Acceleration of student growth
4. Professional Learning Community (PLC)	Grade-level PLCs analyze student work and share best PBE practices.	Instructional Leader	Monthly	Build collective teacher efficacy

Focus Area	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcome
5. Student Ownership & Feedback	Use student-friendly rubrics and self-assessment tools aligned with success criteria.	Teachers	October 2025	Increase student engagement and responsibility
6. Family Engagement	Communicate proficiency progress to families through academic updates and student portfolios.	Counselor, Teachers	Quarterly	Families are informed and involved

- Data-Driven Instruction.** Every three weeks, each teacher will administer a brief common formative assessment (or use items from recent classroom/unit tests) and run an item analysis to identify misconceptions, language/reading barriers, and skill gaps at the standard and success-criteria level. During a same-week data huddle (30–45 minutes), teachers—supported by the data coach and an administrator—will sort items into “keep, revise, retire,” tag the underlying standards, and decide on precise reteach moves (mini-lessons, worked examples, error analysis, small-group instruction). Teachers will then revise low-performing items for validity and reliability (clarity, alignment, cognitive demand) and log the changes in a shared assessment tracker. The next cycle will re-check the revised items and compare cohorts/class periods to verify impact, with administrators conducting short walkthroughs focused on evidence of reteaching aligned to the data (e.g., success criteria posted, exemplars, practice sets matched to the error patterns). Expected outcome: continuously improving assessments, targeted reteaching, and steady growth in classroom-level proficiency.
- Proficiency-Based Education (PBE).** By August, teachers will unpack the Montana Content Standards into clear learning targets (“I can...” statements) and observable success criteria, then attach them to each lesson, task, and assessment item. In bi-weekly cycles, students not yet proficient receive flexible pacing opportunities: targeted small-group lessons, alternative practice pathways, and additional attempts on priority standards, while proficient students engage in extension tasks. Each unit will include a proficiency scale (e.g., Emerging → Proficient → Advanced) and a folder of calibrated exemplars. Teachers will document reteach plans, reassessment windows, and the specific evidence a student must show to be marked proficient, ensuring grading communicates mastery rather than seat time. Administrators will monitor for consistent use of targets/criteria, equitable access to reassessment, and the presence of aligned tasks at the right depth of knowledge. Expected outcome: a transparent path to mastery where every student knows what proficiency looks like and how to reach it.
- Tiered Support & Interventions.** Beginning September, Title I and resource staff—coordinating with classroom teachers—will use the assessment dashboard to flag students below proficiency on priority standards and schedule Tier 2 sessions (3–5 times per week, 20–30 minutes) with explicit, high-leverage routines (model → guided practice → independent practice with immediate feedback). Students with persistent non-response will receive Tier 3 intensification (smaller groups, increased dosage, or specialized programs), and all intervention plans will include a progress-monitoring probe at least bi-

weekly. Teachers will align core-class assignments so intervention time reinforces the same success criteria, and counselors will help with attendance/family coordination to protect intervention minutes. Each month, teams will exit or adjust students based on progress graphs and return them to core supports once proficiency is demonstrated. Expected outcome: acceleration for non-proficient students through timely, data-tied supports that prevent skill slippage.

- **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).** Grade-level/content PLCs will meet monthly to study student work, moderate scoring against success criteria, and share PBE-aligned practices that moved the needle (e.g., feedback protocols, scaffolded tasks, reassessment structures). Each PLC will maintain a living agenda and evidence folder: recent item analyses, reteach plans, revised items, student-work samples with annotations, and brief reflection notes on what to scale or abandon. Instructional leaders will facilitate a common “Plan → Do → Study → Act” cycle and ensure each meeting ends with a clear deliverable (e.g., two revised items, one calibrated exemplar, a mini-lesson plan). Administrators will conduct short, supportive learning walks tied to PLC goals and report trend data (what’s being implemented consistently, what needs coaching). Expected outcome: stronger collective efficacy and a consistent instructional core across classrooms and grades.
- **Student Ownership & Feedback.** Teachers will roll out student-friendly rubrics and checklists aligned to success criteria so learners can self-assess before submission and during revisions. Routine structures—exit tickets labeled by success criteria, traffic-light self-ratings, goal-setting slips, and short reflection prompts (“What error pattern did I fix today? What’s my next step?”)—will build metacognition. Feedback will be timely, specific, and actionable (one strength, one next step), and students will keep a simple portfolio (paper or digital) showing growth toward proficiency with dated evidence and teacher comments. Before any reassessment, students must complete a short “readiness” task demonstrating they engaged with feedback (corrections, practice set, conference). Expected outcome: higher engagement, clearer understanding of quality work, and faster movement from “approaching” to “proficient.”
- **Family Engagement.** Each quarter, teachers and the counselor will send concise progress updates that translate proficiency language into family-friendly terms, highlight current priority standards, and point to the student’s portfolio artifacts. Families will receive simple “how to help at home” guides tied to current success criteria (sample questions, vocabulary, quick practice ideas) and invitations to brief showcase events (virtual or in-person) where students explain their learning targets and growth evidence. For students in intervention, families will get a personalized plan outlining the focus skill, schedule, and how progress will be monitored, with a mid-cycle check-in. Communication will be two-way: provide channels for questions (office hours, call times, or messaging platform) and track contact attempts to ensure no family is missed. Expected outcome: informed, supportive families who understand proficiency progress and partner with the school to sustain gains.

IV. Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Progress Monitoring:** Track benchmark scores and classroom assessment data quarterly.
- **Walkthrough Observations:** Focused on implementation of PBE strategies and differentiated instruction.
- **Performance Growth Targets:** Use NWEA/Interim Data to track improvement by Spring 2026.

V. Resources Needed

- Continued access to **AI tools for item analysis**
- Ongoing **professional development** on PBE
- **Time for PLC collaboration**
- **Intervention materials** and trained staff

VI. Conclusion

This corrective plan aims to turn around the Deficient Status in Grades 7-8 and elevate Grades 9-12 beyond Advice Status through systematic use of item analysis and sustainable PBE practices. With collaboration and commitment, all students can succeed.



Lustre Christian High – Lustre Christian HS: Corrective Plan

The reason the school is in a corrective plan:

Assurance Standards (Rubrics A-R) & Student Performance Standards (SPC)

Please describe your systematic procedure and timeline for resolving deviations:

See Attached

Define the specific area requiring improvement and identify the underlying reasons contributing to the accreditation status of advice or deficiency through data and root cause analysis:

See Attached

Outline the specific steps to address the area of improvement. (Examples: professional development, resource allocation for staffing or materials, collection of relevant evidence/data, etc.):

See Attached

Identify responsible parties and deadlines for corrective action:

See Attached

Describe how progress will be tracked and monitored:

See Attached

Provided evidence that the local board of trustees has approved this plan:

YES

Accreditation Report Response Lustre Christian School

Describe your Systematic Procedure & Timeline for Deviations

Most of the items found lacking in the Accreditation Status Report have consistently been implemented, followed and are in board policy. The lack of state reporting is where the deviations primarily occur. Administrative turnover is the primary source of the lack of reporting. The Lustre School Board is currently overseeing administration to ensure state reporting is timely and complete. Preparation and data collection to create the ISAP is also the responsibility of the administrator. The board is responsible for survey development and administrative oversight. Much is to be done, with time as the main obstacle, the goal is to complete the ISAP during the 25-26 school year and have full implementation in place for the 26-27 school year.

District Standard B: Procedures of Accreditation Standards

Collaborative planning of professional development between Administration and all Teachers allowing opportunities for feedback and reflection, both individually and as a whole, develop further experience in subject content, teaching strategies, and uses of technologies. During daily staff meetings individual students' needs are evaluated through problem solving, to review academic needs of schoolwide standards, MBI practices, and addressing safety. Each fall orientation with staff is held. The instruction of MBI initiatives, CPR/1st aid training and a review of the existing emergency plan of the school ensues. Together all read the staff and student handbooks. In September the IEFA initial training is completed by all new staff. A schoolwide expectation of behavior and academics that build our culture is the topic of the staff PIR days held in early fall. The review of district graduates' educational goals outlined in the district integrated strategic action plan **B6**, is being reviewed for the 30 students in the High School with staff and administration.

As part of professional development teachers follow scope and sequence of curriculum, of which each class level has in curriculum material **B 4g**. Teachers are accountable for district graduate educational goals outlined in the district Integrated Strategic Action plan through ongoing and sustained weekly collected individual teacher lessons plans. Conformation of subject content and teaching strategies are done through administration's daily classroom walk-throughs. **B 6** There will be a review of district graduate educational goals outlined in the district integrated strategic action plan. **B 3,6**

Lustre uses state approved academic achievement testing including PSAT for all juniors, SAT for all seniors and the ASVAB is available to all students. All score results are shared with parents, staff and administration to use to improve curriculum. This is in addition to the current, in class unit tests of all subject areas. The board will be discussing switching to the ACT's next year as a primary academic assessment. **B4d** These scores are used as part of the development of the graduate profile. The graduate profile has been included in the school

mission statement and recently reviewed by the board with current input. See attachment. **B 3, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4e, 5, 6**

District Standard H Family and Community Engagement

The board implements a strong family and community engagement plan. This is done by holding School Clean-up Day in Aug. prior to school, where the majority of the community joins in to repair, clean, and paint the school and dorm facilities, under board supervision. Students serve the local community at least one service day per year. This is chosen by the Senior students and approved by the board. These projects serve the community **H 1b, d, f**

The school opening program, organized by the chairman of the board and administration, is held at the beginning of each year, inviting the community to meet and engage with all students. New teachers introduce themselves. Each student and staff member has a card with their picture, name and grade or position, which is given to a community member. The person receiving or asking for the card agrees to pray for that person throughout the year.

A Foundation Committee meeting is held each Oct. for fundraising for the school, including an annual fundraising dinner. At this event the investments funds are reviewed, and accountability of financial reports are reviewed. The board selects the Schmeckfest Committee, to head the annual March Schmeckfest meal and auction that includes almost every community member. Each community member is contacted personally and given an opportunity to work at the event or to prepare for the event. Almost everyone, without exception, participates because the school is the focus and mission of the community. **H 1b, d**

A shared responsibility of learning is seen with community, family and school staff engaging in pep band, Harvest Festival, Schmeckfest, JR/SR play and coaching. The specialty content conducted by community members with vocational training include Tech, Art, Drama, and Library, all with administration oversight. **H 1c** The Tumbleweed monthly newsletter, college fairs, and the two days of college visits per student are other ways the community is connected with Lustre Christian High. **H 1d**

Another organization, the Alumni Association decides where to focus fundraising monies. This organization works to assist the school when needed for special projects. **H 1b** The Board of Trustees has created and approves annually the dorm handbook and policies. They appoint a dorm committee of local citizens to oversee dorm activities and provide events for dorm student residents. The dorm committee chair reports to the Board monthly. Residential discipline of students is handled by the dorm parents with guidance from the dorm committee as issues arise. **H 1b,d**

Of the 30 students in the High School, 20 are currently local residents. Of the 20 local students 17 have or have had parents serve on the Lustre Christian High School Board. Each board member oversees a particular area of the school facility or public relations. **H 1b,d** Effective engagement practices linked to relational, developmental, collaborative, and interactive learning

include: written community surveys, meetings, verbal surveys at parent teacher conferences, meeting attendance via Zoom and parent/teacher conferences. The community and past graduates are involved as speakers for the weekly chapels. **H 1b**

District Standard J Basic HS Program

Twenty credits are required for graduation. MT Small School Alliance (MSSA) reviews materials for IEFA, of which teachers use, or use lessons from the State of MT IEFA each quarter. These are documented and provided to the administration. **J 1** Labs are integrated in Science, both written and performed. In Social Studies students read historical documents and study Government legislation and processes. Written stories accompany physical art, and in technology all of the above are included. **J 2** All content required is offered on site, except world languages, which are available through Ignitia, MSUB or Montana Digital Academy. **J3**

District Standard M Curriculum

Lustre School District has not reported, but does belong to MT Small School Alliance (MSSA) and follows the curriculum review schedule every five years in each content area. Administration and staff will follow the MSSA schedule of review for curriculum content & standards for each subject, with assistance of MSSA, and meet with MSSA personnel to assure curriculum aligns with standards.

The counselor and librarian requirements are completed through MSSA training. Assistance with professional development is also done through MSSA. **M 1,4c** MSSA reviews materials for IEFA, to teach each quarter, which are documented and provided to the administration. **4d** In accordance with policy 325.1 a board member, counselor, administrator make up the Professional Development Committee. This committee assigns staff members to attend library and counselor requirements at the MSSA August training. **M 1**

District Standard N Curriculum and Assessments

Lustre administers PSAT and SAT state approved academic testing to high school juniors and seniors respectively. The ASVAB is also available for students All score results are shared with parents, staff and administration to improve curriculum. The ASVAB is available for students, but not required. Current class unit tests are also used to inform teachers and parents of student progress. **N 5a, b** The annual composite data is used to assess the graduate profile, as necessary.

District Standard O Professional Development

Professional development has been scheduled, but not reported to the state. Every year the School Board assigns 7.5 PIR days on the upcoming school year calendar which is created in March. The administration determines the content of those learning days in alignment by ARM standards. Professional development is based on student needs and teacher input. In addition to PIR days, professional development may be assigned to teachers from the Learning Hub or MT Small School Alliance training, or for individual improvement. During MEA in mid-October,

teachers attend conferences relevant to their subject areas. Ongoing communications with the board chair and administration regarding professional development occur. **O-1 e, i**

As part of professional development teachers follow scope and sequence of curriculum and are accountable for district graduate educational goals outlined in the district integrated strategic action plan. Teachers turn in weekly lesson plans. Admin classroom walk-throughs, daily, ensures annual completion of curriculum with student engagement and success. **O1- a,d, e,g, i** The Board of Trustees will have monthly ongoing accountability reports from admin as well as a calendar of state requirements to ensure meeting school benchmarks in student academics, school climate and staff development. **O-1i**

Administrative coaching provides support for individual staff development in subject content, teaching strategies, and uses of technologies by ongoing and sustained daily classroom walkthroughs. Training supports individual teacher goals, annual school mission statement, student individual needs and selection of professional development from MEA and MBI training. Opportunities are provided in daily staff meetings for feedback and reflection. **O1 a,b, c,d, g,h, i, k,m**

Professional development requires annual training in emergency plans. During the first four weeks of school practice emergency exit drills, each week. The remainder of the year four more emergency drills, fire, lockdown or intruder, are held. Suicide prevention training has not been implemented, but will now become part of the Spring PIR, training. **O 1 b, c, d, f,g**

District Standard P Mentorship and Induction

Adoption of mentor training will be implemented by utilizing MSSA to assist mentor training. Training for mentors can also be given from the Teacher Hub or professional organizations in the content areas taught, MEA convention. Each new staff member has a veteran teacher mentoring them in practices maintaining school climate, initial learning and school procedures. **P 1 b,c,d,e 2 a,b,d,e**

District Standard Q Evaluation

During August PIR meetings, discussion of mission statements, MBI implementation and staff evaluations occur to match goals with classroom practices expectation. Both staff and administration match observation expectations with school goals. In November, discussions include pre-evaluation meetings and the first classroom observation of teachers. After the first observations teachers and administration discuss evaluations and set additional goals. The second evaluation timeline follows the format of the first, starting and ending in January. The administration will provide the board with recommendations for rehire or termination of staff. The board will offer contracts to teachers in March. **Q 1,2,3**

District Standard R School Climate

MBI is the tool used to foster a positive school climate in the classroom. Lustre Christian High also has an annual Bible verse which focuses staff and students on a character quality that

promotes both individual and schoolwide growth. This is also reflected in the discipline policy, in the student handbook. The small size of the school, along with the small student to teacher ratio, 5:1, creates a homey and close-knit school. **R1d** The strong community involvement within the school, along with communication, maintains a safe and encouraging learning climate.

The safety plan updated in 2024-25 is reviewed annually by the school board and administration. School staff review and practice emergency safety drills with students throughout the year. Staff review the bullying and hazing policies annually. **R 1 a,d,e,g,h,i**

Specific areas to improve and Identify underlying reasons & problems

Communication from outgoing Board Chairman to incoming Board Chairman must address administrator oversight and board monthly duties. Communication from outgoing Administrator to incoming Administrator must be written with a copy to the chairman of Board of Trustees assuring follow-up will occur. A system of checks to ensure state documents are being filed will be implemented.

Resolution for certification for Art and Tech are in place and overseen by administration. Included in the addendum is a list of entities through which staff is pursued. The strategic plan is being created and will be completed by February. Finally, professional development for suicide prevention has not been consistently implemented, but will become an annual training practice in the Fall PIR training, as part of the long term PIR development plan board approves each March.

As members of the MSSA and will follow review standards for curriculum on their five year schedule.

Outline steps to address improvement areas

The school board, administration, staff and community have begun to compile documents to build the Integrated Strategic Action Plan. The goal is to have the Strategic Action Plan completed by the end of the 25-26 school year and fully implemented in the 26-27 school year.

Meetings, school benchmarks in student academic school climate, and staff development will be part of the spring professional development. Two hours of suicide prevention training in professional development will be provided in the fall.

Administrative procedures will be formally, written by month, to be passed from outgoing to incoming new administration. The Lustre School Board will have a list of administrator responsibilities by month to ensure the LCHS Administrator is staying current with state reporting requirements. This will be the responsibility of the Board Chairman, the Board of Trustees and the building administrator.

Part time positions of Art and Technology teachers will be advertised and continued searching will occur. Foreign language is available on-line and needs to be listed on class registration form.

The Strategic Plan is incomplete and currently being compiled.

Responsible parties and deadlines for corrective action

Most of the items found lacking in the Accreditation Status Report have consistently been implemented, followed and are in board policy. The issue was failure to complete state reporting and the development of the Integrated Strategic Plan. The current Administrator and the Board chair will have a monthly duties list for incoming administration. The Board will also have the list in their policy books. Administration will inform the school board of state reporting changes as they occur. The administrative duties list will be completed by June of 2026.

The Administrator will be in charge of scheduling suicide prevention professional development training for the fall of 2026. Professional development is board approved for the following school year in March with the school calendar.

The Administrator will include in the student class registration form for foreign languages offered by December 2025. Inclusion of Home Language Form will occur by January 2026 with application packets, implemented by the school secretary. Foreign Language classes are offered to all students by enrollment with Ignitia or Montana Digital Academy or at MSUB dual credits.

Administration and Board have surveyed parents in September to obtain initial data Integrated Strategic Action Plan. The results of the surveys were recorded and used to draft the current Graduate Profile. Verification with a more comprehensive survey that will include all sections of the school community, will be completed by December 2025. This more completed survey was provided to the board in October 2025 by the administrator. At the November meeting board will provide additions or corrections to the comprehensive survey. This survey will be given each fall to assess effectiveness and address needed improvements the following year.

We will initially identify ELL students with the MT Home Language Survey. All students registering for LCHS will be given the MT Home Language Survey form with their application each spring. The school secretary will include the survey as one of the requirements before forwarding the completed application to the administrator. The principal will verify and assign the appropriate help for ELL students. ELL students will be provided with language assistance, as needed, by administrator and staff.

The procedure to have a 3-hour training class for all incoming Substitute teachers, in conjunction with Lustre Elementary, will be implemented. In the 25-26 school year all substitutes will attend substitute training scheduled by the administrator.

The Integrated Strategic Action Plan will be completed in May of 2026, filed with OPI and revised every three years, as led by the Board and administration.

Climate measuring tools will be implemented and a timeline established for it to become procedure. Tools will be determined by the administrator and board approved. This will be implemented at the beginning of the 26-27 school year.

The incoming administrator will attend NEMASS monthly meetings, in person or on-line.

Progressed tracked and monitored

A list of board responsibilities, by month, will be created and passed from retiring Board Chairman to incoming Board Chair.

Board members will receive the month-by-month administrator responsibilities from the NEMASS (North East Montana Association of School Superintendents) organization. The Board Chairman then has a document to oversee administrator's completion of state reports and responsibilities. The deadlines and corrective actions listed will be checked by the Board Chairman at the board meetings.

School Assurances Standards Lustre Christian High School

School Assurance Standard E Duties of Administration

Staff have been fingerprinted for licensure, the county school Superintendent is the Superintendent of record for Lustre Christian High School through the state and county. We will provide a supervising teacher to oversee the instructing of two periods of art class and tech.

E1a The training provided by MSSA training for Counselor and Librarian is accompanied by the availability of an itinerant Counselor from a neighboring community who comes upon request.

E3 Substitute teachers will receive 3 hours of inservice training on school policies and procedures in partnership with Lustre Elementary district. **E3**

School Assurance Standard I Basic Program Offerings High School

Lustre meets the 20 units required for graduation, and will utilize the Ignitia, MSUB, MT Digital Academy on-line services to offer foreign language to students. Currently, certified staff oversee Art and Tech teachers for two periods. These part time partial year positions will be advertised each spring and summer in various places.

LCHS October 9, 2025 School Board Meeting

- Report progress on OPI Correction Plan and discussion on ARM deficiencies
- Review - Preliminary Parent Survey
- Review - Mission Statement
- Review and Align - Graduate Profile with Mission Statement
- Present sample survey for board preview
- Schedule special October Meeting for Approval of Final Survey in these categories:
 - Parents
 - Employees
 - Students
 - Graduates
 - Community

Provide copies of ...

- Sample Survey
- Mission Statement
- Profile Goals
- Accreditation Status Report

Lustre Christian High School

Board Meeting Minutes

October 9th, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

Members Present: Justyn Klatt, Jeff Damboise, Clayton Zerbe, Darin Pankratz, Jared Fast, Mike Hilkemann, Wes Young

Members Absent: Curt Neufeld

Devotions and Prayer: Darin Pankratz

Psalm 23

Breakdown of the Passage by Ann Graham Lotts showing a practical application of the passage.

Prayer Requests: Sarel (Stem Cell transplant is on 10/10/25),

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Jared MAM to approve the minutes of the last regular meeting.

Mike Seconded Motion Passed

Agenda:

Mike MAM to approve the agenda as presented

Curt Seconded Motion Passed

Old Business:

1. Finances and Bills - Lynn Unrau

- Presentation of financial statements and bills.
- Worked on preparing the budget.

Curt MAM to approve the financial report & pay the bills.

Jared Seconded Motion passed.

2. Administrators Report – Wes Young

- First set of Teacher Evaluations will happen in November
- Parent Teachers conferences are complete
- Working on OPI accreditation items
 - Fingerprinting is complete
- One potential student to Interview tomorrow

- 3 Girls for Congos (Siblings)

3. Building -Curt

- Bathroom Maintenance Completed
- Conference Room Bridge Installed
- Possible Upstairs AC Units
 - Donor has approached the school with a specific donation
 - Start looking into the possible project

4. Housing-Mike

- Small House Repairs complete

5. Yard-Jerry

- Boiler has been started
- Roof Materials are onsite. Work day to be planned at a later date.

6. Finance-Clayton Zerbe

- Commercial Insurance Umbrella
 - Church Mutual Dropped LCHS. Working with Wolfe Daniels on quotes.
- Grant submitted to the Theo & Alice Beck Foundation in the following areas:
 - Grants Awarded
- ACE Scholarship-Obtained access to all accounts. Working on Nikki with final paperwork.
- Working on another AG West Grant-Computer for Treasurer
- Donor approached on bus purchase-Donor is looking into options and will present to Board at a later date,
- VB Coach Mary Zerbe is going through VB Jersey inventory.
 - Putting together a list to see if LGS would like the first option on purchasing the best set.
 - Remainder of jersey's, possibly look at selling as a fundraiser for the VB Program.
- Wes Young-Credit Card Limit Approval- **Board approves credit card limit to be the same level that was used for Bob Burkahrt last year.**
- Technology agreement reviewed by Sarel and Marshall.
 - LCHS office will distribute to parents and students for signatures.

7. Dorm – Dorm Committee Report submitted by Wes and Joy Young

- New Dorm Committee Members are Micheal and Kaitlyn Brown are
- Things are running smoothly.
- Possibility of new students

8. Vehicle and Maintenance- Darin
 - No Report
9. Technology– Jeff
 - No Report
10. Promotion-Justyn
 - October Newsletter is going to be sent out this week.
11. Security-Jeff
 - Concealed Weapons Training completed on 9/29-10/2/25 for security team members.

New Business:

1. Email & Text Message Business Reviewed

- **NONE**

2. Student at 7:50 PM

- Student committed policy violations under Section 755.
- Student met with Board to address issues.

3. LCHS Website Update-Marshall Mullet 8 PM

- Gave Presentation on update on Website upgrade's
- Will email the proposed website changes to the Board for their review and comments.

4. Sale of Music Equipment

- Mr. Ayuno went through all of the musical instruments and has come up with a list of instruments that LCHS could possibly sell due to the excess number of instruments.
- See email with list of proposed instruments for sale.
- He would like to purchase two musical instruments for the music department.
 - **Board tabled the proposed purchase of these items at this time.**
- Need Board Approval to authorize the sale of additional musical instruments.

Curt MAM to approve the sale of the music instruments that are listed for sale.

Mike Second. Motion Approved.

5. Laptops Donated

- A donor approached to the school about purchasing additional laptops for the school.

- Donation has been made and the laptops have been purchased for the school.

6. Music Teacher Vehicle Donated.

- A donor has approached the school about donating a vehicle to the school for Mr. Ayuno teacher.
- Board recommends that the title be signed and notarized by the music teacher. LCHS will hold the title for a period of time.
- After the agreed period of time, title will be turned over to Mr. Ayon.
- Music Teacher will be responsible to for all operating costs of the car.

7. MEA Vehicle Request/MB Church Vehicle Request.

- Lustre MB Church youth group is requesting the use of one of the 15 passenger vans for a youth trip on 11/21-23/2025.

Curt MAM to approve the usage of one of the 15 passenger vans to the Lustre MB Youth group.

Jeff Seconded Motion Passed

- Mr. Ayuno asked if there as the possibility of using a school vehicle to attend MEA Conference in Great Falls. Board suggested he ride with the Cumpios as they were planning an outing. Mr. Young will discuss with Mr. Ayuno.

8. Winterization of Housing and Vehicles

- With two houses empty, suggestion on winterizing the house.
- Mike Hilekmann to work on winterizing housing in the next several weeks.

9. Potential Tabor College Partnership

- Curt and Lisa Neufeld had a meeting with the Tabor College President and his wife to discuss some ideas for partnership.
- Need to keep pursuing a relationship with Tabor College for potential teaching applicants and student teachers.
- Recommendation for a future planning meeting with the LCHS Board.

10. International Students

- Need to look at the possibility of hiring a international student recruiter to help with students.
- Will need to start a search to try and find a possible recruiting agent.

11. Dual Enrollment

- Tabor College offers dual enrollment classes.
- Need to look into the possibility of partnering with them for dual enrollment classes.

12. Policy update and Zoom MTG with Elizabeth Kelva (10/13 @ 6:30)

- Bring Questions.

13. OPI Accreditation-Mr. Young

- Need to create surveys
- Profile and professional survey Board to Review
- Need to work to have this done for the OPI review
- Mr. Young and Board will keep working on what items are needed.

Curt **MAM** to adjourn.

Mike Seconded Motion Passed

Closed in Prayer

Next Regular Meeting – Tuesday November 4th, 2025 @7PM

Devotions - Jerry Refreshments- Darin

ITEM 11

UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON THE INTENSIVE ASSISTANCE PROCESS FOR ACCREDITATION

**Dr. Julie Murgel
Tyler Capece**

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: November 19-21, 2025

Presentation	Intensive Assistance Process
Presenter	Julie Murgel Tyler Capece
Position Title	Chief Program Officer Assistant Deputy Superintendent Office of Public Instruction
Overview	The purpose is to provide an update on the intensive assistance task force schedule and work to date.
Requested Decision(s)	Informational Item
Related Issue(s)	10.55.602(21), 10.55.605(8)(9)
Recommendation(s)	None





Rigorous Action/Intensive Assistance Task Force Membership

Potential task force members were sent a letter the week of October 20th, 2025.

The task force includes members with specific expertise, drawing on individuals from within Montana and from organizations with deep school improvement experience.



Member Name	Title/Role on Task Force	Task Force Role	Organization/District
Mandi Smoker Broaddus	Task Force Facilitator	Leadership & Institutional	Education Northwest
McCall Flynn	Board of Public Education Representative	Leadership & Institutional	Executive Director Board of Public Education
Gerald Chouinard	District Leadership	Leadership & Institutional	Superintendent Hot Springs School District
Marcy Cobell	District Leadership	Leadership & Institutional	Superintendent Heart Butte School District
Sara Tempel	Instructional Representative- Special Education	Leadership & Institutional	Bear Paw Special Ed Cooperative
Caitlin Jensen	Instructional Representative- Early Literacy	Leadership & Institutional	Executive Director Zero to Five Montana
Anne Penn Cox	Instructional	Leadership &	Director of Special



	Representative- Early Literacy	Institutional	Services Livingston School District
Dr. Allison Wilson	Instructional Representative- Early Literacy	Leadership & Institutional	Early Childhood Education Department Director University of Montana
Dr. Lynne Rider	Instructional Representative- Math	Leadership & Institutional	Math Instructor Kalispell Middle School
Gary Stevenson	Instructional Representative- CTAE	Leadership & Institutional	Principal Lodge Grass High School
Burt Medicine Bull	Tribal Education Representative	Community & Stakeholder	Chief Dull Knife College
Robert Hall	Tribal Education Representative	Community & Stakeholder	Browning School District
Whitney Top Sky	Tribal Education Representative	Community & Stakeholder	Box Elder Public Schools
Jeremy MacDonald	Tribal Education Representative	Community & Stakeholder	Stone Child College
Alicia Doney	Family/Student Representative	Community & Stakeholder	Tribal Youth Outreach Department of Labor and Industry
Dawn Bishop-Moore	Family/Student Representative	Community & Stakeholder	Indian Impact Schools of Montana
Craig Crawford	Business Representative	Community & Stakeholder	Training Director Montana Contractors



			Association
Jennifer Cronk	Business Representative	Community & Stakeholder	Workforce & Special Initiatives Director Kalispell Chamber of Commerce
Rob Watson	Support Partner	Specialization	Executive Director School Administrators of Montana
Shelley Turner	Support Partner	Specialization	Executive Director Montana Association of School Business Officials
Jordann Lankford Forester	Support Partner/Tribal Education Representative	Specialization/Community & Stakeholder	Chairwoman Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education
Calli Rushe-Nicholson	Support Partner/Tribal Education Representative	Specialization/Community & Stakeholder	Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education
Norma Bixby	Support Partner	Specialization	Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education
Crystal Hickman	Mental/Behavioral Health Specialist	Specialization	Tribal Student Achievement Specialist Office of Public Instruction
Tammy Tolleson Knee	Mental/Behavioral	Specialization	School Support

Susie Hedalen, Superintendent
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501



Phone: 406.444.5643
In-State Toll-free: 1.888.231.9393
opi.mt.gov

	Health Specialist		Liaison Montana Safe Schools Center
Dr. Julie Murgel	OPI Staff		Chief Program Officer
Tyler Capece	OPI Staff		Assistant Deputy Superintendent
Krystal Smith	OPI Staff		Opportunities & Innovative Learning Senior Manager
Crystal Andrews	OPI Staff		School & Educator Effectiveness Senior Manager
Dr. Brooke Beaverheart Gondara	OPI Staff		Indian Education Director
Lindsay Mahoney	OPI Staff		Comprehensive School Improvement Director



RIGOROUS ACTION/INTENSIVE ASSISTANCE TASK FORCE

MEETING SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER-
DECEMBER 2025

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12 TH 4- 5 PM	INTRODUCTION A virtual session that will welcome Task Force members, outline the purpose and outcomes of the work, and ground everyone in the shared “why” behind this project.
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17 TH 4- 5:30 PM	TECHNICAL OVERVIEW A virtual session that will orient Task Force members to Montana’s Accreditation & Accountability systems, providing key background and context for the work ahead.
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4 TH 4- 5 PM	CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP A virtual session to prepare for the in-person work session. Members will also review key findings and begin organizing recommendation themes.
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9 TH 10 AM- 4 PM AND WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10 TH 8 AM- 2 PM	TWO- DAY IN PERSON MEETING This two day, in person convening will bring Task Force members together to engage in collaborative dialogue, reviewing emerging recommendations, and build consensus toward the final plan. Lunch will be provided both days- please let us know of any food allergies.
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18 TH 4-5 PM	CLOSING This final closing virtual session Task Force members will review and share feedback on the draft recommendation before the plan is finalized.

Contact: Tyler Capece, OPI Assistant Deputy
Superintendent, tyler.capece@mt.gov

Thursday, November 20, 2025

***BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TOURS
WITH LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION INTERIM
COMMITTEE***

9:00 AM

**SCHOOL SAFETY VISIT AND TOUR
Hellgate Elementary School, Missoula, MT**

10:15 AM

**TEACH ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL TOUR
Franklin Elementary, Missoula, MT**

11:20 AM

**SPECIAL EDUCATION VISIT AND TOUR
Rattlesnake Elementary School, Missoula, MT**

*******RECONVENE AT 1:15 PM*******

CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance**
- B. Roll Call**
- C. Statement of Public Participation**
- D. Welcome Visitors**

❖ BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND
LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION INTERIM
COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING – (Items 12-18)

Dr. Tim Tharp

ITEM 12

**PRESENTATION ON SAFE
SCHOOL CENTER
SURVEY**

**Nancy Berg
Tina Eblen**

ITEM 13

DISCUSSION ON TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL PREPARATION AND EDUCATOR PIPELINE CHALLENGES

Dr. Dan Lee, University of Montana
Dr. Tricia Seifert, Montana State University
Dr. Jodi Carlson, Rocky Mountain College

*******2:30 PM*******

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING GRANT
OBSERVATION

SENTINEL HIGH SCHOOL

ITEM 14

FUTURE READY UPDATE

Superintendent Susie Hedalen

ITEM 15

**SCHOOL FUNDING INTERIM
COMMISSION UPDATE**

**Dr. Tim Tharp
Representative Lee Deming
Senator Sara Novak
Representative Melissa Romano
Senator Sue Vinton**

ITEM 16

**INFORMATION ON MONTANA ALIGNED
TO STANDARDS THROUGH-YEAR (MAST)
AND REVIEW OF STATEWIDE
PROFICIENCY SCORES**

Cedar Rose

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: November 19-21, 2025

Presentation	Overview of MAST and Review of Statewide Proficiency Data
Presenter	Cedar Rose
Position Title	Assessment Director
Overview	How MAST works, benefits for students and families, data reporting with sample reports, and strengthening the MAST system, as well as a review of the state-wide proficiency data.
Requested Decision(s)	Information Item
Related Issue(s)	N/A
Recommendation(s)	N/A





Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST)

Connecting Instruction, Students, and Families Through Meaningful Data

OVERVIEW

The Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST) Assessment represents an approach to statewide testing that supports learning throughout the year rather than providing data after the school year is over. MAST provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know and can do, giving educators and families timely information that can be used to support learning right away.

Developed in partnership with Montana educators, MAST reflects the state's commitment to assessments that are useful, aligned to standards, and designed to serve all students.

HOW MAST WORKS

MAST includes a series of short, standards-aligned assessments (testlets) administered several times during the school year. Each testlet measures student understanding of the knowledge and skills outlined in Montana's content standards as close as possible to when instruction is provided. This design allows educators, schools, and families to see a clear picture of student performance as it unfolds across the year. The result is a system that provides actionable, high-quality data while preserving valuable instructional time.

	Window 1	Window 2	Window 3
	October 13 - December 5	January 12 - March 6	March 30 - May 22
	8 weeks	8 weeks	8 weeks
MATH	3-5 Testlets	3-5 Testlets	3-5 Testlets
			1 Anchor Test
ELA	2 BOY Testlets	2 MOY Testlets Performance Task	2 EOY Testlets

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND FAMILIES

Continuous Insight into Learning

MAST provides a visible and ongoing analysis of student performance on grade-level standards. Teachers can monitor performance throughout the year, identify areas of strength, and adjust instruction as needed. This helps ensure every student has the opportunity to meet grade-level expectations.

Serving All Students

Every student participates in MAST, including students receiving special education services, with the exception of students for the alternate assessment. This ensures consistency across schools and districts and maintains high expectations for all learners.

Strengthening Family Engagement

Through the secure Parent Portal, families have direct access to their child's results as they become available throughout the year. This transparency builds trust and empowers parents to stay informed and engaged in their child's education. Instead of waiting for a single report, parents can track progress, celebrate growth, and partner with teachers to support learning in real time.

Efficient Use of Time and Resources

By integrating shorter assessments throughout the year, MAST reduces the need for separate local benchmark tests and minimizes instructional disruption. Schools gain efficiency by using one statewide system that supports both instructional decision-making and state accountability requirements.

Montana Educator Engagement

Montana educators are involved at every step of MAST's development, from item writing and review to data interpretation and professional learning. Their input ensures that the system reflects the needs, priorities, and values of Montana classrooms. MAST is truly a Montana-designed solution for Montana students.

DATA REPORTING

MAST provides a comprehensive suite of reports designed to give educators, administrators, and families timely, useful information at every level, from individual students to entire districts.

<u>Testlet Reports</u>	<u>Progress Reports</u>	<u>Through-Year Reports</u>
Student Testlet - Available weekly - Following Thursday after assessment - Shared in Kite Parent Portal with connected parents/guardians. Student Performance Task - Hand scored, available two weeks after the close of Window 2	Student Progress Available at the end of Windows 1 and 2	Student TY 2024-2025 available October 16, 2025 2025-2026 available TBD
Classroom Testlet - CSV & PDF Reports - Available and updated weekly	Classroom Progress Available at the end of Windows 1 and 2	Classroom TY 2024-2025 available October 16, 2025 2025-2026 available TBD
School Testlet - CSV & PDF Reports - Available after each window	School Progress Available at the end of Windows 1 and 2	School TY 2024-2025 available October 16, 2025 2025-2026 available TBD
District Testlet - PDF Available after each window - CSV Available after last window	District Progress Available at the end of Windows 1 and 2	District Through-Year 2024-2025 available October 16, 2025 2025-2026 available TBD

STUDENT TESTLET REPORTS

Testlet Reports provide weekly, actionable feedback on student performance, allowing teachers and students to set targeted learning goals and address areas needing support. Families can also view results through the Parent Portal, fostering timely collaboration to support student learning.



Student Testlet Report Wilson Elementary School 2025-2026

Fatima Ali (1111111111)

Test Date
09/15/2025



Math, 3rd, Compare and Find Equivalent Fractions

In previous grades, students measured an object using two different length units and recognized that the count of length units is inversely related to the size of the length unit. In grade 3, this understanding serves as a foundation for comparing unit fractions (i.e., length units on a number line model). Students also compare fractions with the same denominator, leveraging their understanding that a fraction represents a count of parts of a given size. They also understand that the two fractions must refer to the same whole to generate a valid comparison.

Performance



The student's score was in Level 2. This indicates that they demonstrated a partial understanding of the content and skills assessed in this testlet. Level 2 indicates that the student's performance on this testlet is near grade-level expectations for proficiency, but additional support may be necessary to achieve proficiency.

Student reports should be used in conjunction with the MAST Student Report Interpretation Guide, found on the MAST portal.

The OPI recommends focusing on item, standard, and misconception information to understand student performance as related to the assessed content.

Misconceptions

AG.2.a Incorrectly use substitution to evaluate an equation

Testlet Summary

Standards	Points Earned / Points Possible
3.NF.A.3	5 / 10

		Legend	Correct	Incorrect	Did Not Attempt
Question Description		Credit Earned	Standards		
1.	This question evaluates students' understanding of sequences and series.	✗	3.NF.A.3		
2.	This question evaluates students' understanding of rounding numbers to the nearest ten.	✗	3.NF.A.3		
3.	This question addresses students' understanding of basic probability concepts.	✗	3.NF.A.3		
4.	This question evaluates students' understanding of coordinate planes and how to plot points.	✓	3.NF.A.3		
5.	This question assesses students' understanding of ratios and proportional relationships.	○	3.NF.A.3		

CLASSROOM TESTLET REPORTS

Classroom Testlet Reports provide detailed insights into student performance on specific standards, enabling educators to identify areas of strength and areas needing support. These reports assist in setting focused learning goals and inform instructional strategies at the student, small-group, and classroom levels.



Classroom Testlet Report Wilson Elementary School 2025-2026

Class 1 (Math)

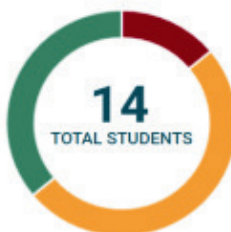
Tony Sullivan, Teacher 2, Proctor



Math, 3rd, Compare and Find Equivalent Fractions

In previous grades, students measured an object using two different length units and recognized that the count of length units is inversely related to the size of the length unit. In grade 3, this understanding serves as a foundation for comparing unit fractions (i.e., length units on a number line model). Students also compare fractions with the same denominator, leveraging their understanding that a fraction represents a count of parts of a given size. They also understand that the two fractions must refer to the same whole to generate a valid comparison.

Summary Results



- **Level 1**
3 Students (21%)
- **Level 2**
4 Student (29%)
- **Level 3**
7 Students (50%)

State Standard	Average Percent of Points Earned
5.OA.A.1	65%
5.OA.A.2	35%

Misconceptions

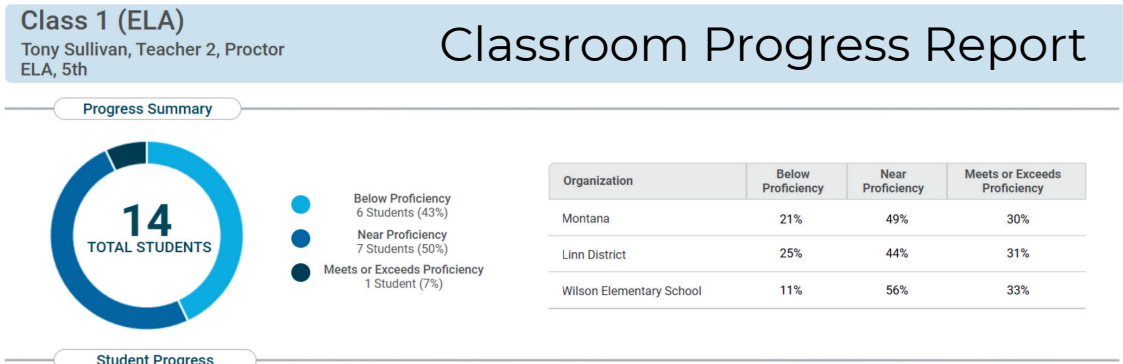
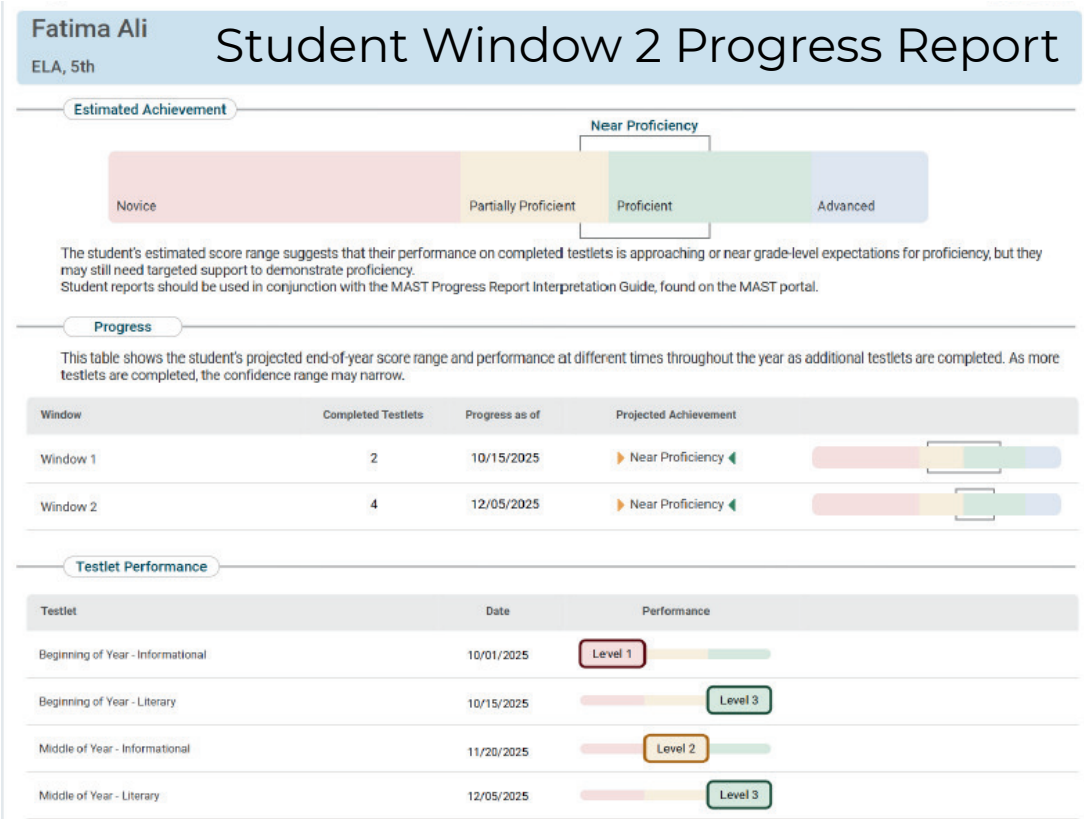
Misconception	Description	# of Students
ME07	Misinterprets ratio as an additive relationship.	3
ME31	Incorrectly interpreted graph.	3
ME06	Student added or subtracted numerators and denominators, instead of finding equivalent fractions.	2
ME08	Error creating equivalent fractions when adding or subtracting.	1

Student Details

Student Name	Student ID	Test Date	Performance Level	Misconceptions
Ali, Fatima	1111111111	09/16/2025	Level 2	
Anderson, Jackson	1212121212	09/16/2025	Level 1	ME31
Brown, Olivia	1231231231	09/16/2025	Level 2	ME07
Chen, Lila	1234123412	09/16/2025	Level 3	

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports provide an estimated achievement level based on the testlets completed through the end of each testing window. After every window, results are updated to reflect additional student performance data, offering a clearer picture of where students are in relation to grade-level expectations.



STRENGTHENING MAST SYSTEMS FOR 2025-2026

The MAST assessment and surrounding systems continue to improve to better support classroom instruction, data use, and educator experience.

Enhanced Professional Learning & Support

- **MAST 4 Teachers:** Training on administration, performance tasks, math misconceptions, and using results for next instructional steps
- **MAST Summit:** Role-based sessions on preparing for testing and accessing score reports
- **MAST Memo:** Monthly email direct to teachers with timely MAST tips, instructional resources, and upcoming professional learning opportunities
- **Ongoing Support:** Mini-sessions, HUB courses, and updated school-facilitated training materials to ensure practical implementation support

Improved Access to Data

- More frequent reports across student, classroom, school, and district levels, now available in both PDF and Excel formats.
- A new interactive reporting platform coming Spring 2026 to simplify access and help educators more efficiently interpret and use results.

Better Alignment with Instruction

- Testing windows extended and shifted later to align with curriculum pacing.
- Increased educator involvement in scheduling and additional curriculum alignment options in the Scheduler.

Sharper Focus on Student Progress

- New Progress Reports help monitor how students are performing relative to grade-level expectations throughout the year.
- Continued work on additional metrics and future growth indicators support teachers and students in setting focused learning goals.

RESOURCES

[OPI Assessment Webpage](#)

The official Montana Office of Public Instruction landing page for statewide assessments, including MAST. Provides general information on testing windows, purpose of assessments, and links to additional resources.

[MAST Portal](#)

The primary resource platform for the MAST program. It contains sections for professional learning, test administration materials (manuals, scheduling guides, accessibility guides), student/roster management, resources for educators, and other live support tools.

[MAST FAQ Webpage](#)

The central resource for the MAST assessment. Provides answers to common questions about testing windows, subjects, score reporting, and links to parent letters, portals, and testing blueprints.

[Statewide Data Release Webpage](#)

Provides guidance and timelines for when assessment data, including MAST results, are released publicly. Includes interpretive guides and resources for analyzing statewide trends.

If you have any questions, please contact:
Cedar Rose, Assessment Director, OPI
cedar.rose@mt.gov



2024-2025 STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT DATA OVERVIEW

Cedar Rose
Assessment Director
OPI

Montana Office of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent

DATA OVERVIEW

- Statewide data release timeline
- Considerations for MAST data interpretation
- Grades 3-8 math and ELA
- Grade 11 math, ELA, and science
- Grades 5 and 8 science



STATEWIDE DATA RELEASE TIMELINE

July 28-31, 2025

MAST Standard Setting
occurred in Bozeman with 45
Montana educators setting cut
scores for grades 3-8 math and
ELA

Thursday, October 16

2024-2025 MAST Through-Year
Reports available through the
Kite Educator Portal at the
student, classroom, school, and
district levels

Tuesday, November 4

2024-2025 statewide math, ELA,
and science results available for
school and district embargoed
access through GEMS (1 week)

Wednesday, November 12

2024-2025 statewide math, ELA,
and science results publicly
available through GEMS



WHY MAST CREATES A NEW BASELINE

- **New assessment system:** Multiple MAST testlets replace one end-of-year test—different structure, scoring, and reporting.
- **New proficiency expectations:** Montana educators set new grade-specific cut scores after reviewing student work and alignment to standards.
- **Multiple evidence sources:** Standard setting used impact data including historical Smarter Balanced trends results to ensure validity.
- **New baseline established:** 2024–2025 results serve as the starting point for measuring future progress and trends.

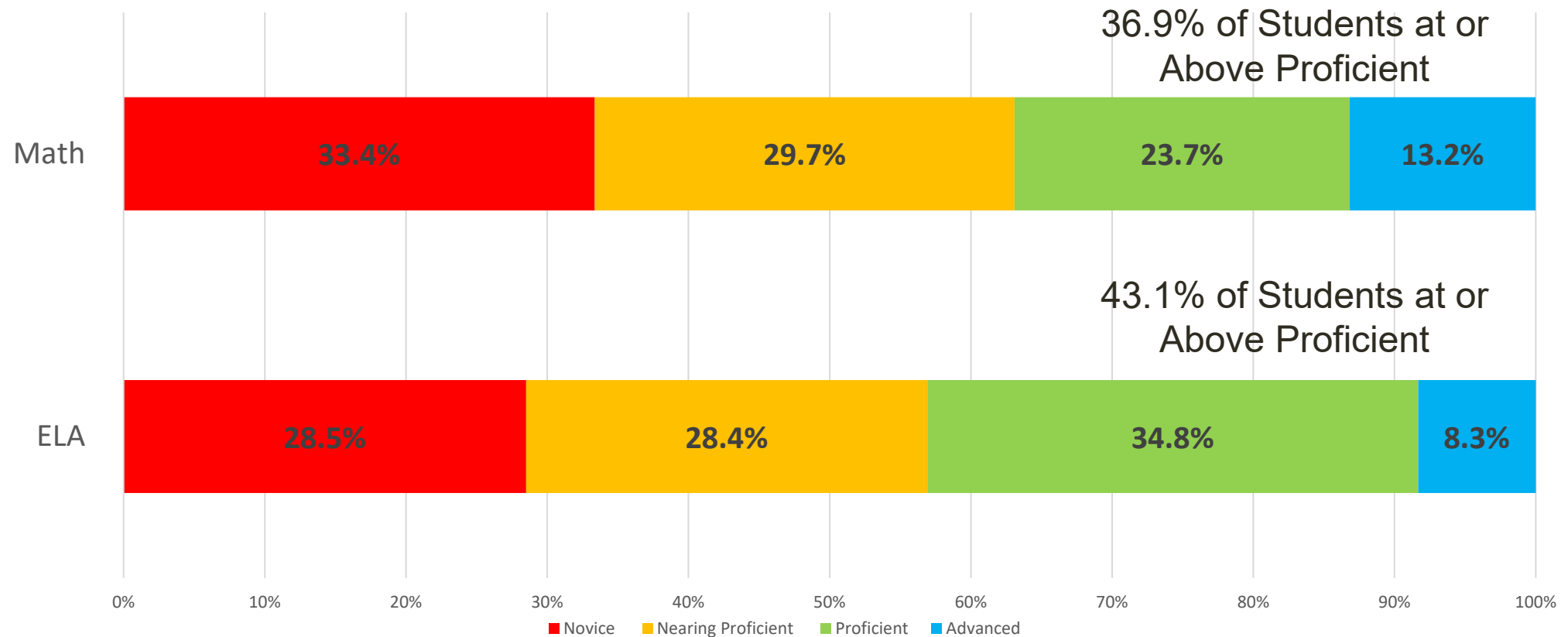


GRADES 3-8 MATH & ELA RESULTS

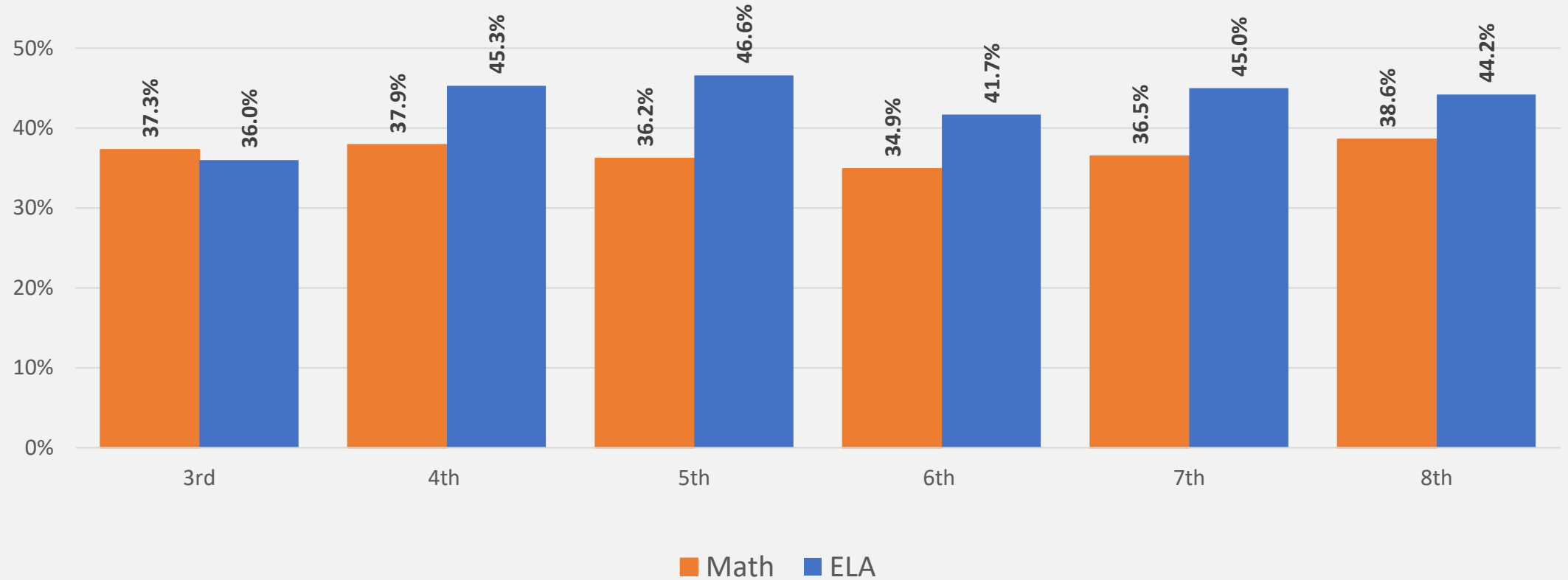
- First full statewide administration of MAST for Grades 3-8
- Includes all eligible students in public accredited Montana schools
- Approximately 66,500 students statewide participated in MAST or MSAA alternate math and ELA testing (98%)



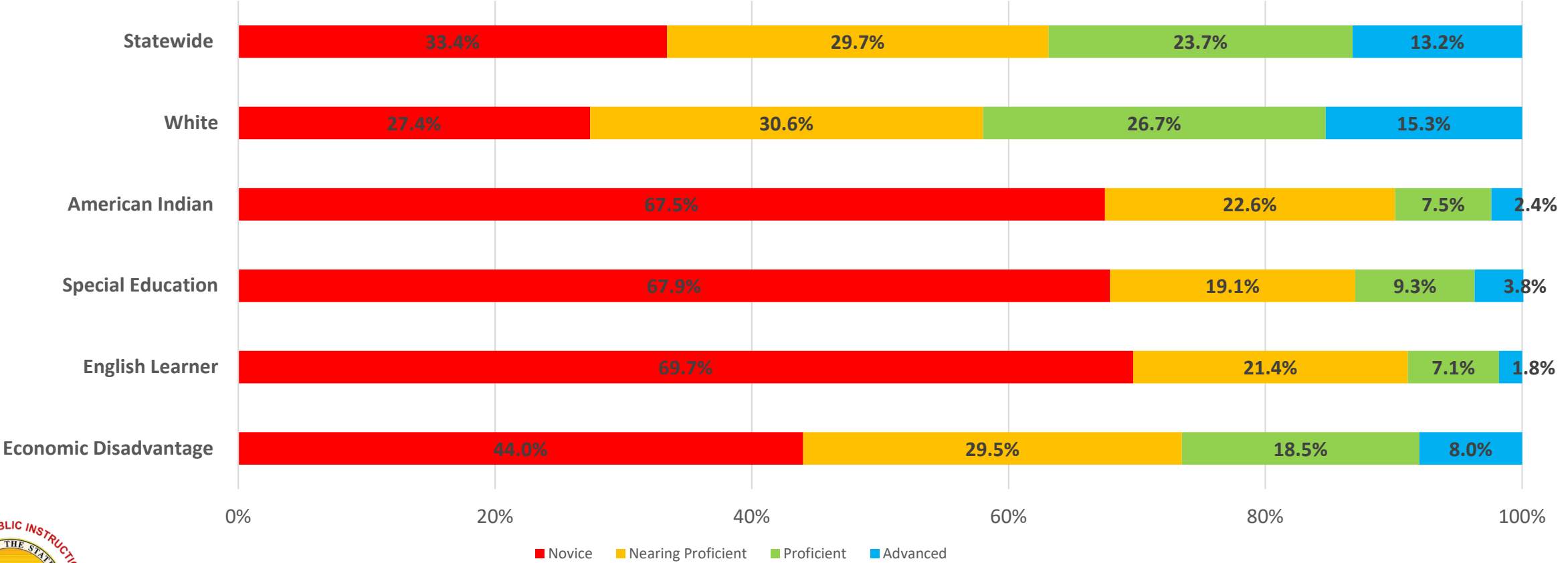
GRADES 3-8 2024-26 MATH & ELA ACHIEVEMENT



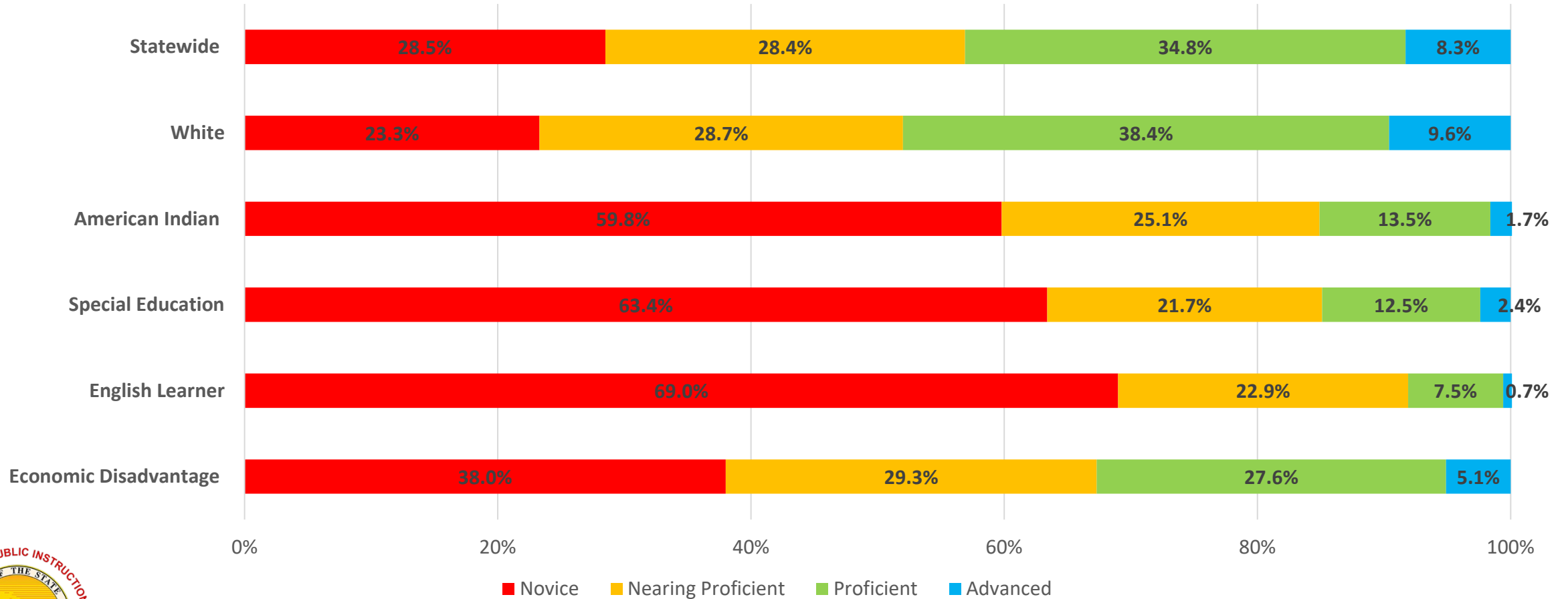
Percent At or Above Proficient by Grade



MATH SUBGROUP PERFORMANCE

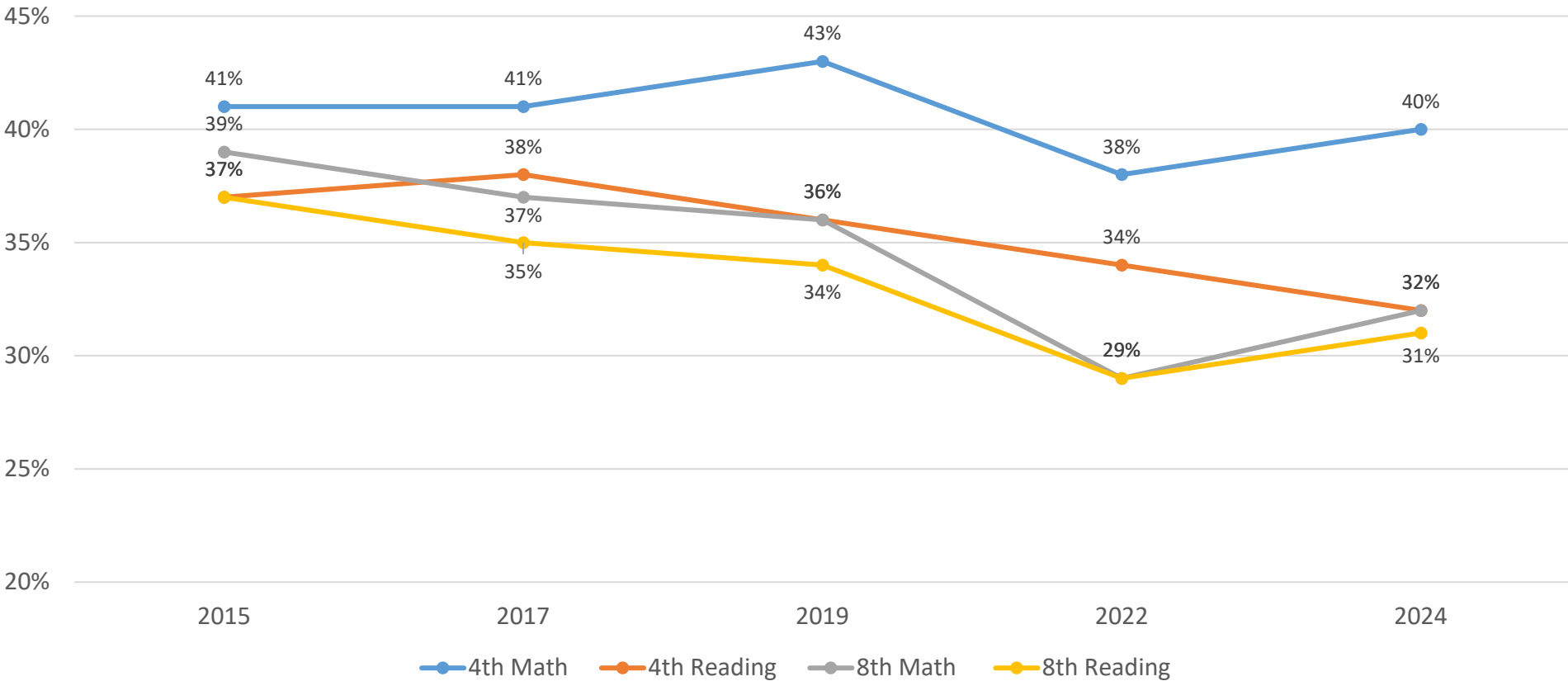


ELA SUBGROUP PERFORMANCE



NAEP LONGITUDINAL DATA

% of Students at or Above Proficient



NAEP will be administered around the state this spring with 2026 data release planned for early 2027

Montana Office of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent

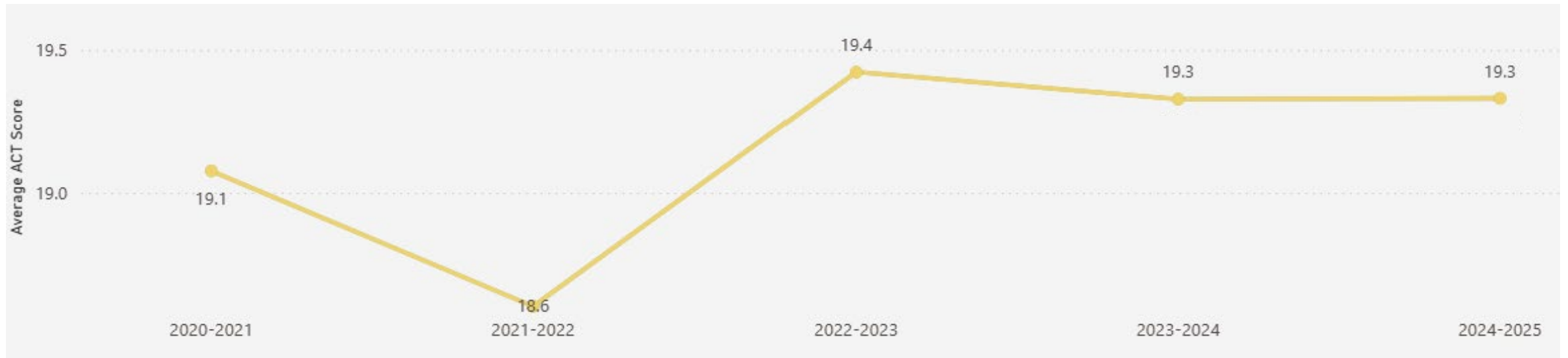


GRADES 3-8 MATH & ELA KEY POINTS

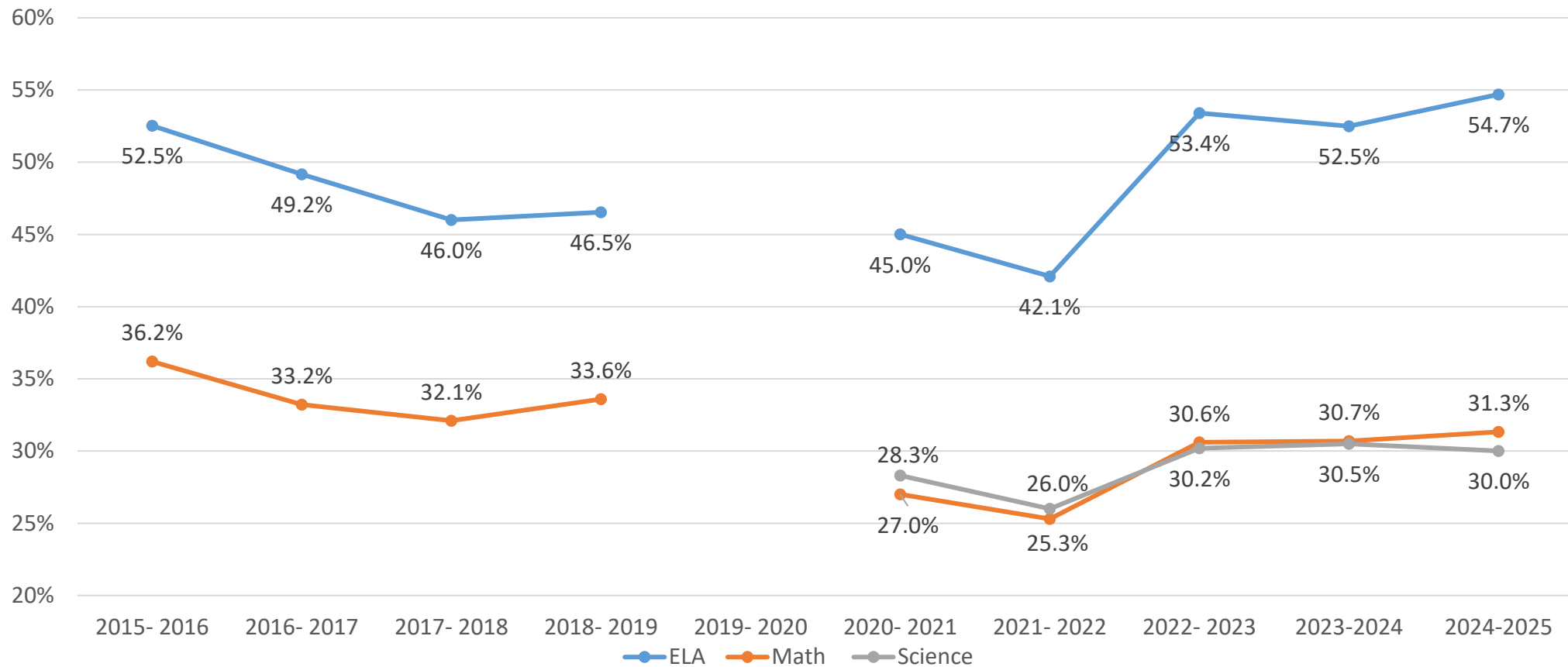
- ELA achievement is slightly higher across all grade levels except for grade 3 with the lowest ELA proficiency rate by grade level
- Math proficiency rates are consistent across all grade levels
- Large performance disparities exist between statewide results and American Indian students, students receiving special education services, English Learners and economic disadvantage students across both math and ELA



ACT COMPOSITE SCORE TREND



GRADE 11 PROFICIENCY RATES

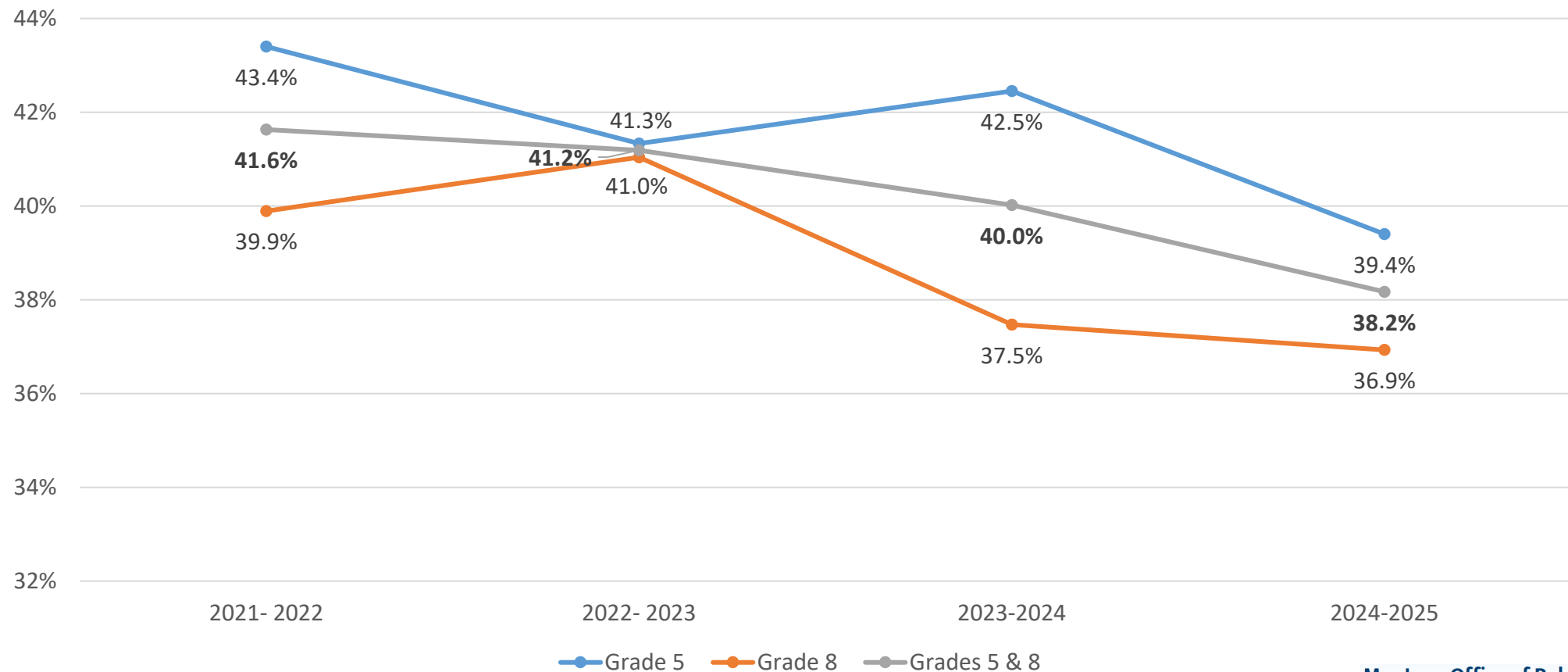


*Includes both ACT and MSAA/AMSA results
(~9,700-9,800 students per subject)*

Montana Office of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent



GRADES 5 AND 8 SCIENCE PROFICIENCY RATES



GRADE 11 AND SCIENCE KEY POINTS

Grade 11

- Highest level of ELA proficiency since ACT statewide use in 2015-16
- Consistent composite score, math, and science proficiency rates

Grades 5 and 8 Science

- Decrease in proficiency more prominent at grade 5
- Decline in overall proficiency consistent with the 2023-2024 school year



GEMS.OPI.MT.GOV/STUDENT-DATA



Learn about students in
Montana schools

Interactive Dashboards

Student Achievement & Performance

- ▶ College Readiness
- ▶ Graduation and Dropout
- ▶ Math, ELA, and Science Assessments Dashboard (Grade High School)
- ▶ Math and ELA Assessments Dashboard (Grades 3-8)
- ▶ Montana Science Assessments Dashboard (Grades 5 & 8)



Montana Office of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent

CONTACT

Cedar Rose, Assessment Director OPI

cedar.rose@mt.gov



ITEM 17

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL PANEL AND PRELIMINARY ANNUAL REPORT DATA

**McCall Flynn; Pad McCracken;
Superintendent Micah Hill, Missoula County
Public Schools; Superintendent Les Meyer,
Frenchtown School District; Superintendent
Pete Joseph, Corvallis School District;
Superintendent Dave Thennis, Hamilton
School District**

HB 549 Public Charter Schools 101

Prepared by Pad McCracken, LSD, and McCall Flynn,
Executive Director of the Board of Public Education



First a reminder...

- The 2023 Legislature enacted two bills allowing for the creation of new types of schools
- One was HB 549 (Anderson) which established “Public Charter Schools”
- The other was HB 562 (S. Vinton) which established “Community Choice Schools”
- HB 562 is being litigated, and a decision is expected soon
- If the court allows HB 562 to proceed, the committee may wish to have a similar presentation on the basics of Community Choice Schools



BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Two application "routes"
both through the sole
approving entity, the BPE.

"Route I"

- Board of Trustees of an existing school district submits a rigorous application to the BPE
- BPE selection process and approval/denial
- New charter school operates as school of the district
- If approved, governed by the existing Board of Trustees and funded through the regular school funding formula and as a separate budget unit receiving additional basic entitlement if enrollment thresholds are met
- Currently, all 22 public charter schools have been approved through the Route I process

Route II"

- Community group formally asks Board of Trustees (of school district in which desired charter school will be located) to pursue a Route I approval
- If Board of Trustees declines, the community group may independently submit to the BPE the same rigorous application as under Route I plus info pertaining to the physical location of the proposed charter school and background on the initial governing board
- BPE selection process and approval/denial
- If approved, a new "public charter school district" is created (composed only of land area encompassing school building), governed in the first year by the initial governing board, then by a board of trustees elected at the next school election
- The public charter school district is funded at the 80% BASE level by the state

2025 Legislative Changes – HB 28 (Bedey) and HB 251 (Bedey)

HB 28 - Clarify timelines and opening procedures for public charter schools

- Agency bill requested by EDIC on behalf of BPE
- Addressed issues related to approval timelines, opening procedures, and initial funding
- Public charters exempt from regular school opening laws
- Route I charter:
 - no per-ANB funding in 1st year;
 - basic entitlement based on planned enrollment (subject to clawback)
- Route II charter:
 - per-ANB; other ANB-driven components, and basic entitlement in 1st year based on planned enrollment (subject to clawback)

HB 251 - Generally revise laws related to public charter schools

- Clarified Route II public charter school district and authority (not a taxing district)
- Removed BPE authority to waive statute in charter contracts (BPE may still grant variances to accreditation standards if requested in charter proposal)
- BPE must limit new approvals based on LEG-determined funding limit and prioritize proposals emphasizing personalized and proficiency-based learning
- Resident district financial obligations for a child with a disability attending a Route II public charter school district same as any out-of-district

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Charter Proposals



Charter Contracts



Continuous Oversight and Monitoring



Performance Framework



Renewal and Nonrenewal/Revocation



Public Charter School Account

Public Charter School Website

<https://bpe.mt.gov/INTRODUCTION-PUBLIC-CHARTER-SCHOOLS>

Performance Report

[2024-25 Public Charter School
Compiled Performance Report](#)

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL TIMELINE

June

- The Board shall issue and broadly publicize a request for proposal by June 1 of each year.
- Include the criteria that will guide the Board's decision to approve or deny a charter proposal.

November

- If a public charter school proposal does not contain all of the required elements, the Board shall consider the proposal incomplete and return the proposal to the applicant without taking action.
- In reviewing and evaluating public charter proposals, the Board shall use procedures, practices, and criteria consistent with nationally recognized best practices, principles, and standards. The proposal review process must include a thorough evaluation of each charter proposal, an in-person interview with the applicant, and an opportunity in a public forum for local residents to learn about and provide input on each proposal.

January

- In deciding whether to approve public charter proposals, the Board shall grant charters only to applicants that have met the requirements and are likely to open and operate successfully, base decisions on documented evidence, follow charter-granting policies and practices, and heavily weigh the evidence of community support, projected student enrollment, and input received.
- The Board shall approve or deny public charter proposals within 90 business days after the filing. When approval is granted to a governing board other than a local school board, the approval constitutes corresponding approval of the creation of a separate public charter school district and its boundaries.
- The Board shall adopt by resolution all public charter approval or denial decisions in an open meeting. An approval decision may include reasonable conditions before a charter contract may be executed. For a charter denial, the Board must clearly state the reasons for denial.

March

- Within 45 business days of approval, the Board and the governing board of the approved public charter school district shall execute a charter contract that clearly sets forth the academic and operational performance expectations and measures.
- A charter must be granted for a term of 5 operating years, commencing on July 1 of the first school year. An approved charter may delay their opening for one school year to plan and prepare. If the school is delayed in opening, the school shall request an extension from the Board, which may grant or deny the extension.
- The charter contract must be signed by the presiding officer of the Board and the public charter school's governing board.
- A public charter school may not operate without a charter contract approved in an open meeting by the Board.
- The Board may establish reasonable preopening requirements or conditions to monitor the startup progress to ensure the school is prepared to open smoothly and meets all building, health, safety, insurance, and other legal requirements.

LIST OF APPROVED PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

2024-25 PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL NUMBERS AND INFO AT A GLANCE

CHARTER SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL DISTRICT	FIRST OPERATING YEAR
Big Horn Academy	Hardin Public Schools	2025-2026 – Year 1
Billings Early College School	Billings Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Billings Multilingual Academy	Billings Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Billings Opportunity School	Billings Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Bitterroot Polytech	Hamilton School District	2024-2025 – Year 2
Bridger Charter School	Bozeman Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Bronc Fast Track Public Charter School	Frenchtown School District	2024-2025 – Year 2
Butte Pathway Academy	Butte School District	2025-2026 – Year 1
Central Montana CTE Academy	Lewistown Public Schools	2025-2026 – Year 1
CORE School at Morningside	Great Falls Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
East Helena 227 Academy	East Helena School District	2024-2025 – Year 2
Flathead PACE Academy	Kalispell Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Helena Montessori Charter School	Helena Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Libby Central Charter School	Libby Public Schools	2025-2026 – Year 1
Missoula CONNECT Academy	Missoula County Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Missoula TEACH Academy	Missoula County Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Mount Ascension Learning Academy	Helena Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Project for Alternative Learning	Helena Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Rise Charter & Distance Learning Academy	Corvallis School District	2024-2025 – Year 2
Rise Charter & Pathways Learning Academy	Corvallis School District	2024-2025 – Year 2
Rising Wolf Charter	Kalispell Public Schools	2024-2025 – Year 2
Ronan Charter Academy	Ronan School District	2025-2026 – Year 1

There are roughly 1,486 elementary school students (K-6) participating in a public charter school (1.9%), roughly 415 middle school students (7-8) participating in a public charter school (1.8%), roughly 1,711 high school students (9-12) participating in a public charter school (3.9%), and roughly 3,612 total students participating in a public charter school (2.5%).

Public charter schools focused on a diverse range of goals tailored to the unique needs of each local community, focusing on college and career readiness, individualized learning, academic achievement, social-emotional learning, experiential learning, community engagement, and support for English language learners.

Each charter school crafted its goals to reflect its unique mission and educational approach. For example, **Rising Wolf Charter School** focuses heavily on outdoor education and experiential learning, integrating AP Environmental Science and outdoor career pathways, while **Billings Multilingual Academy** targets academic English growth using WIDA ACCESS scores and career exploration via BEABLE RIASEC-LEXILE assessments.

Several schools prioritize early college credit attainment. For instance, **Billings Early College School** set a goal for 90% of students to earn at least five college credits in their first year, and **Bronc Fast Track** aims for students to earn up to 30 college credits before high school graduation.

Schools like **Billings Opportunity School**, **Bitterroot Polytech**, and **Mount Ascension Learning Academy** emphasize personalized learning plans to tailor educational experiences and track student progress, especially for those who are off track or in non-traditional learning environments.

A number of schools have embedded social emotional learning goals to foster a healthier school climate. For instance, **Bridger Charter Academy** promotes social emotional growth through mentoring and community activities, and **CONNECT Academy** aims for 75% of students and families to report a positive school connection via surveys.

Many schools incorporate career readiness through work-based learning. **Flathead PACE Academy** aims to increase internships and employment placements, while **Bitterroot Polytech** target increases in work-based learning opportunities and industry certifications to support post-secondary success.

WHAT'S NEXT...

APPLICATION RESOURCES

The application and criteria will be publicly available by June 1 each year.

[2025 Public Charter School Approval Timeline](#)

[2025 Public Charter School Application](#)

[2025 Public Charter School Evaluation Criteria](#)

SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

To facilitate the Montana Board of Public Education's review of public charter school applications, applicants must submit the application to bpe@mt.gov between the dates of October 27-31, 2025, with a deadline of October 31, 2025 at 5PM. All submission materials must be submitted in a single electronic submission. Multiple attachments will not be accepted in the submission. The Board will review the public charter school application, and if determined complete, will facilitate an interview and take public comment on the application. Final approval of the application will take place at the January 2026 Board of Public Education meeting. Please note the timeline at the link above.

Please provide a brief, direct response to each question using this application template and limit the application to 26 pages. Any appendices, handbooks, policies, and additional documents will be considered as supporting documentation. Please include links, when possible, and refrain from including lengthier documents.

Please note that submitting a public charter school application does not guarantee approval and that a public charter school contract will be granted. Failure to adhere to any requirements may lead to an incomplete application that is rejected before consideration.

2025-26 APPLICATION AND APPROVAL

- Added HB 251 language to application and criteria, which was publicly available on June 1.
- Prioritizing personalized and proficiency-based learning responses in application review.
- Creating ranking process for application review (\$1M funding limit).

HIRED PROGRAM OFFICER

ITEM 18

OPEN DISCUSSION AND FINAL THOUGHTS

Dr. Tim Tharp
Representative Linda Reksten

Friday, November 21, 2025

*University of Montana
Phyllis J. Washington College
of Education
Room 334*

CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance**
- B. Roll Call**
- C. Statement of Public Participation**
- D. Welcome Visitors**

❖ **REPORTS – (Item 19)**

Dr. Tim Tharp

ITEM 19

STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

- **Assessment Update**
- **Federal Update**
- **Content Standards Update**
- **Accreditation Update**
- **Annual Data Collection**

State Superintendent Susie Hedalen



November 2025 BPE Assessment Update

MAST Window 1 Update

- Window 1 opened October 13, 2025.
- Over 29,000 testlets were completed within the first week.
- Score reports are released weekly in PDF and Excel formats at the student and classroom levels.
- School and district testlet reports, along with progress reports, will be released after the window closes.

MAST Instructional Resources and Updates

2025-2026

OPI Assessment

MAST Training, Professional Learning,
and Administration Resources



LIVE SESSIONS

3:30-4:30 PM

PREPARING TO TEST WEBINARS

OCTOBER 1 [RECORDING & SLIDES](#)

OCTOBER 8 [RECORDING & SLIDES](#)

OCTOBER 15 [RECORDING & SLIDES](#)

MAST PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

OCTOBER 29: SCORE REPORTS

NOVEMBER 5: MATH MISCONCEPTIONS

NOVEMBER 12: ELA PERFORMANCE TASK

MAST MINI-SESSIONS

Schedule a virtual session to support a variety of MAST topics

[SCHEDULE HERE](#)

RESOURCES FOR TRAINING TEST ADMINISTRATORS

MAST for Educators PPTX, PDF, and Facilitator Guide available to assist with training

- [TA Roles & Responsibilities for Test Security](#)
- [MAST Test Administration Manual](#)
- [MontCAS Test Security Manual](#)

VISIT THE [STAY INFORMED PAGE](#) OF THE OPI ASSESSMENT WEBSITE FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

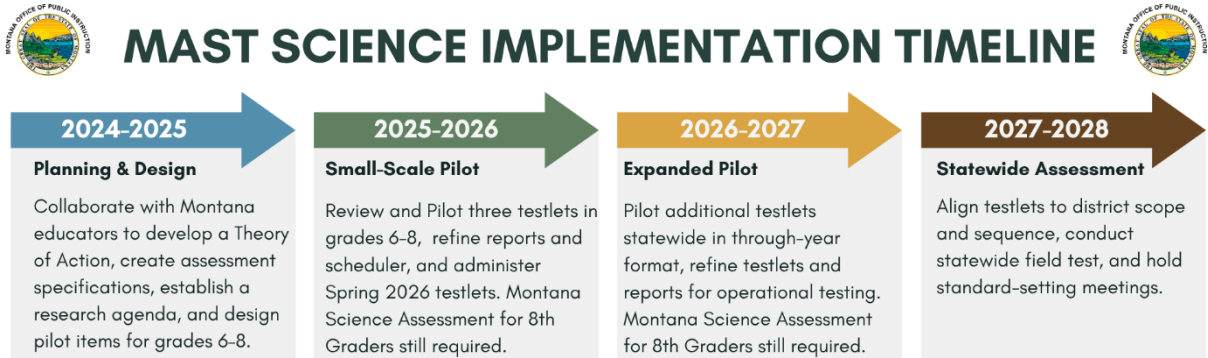
VISIT THE [OPI ASSESSMENT BULLETIN](#) FOR TIMELY TASKS & RESOURCES

- **MAST Memo:** Delivered monthly with instructional resources, administration tips, and professional learning opportunities (*October Edition*)
- **Last Best Learning Podcast, Ep. 15 – MAST in Motion: Lessons from Implementation with Rachel Barkell**

2025-2026 Assessment Support Visits

- This year, OPI Assessment is shifting some monitoring visits to support visits, focusing on CSI schools and districts with new System Testing Coordinators.
- Support visits cover staff training, resource access, testing platform navigation, test plan creation/management, administration best practices, and score report use.
- 21 visits are planned for the school year (roughly one-third of total site visits), primarily in October and November.

Science CGSA Update



- Recruitment has started for Spring 2026 pilot 6th-8th grade (goal of 1,500 per grade level) [Recruitment Form](#)
- Framework recommendations have been made and will continue to be implemented through the development process.

If you have any questions, please contact:
Cedar Rose, Assessment Director
cedar.rose@mt.gov



Federal Update as of November 4th

Federal Government Shutdown

The federal government remains shut down as of Tuesday, November 4th. Although there are no new updates at this time and operations are continuing as usual, the Office of Public Instruction recognizes that concerns may have increased since the end of October.

Regarding school nutrition reimbursements, carryover funding and recoveries are available to continue to reimburse schools as well as child and adult care providers for meals served in September and October.

In addition, the Child Nutrition Programs are largely funded by the Section 32 transfer from the Treasury Department, which can be made available in advance of annual appropriations acts.

Impact Aid payments to districts may begin seeing disruptions if the federal shutdown continues. We continue to stay in touch with our federal and state partners and will share information as we have it.

Education Innovation & Research Grant

Additionally, the Office of Public Instruction applied for a Department of Education EIR (Education Innovation & Research) Grant for \$10 million for 5 years. The purpose of the grant is to replicate and take to scale the science of reading instructional evidenced based practices that were launched through the early literacy targeted intervention program by the State of Montana in 2023.

Key Goals and Initiatives:

- Science of Reading Implementation:

Providing training in the Science of Reading for K-3 teachers, requiring proficiency in these practices for new teachers, and encouraging the use of HQIM.

- High-Quality Instruction:

Requiring all teachers to use high-quality, evidence-based curricula and instructional materials to teach foundational reading and language skills.

- Intervention and Tutoring:

Ensuring students who struggle receive research-based interventions, like high-dosage tutoring.

- Professional Development:

Providing ongoing, high-quality professional growth opportunities for educators to improve their knowledge and use of effective literacy practices.

- Data-Driven Instruction:

Equipping teachers with the ability to use literacy assessment data to monitor student progress and inform their teaching strategies through the state MTSS data modules.

- Parent and Family Engagement:

Expanding opportunities for families to be involved in their children's literacy development through tools and resources that keep them informed of their child's progress.

- School Leadership:

Fostering school leaders who maximize the use of time and personnel, create a culture of shared responsibility for literacy, and support effective teaching.

The Office of Public Instruction applied for this grant in early October. Many of our state and federal partners signed letters of support for the OPI's application. The OPI will potentially know if they have been granted funding through this grant by December.

Ed-Flex Waiver

The Office of Public Instruction is also applying for an Ed-Flex Waiver at this time under the *Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999* (Ed-Flex Act). This option allows states with Ed-Flex authority to waive certain federal requirements that apply to districts and schools without first having to submit waivers to the Department for review and approval – allowing school districts to focus on improving learning outcomes and better serve the needs of the local community. Notice was sent out the week of November 3rd and will be posted for 30 days for public comment.

Upcoming Federal Programs Deadlines for School Districts

- Title I Schools Final Expenditure Report due November 25th
- 2024-2025 Title Program Final Expenditure Reports due November 25th
- Districts being monitored for Title I A and Title I D evidence materials must be submitted by December 1st
- Final ESEA application amendments due December 15th.



November 2025 BPE Content Standards Update

Mathematics Content Standards Implementation

- [PK-12 General Guidance Document](#)
 - This document lists all PK-12 mathematics standards as a PDF file. This document includes all guidance, from a PK-12 perspective, for the new standards. This consists of the content standards, the practice standards (with elaborations), as well as assessment, financial literacy, pathways, recommended course alignment, and other appendices.
- [Kindergarten Expanded Guidance](#)
 - This document lists the kindergarten mathematics standards as a PDF file. This document includes all guidance, from a kindergarten instructional perspective, for the new standards. This consists of the content standards, the practice standards (with elaborations), general notes, instructional and IEFA examples for each standard, example proficiency rubrics for each standard, suggestions for alignment with financial literacy, and PK-K1 vertical alignment recommendations.
- Implementation Webinars:
 - Session #1: [Why the Change?](#)
 - Session #2: [Exploring the Changes and Structure](#)
 - Session #3: [Math Practices](#)

Montana ELA & Literacy Standards Revision

English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy Standards:

- Summary of Revisions Posted – Waiting for formal adoption
- Next Steps:
 - Preparing documents for official adoption, including loading into Satchel
 - Preparing General Guidance Document
 - Preparing Expanded Grade Level Guidance Document

Montana World Languages Content Standards

- [K-12 General Guidance Document](#)

- [2026 World Languages Standards' Implementation Video -Slide Deck](#)

Satchel: <https://mt-satchel.commongoodlt.com/>

Montana Content Standards
Montana Office of Public Instruction

VIEW AS: **TILES** TABLE

Framework Category: Search framework titles/identifiers:

Framework Index

CURRENT Standards

- Montana Arts Content Standards 2016
- Montana Content Standards for Career and Technical Education (2021)
- Montana Content Standards for Computer Science (2021)
- Montana Content Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy 2011
- Montana Content Standards for Library Media and Information Literacy (2021)
- Montana Content Standards for Mathematics 2011
- Montana Content Standards for Social Studies (2021)
- Montana Content Standards for Technology Integration (2021)
- Montana Early Learning Standards (2014)
- Montana English Language Proficiency Content Standards 2025
- Montana Health and Physical Education Content Standards 2016
- Montana Science Content Standards 2016
- Montana Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies
- Montana World Languages Content Standards 1999

Adopted Standards

- Montana Mathematics Content Standards (2026)
- Montana World Languages Content Standards & Performance Descriptors 2026

REPEALED Standards

- Montana Career and Vocational/Technical Content Standards (REPEALED)
- Montana Content Standards for Social Studies (REPEALED)
- Montana Information Literacy/Library Media Content Standards (REPEALED)
- Montana Technology Content Standards (REPEALED)
- Montana Workplace Competencies Content Standards (REPEALED)

Next Steps:

- Once all expanded guidance documents are done for each content area, the specifics by grade level will be uploaded onto Satchel as well as instructional support videos and resources.



Montana Content Standards Revisions



Current Cycles of Standards Revisions

Cycle	Content Standards	Review/ Research	Revision	Negotiated Rulemaking	Adoption Phase	Adoption	School Implementation
I	English Language Proficiency	January 2023 – February 2023	March 2023 – April 2023	May 2023 – August 2023	September 2023 – March 2024	May 2024	July 1, 2025
II	Mathematics	September 2022 – March 2023	April – October 2024	November 2024 – March 2024	March 2024 - January 2025	January 2025	July 1, 2026
III	World Languages	January – March 2023	April – August 2023	September – December 2023	January - June 2024	September 2024	July 1, 2026
IV	English Language Arts/ Literacy	September 2023-March 2024	April – October 2024	December – March 2025	March – June 2025	September 2025	July 1, 2027

Adoption, Revision, and Repeal History for Montana Content Standards

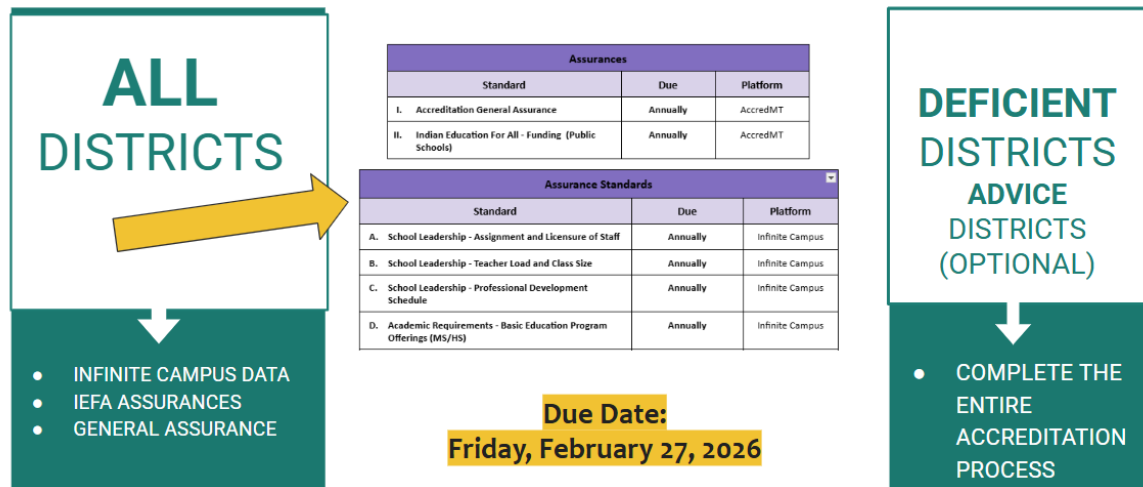
Standards	Initial Adoption	Revised	Revised	Revised	Repealed	ARM Chapter	Current Framework
Mathematics	1999	2009	2011	2025		10.53	K-8 Grade Level Standards, 9-12 Standards
Science	1999	2006	2016			10.53	K-5 Grade Level Standards, 6-8 & 9-12 Grade Band Standards
World Languages	1999	2025				10.53	K-12 Standards/ Performance Descriptions
Arts	2000	2016				10.53	K-5 Grade Level Standards, 6-8 & 9-12 Grade Band Standards
Career and Technical Education	2000	2020				10.53	K-5 Grade Level Standards, 6-8 & 9-12 Grade Band Standards
Library Media	2000	2008	2020			10.53	K-5 Grade Level Standards, 6-8 & 9-12 Grade Band Standards
Social Studies	2000	2020				10.53	K-5 Grade Level Standards, 6-8 & 9-12 Grade Band
Computer Science	2000	2008	2020			10.53	K-5 Grade Level Standards, 6-8 & 9-12 Grade Band Standards
Technology Integration	2000	2008	2020			10.53	K-5 Grade Level Standards, 6-8 & 9-12 Grade Band Standards
Workplace Competencies	2000				2021	10.54	
English Language Arts	2011	2026				10.53	K-8 Grade Level Standards, 9-10 & 11-12 Grade Band Standards
English Language Proficiency	2011	2024				10.53	K-12 Proficiency Standards
Health & Physical Education	2016					10.53	K-5 Grade Level Standards, 6-8 & 9-12 Grade Band Standards

For questions, please contact: Marie Judisch, marie.judisch@mt.gov



Accreditation Update Board of Public Education- November

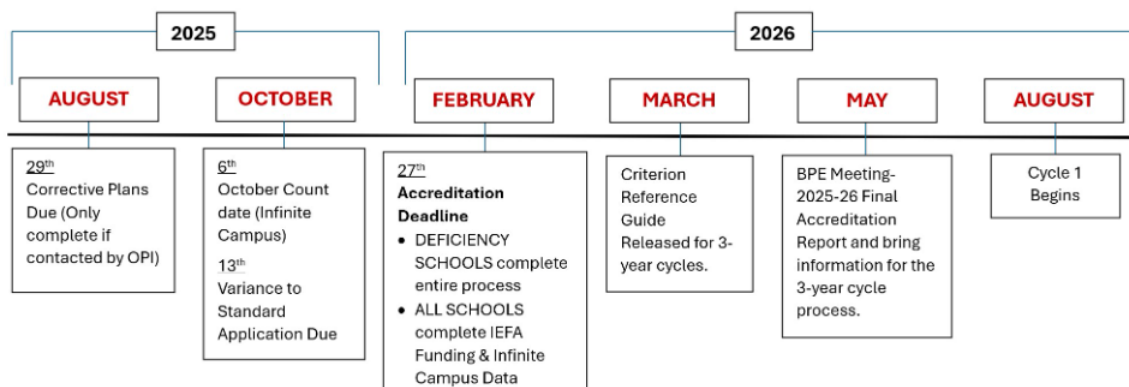
Accreditation Process 2025-26



Think Tank Tasks

1. Refine rubrics for Criteria Reference Guide (September- December)
 - a) Sample Evidence Examples
 - b) Resource Materials
2. Define the Student Performance Rubrics - High School (January- February)
 - a) Looking at ACT Data to determine
 - b) Looking at what else to include (CCR)
3. Define the Student Performance Rubrics - Elementary (January- February)
 - a) Looking at MAST Data to determine
 - b) Looking at other states
 - c) Looking at what else to include
4. Small School Process (March)

Timeline





Annual Collections Update – November 2025

The EDUCATE team continues to oversee statewide data collections through Infinite Campus, ensuring districts maintain accurate, timely, and certified information for state and federal reporting.

Data Collection

Each year, the OPI publishes the Data Collection Calendar for the upcoming school year. The calendar includes the collection name, the purpose of the collection, the collection type (financial, accountability, federal reporting, etc.), along with the relevant state statute, administrative rule, or federal reporting requirement associated with each collection. The EDUCATE team is actively supporting districts with fall data collections, including:

- Graduate, Dropout, Cohort (2024-2025)
- Fall Student Count for ANB
- Fall Enrollment Count
- Fall Program Participation
- Fall Personnel
- Fall Teacher Class
- Special Education Child Count

The Data Collection Calendar can be found [here](#).

Training & Outreach

The EDUCATE team, in partnership with the School Services of Montana, delivered the Ultimate Survival Series for Fall Reporting to support districts with data collection, validation, and certification in Infinite Campus. This five-part learning series, held weekly from September 5 to October 3, 2025, guided participants through each stage of the fall reporting process. Training content focused on the setup and submission of calendars, courses, rosters, CTE, ANB, and program participation data. Over 40 participants attended the Survival Series (including data clerks and data administrators). The EDUCATE team posted all recorded sessions, presentation materials, and supporting documentation to the agency's website, ensuring schools can reference these resources as needed throughout the year.

In addition to the statewide training and fall data collection, the EDUCATE team hosted day-in-a-half user group workshops in Billings and Missoula. During these workshops, the EDUCATE team provided an in-depth review of fall state reporting requirements and offered direct assistance through discussion and 1:1 support.

Collaboration & Improvement

The EDUCATE team engaged in a collaborative project with School Finance to make QEC eligibility more transparent by providing a report in MAEFAIRS that lists all staff identified with a QEC eligible state assignment code. This report gives districts the ability to follow up with staff to ensure license requirements are completed by statutory deadlines.

Finally, OPI opened accreditation reports in early September. This report allows districts to verify eligibility for QEC, ensure appropriate staffing for key positions, and identify courses where teachers are either unlicensed or not appropriately endorsed. Making these reports available earlier in the cycle improves the overall quality of educator data and minimizes changes after certification.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Thuotte, EDUCATE Data Team Unit Manager, at nthuotte@mt.gov.

❖ **CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE – (Items 20-22)**

Dr. Ron Slinger

ITEM 20

**UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CHOICE
SCHOOLS COMMISSION**

Cathy Kincheloe

ITEM 21

**INFORMATION ON PUBLIC CHARTER
SCHOOL FALL ENROLLMENT DATA**

Christy Mock-Stutz

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: November 19-21, 2025

Presentation	Public Charter Enrollment Data
Presenter	Christy Mock-Stutz
Position Title	Assistant Chief Program Officer
Overview	Preliminary public charter school fall enrollment data for year 1 and year 2 public charter schools.
Requested Decision(s)	Information Item
Related Issue(s)	N/A
Recommendation(s)	N/A





Public Charter School Fall Enrollment Counts

Preliminary data as of October 31, 2025

This is the second year that public charter schools, under § 20-6-812, MCA, are open and operational in Montana. There were five new public charters approved to open this school year. These schools were provided funding through a basic entitlement based upon their anticipated Annual Number of Belonging (ANB) count, provided to the OPI in the spring of 2025.

Each charter school is assigned a budget unit for each of the grade level bands it serves. The budget unit is the unit for which the ANB of a district is calculated separately, per § 20-9-306, MCA. Budget units are assigned according to grade levels, E= elementary, M= Middle School, H= High School. For funding purposes, § 20-6-812, MCA, states that a public charter school district is not eligible for basic entitlement unless its ANB is greater than 70 for an elementary school or program, 20 for a middle school or program, or 40 for a high school or program.

Table 1: First year Public Charter School codes, budget units, enrollment, and basic entitlement

District	School Name	Budget Unit	District Initial Anticipated ANB	Basic Entitlement amount FY26*	Fall Student Count for ANB	ANB Requirement-greater than:
Hardin HS	Big Horn Academy	H2	70	\$364,401	70	40
Butte	Butte Pathway Academy	H2	60	\$364,401	33	40
Libby K-12	Libby Central Charter School	H2	40	\$364,401	40	40
Ronan Elem	Ronan Charter Academy	M2	20	\$121,466	13	20
Ronan HS	Ronan Charter Academy	H2	40	\$364,401	29	40
Fergus HS	Central MT CTE Academy	H2	40	\$364,401	290	40

* Basic entitlement was calculated using the anticipated enrollment in the school opening documentation.

Student enrollment: Full and Part-time enrollment

Some charter schools leverage existing programming/coursework to provide a new experience for students. Each new charter school is assigned a new budget unit(s) and corresponding grade-level signifier(s) (for example, E2 or H3).

Table 2: Year 2 Charter Schools Fall enrollment ANB counts

District	School Name	Budget Unit	Fall 2024 Student Count	Final ANB SY 2024-25	Basic Entitlement amount FY26	Fall 2025 Student Count	ANB Requirement
Billings Elem	Billings Multilingual Academy	E2	17	18	0	4	70
Billings H S	Billings Multilingual Academy	H2	24	18	0	13	40
Billings H S	Billings Early College School	H3	60	31	0	107	40
Billings H S	Billings Opportunity School	H4	76	74	\$364,401	110	40
Bozeman H S	Bridger Charter School	H2	101	56	\$364,401	134	40
Corvallis K-12	Rise Charter & Distance	E2	181	206	\$60,732	269	70

District	School Name	Budget Unit	Fall 2024 Student Count	Final ANB SY 2024-25	Basic Entitlement amount FY26	Fall 2025 Student Count	ANB Requirement
Corvallis K-12	Rise Charter & Distance	M2	47	49	\$121,466	189	20
Corvallis K-12	Rise Charter & Distance	H2	50	45	\$364,401	68	40
Corvallis K-12	Rise Charter & Pathways	E3	262	265	\$60,732	613	70
Corvallis K-12	Rise Charter & Pathways	M3	25	29	\$121,466	189	20
Corvallis K-12	Rise Charter & Pathways	H3	124	44	\$364,401	214	20
East Helena K-12	227 Academy	E2	10	11	-	2	70
East Helena K-12	227 Academy	M2	11	16	0	22	20
East Helena K-12	227 Academy	H2	57	58	\$364,401	56	40
Flathead H S	Flathead Pace Academy	H2	158	68	\$364,401	228	40
Flathead H S	Kalispell Rising Wolf Charter	H3	317	54	\$364,401	237	40
Frenchtown K-12	Bronc Fast Track	H2	53	71	\$364,401	56	40
Great Falls Elem	CORE School at Morningside	E2	297	316	\$60,732	321	70
Hamilton K-12	Bitterroot Polytech	M2	28	22	\$121,466	15	20
Hamilton K-12	Bitterroot Polytech	H2	360	115	\$364,401	46	40
Helena Elem	Helena Montessori Charter Schl	E3	198	206	\$60,732	216	70
Helena Elem	Mount Ascension Learning Academy	E2	49	22	-	48	70
Helena Elem	Mount Ascension Learning Academy	M2	21	22	\$121,466	23	20
Helena H S	Mount Ascension Learning Academy	H2	45	59	\$364,401	105	40
Helena H S	Helena P.A.L.	H3	58	71	\$364,401	62	40
Missoula Elem	Missoula TEACH Academy	E3	84	86	\$60,732	70	70
Missoula H S	Missoula Connect Academy	H3	90	87	\$364,401	67	40

Table 3: Number of Full and Part-time Enrollments

Schools/Districts Totals	Full-time	Half-time	No ANB (less than 179 hours)	Quarter Time	Three-quarters Time	Total student count
Billings Public Schools	68	191				259
Billings Early College School	1	106				107
Billings Multilingual Acad HS		24				24
Billings Multilingual Acad MS		17				17
Billings Opportunity School	67	44				111
Bozeman Public Schools	5	41		46	42	134
Bridger Charter School	5	41		46	42	134
Butte Public Schools	32				1	33
Butte Pathway Academy	32				1	33
Corvallis K-12 Schools	355	456	173	415	17	1416
CSD 7-8 Rise Distance Academy	56	4			5	65
CSD 7-8 Rise Pathway Academy			57	132		189
CSD EL Rise Distance Academy	258	4			5	267

Schools/Districts Totals	Full-time	Half-time	No ANB (less than 179 hours)	Quarter Time	Three- quarters Time	Total student count
CSD EL Rise Pathway Academy		412	115	86		613
CSD HS Rise Distance Academy	41	15	1	4	7	68
CSD HS Rise Pathway Academy		21		193		214
East Helena K-12	84	1	1	2	1	89
227 Academy - HS	60	1	1	1	1	64
227 Academy - Middle School	24			1		25
Frenchtown K-12 Schools	55	1				56
Bronc Fast Track	55	1				56
Great Falls Public Schls	316	5				321
CORE School at Morningside Elementary	316	5				321
Hamilton K-12 Schools	48	13				61
Bitterroot Polytech 7-8	14	1				15
Bitterroot Polytech HS	34	12				46
Hardin Public Schools	69				1	70
The Big Horn Academy	69				1	70
Helena Public Schools	327	33	1	106	1	468
Helena Montessori Charter Schl	216					216
Helena P.A.L.	62					62
Mount Ascension Learning Ac EL				48		48
Mount Ascension Learning Ac HS	43	28		34		105
Mount Ascension Learning Ac MS	6	5	1	24	1	37
Kalispell Public Schools	4	117	91	243	10	465
Flathead Pace Academy	4	52	91	71	10	228
Kalispell Rising Wolf Charter		65		172		237
Lewistown Public Schools	8	35	138	68	40	290
Central MT CTE Academy	8	35	138	68	40	290
Libby K-12 Schools	40					40
Libby Central Charter School	40					40
Missoula Co Public Schls	120	5	3	3	7	138
Missoula Connect Academy HS	50	5	3	3	7	68
Missoula TEACH Academy	70					70
Ronan Public Schools	23	4		5	10	42
Ronan Charter Academy 7-8	4			4	5	13
Ronan Charter Academy HS	19	4		1	5	29
Grand Total	1554	902	407	888	130	3882

ITEM 22

UPDATE ON PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

- **Performance Framework Revisions**
- **New Applicants and Interviews**
- **Application and Evaluation Criteria Review**

McCall Flynn



Montana Board of Public Education Public Charter School Performance Framework Evaluation Rubric

OVERVIEW

Public charter schools must adhere to the provisions in Title 20 of the Montana Code Annotated and Title 10 of the Administrative Rules of Montana and any state or local rule, regulation, policy, or procedure relating to noncharter public schools within the located school district, unless a variance to standard was awarded.

Public charter schools shall identify a performance framework as prescribed in [20-6-809](#), MCA, that clearly sets forth the academic and operational performance indicators, measures, and metrics which include:

- School achievement goals
- Student academic proficiency
- Student academic growth
- Achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between major student subgroups
- Attendance
- Recurrent enrollment from year to year
- Postsecondary readiness
- Financial performance and sustainability
- Charter Governing Board performance and stewardship, including compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and terms of the charter contract

The Public Charter School Performance Framework Work Group also included additional performance indicators, measures, and metrics which include:

- Student Engagement
- Support for Transitions

These performance framework indicators, measures, and metrics must align to mission-specific goals, and when possible, exceed provisions in Title 20 of the Montana Code Annotated and Title 10 of the Administrative Rules of Montana. The performance framework indicators, measures, and metrics must be reported to the Board of Public Education no later than October 31 of the first year of operation.

Public charter schools shall submit information in accordance with the Office of Public Instruction Accreditation Process documenting adherence to the performance framework to support the Board of Public Education's evaluation and annual reporting process.

The Board shall publish an annual report that includes a comparison of the performance of public charter school students with the performance of academically, ethnically, and economically comparable groups of students in noncharter public schools.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS AND RATINGS

Authorizers establish performance targets that honor their unique contexts. These targets establish the levels of performance corresponding to the ratings for a given measure. Authorizers begin by setting targets for the Meets Standard rating category, which establish expectations and definitions of a quality performance on a given measure. Potential ratings include:

Exceeds Standard	This rating is reserved for performance that far exceeds expectations, demonstrating exceptional performance on a particular measure. This rating may be used in the academic framework, but it is not typically used in the financial or organizational framework.
Meets Standard	The target for this rating category sets the expectation for charter school performance in all measures in all frameworks—academic, financial, and organizational. Schools earning this rating on a particular measure are performing well in that area.
Approaches Standard	Schools with this rating are approaching but have not fully met expectations for performance on a given measure. While these schools have achieved some of the minimum expectations on the measure in question, these schools may be subject to further analysis and potentially closer monitoring. This rating may be used for academic measures and qualitative measures in the organizational and financial frameworks.
Does Not Meet Standard	Schools with this rating on a measure are performing below the authorizer's expectations, and the school is subject to further analysis, closer monitoring, and possibly intervention. This rating is used on all measures in all frameworks.

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK – ACADEMIC

Is the public charter school academically successful?

The Board of Public Education places emphasis on multiple measures of student success. Strong literacy and numeracy skills are critical for success in life. There are also additional ways schools impact student learning, wellness, and other life outcomes consistent with their mission. The Board of Public Education encourages charter schools to think more broadly about excellence by setting expectations for, and evaluating progress against, other aspects of students' learning and achievement unique to each school and its particular mission.

Student Achievement Goals

Guiding Question: Is the public charter school meeting mission- or school-specific student achievement goals? (Public Charter Schools must submit between 1-3 student achievement goals to highlight innovative efforts.)

Student Achievement Goals Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The public charter school has met the minimum requirements and has provided evidence that they have gone significantly above and beyond the minimum standard.
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided relevant and reliable evidence to show that they have met their mission- or school-specific student achievement goal.
Approaches Standard	The public charter school has met some of the minimum expectations but has not fully met their mission- or school-specific student achievement goal.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school has no evidence to support meeting their mission- or school-specific student achievement goal.

Student Academic Proficiency/Growth

Guiding Question: How is the public charter school ensuring all students are learning in Math?

Math Performance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The public charter school has met the minimum requirements and has provided evidence that they have gone significantly above and beyond the minimum standard.
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided evidence of the use of a tool for measuring student math performance, along with data demonstrating an increase in student learning progression, growth, or proficiency with overall group performance data, and evidence of how the data from the tool is used to inform teaching and learning.
Approaches Standard	The public charter school has provided evidence of the use of a tool for measuring student math performance and data evidence demonstrating an increase in student learning progression, growth, or proficiency with overall group performance data.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school has no evidence to support student learning in math.

Definitions:

"Overall Group Performance Data" means the whole public charter school.

"Learning progression" means the specific performance expectations in each content area and grade-level or grade-band from kindergarten through grade 12.

"Measure" means a way to assess the level of proficiency on a performance indicator aligned to the district graduate profile.

"Proficient" means that a student demonstrated a level of knowledge and skills that are expected to be learned signaling that a student is well prepared to progress on the learning continuum aligned to the content standards, learning progressions, and necessary readiness skills.

"Student performance standards" means the measurement of student performance and proficiency on annual state level summative assessments and graduation rates used to determine the accreditation status of a school.

"Student growth" means changes in student learning as measured from one point in time to another as determined by state or local measures, or both. The federal accountability system uses a growth model to demonstrate student learning across time as measured by statewide assessments.

Guiding Question: How is the public charter school ensuring all students are learning in ELA?

ELA Performance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The public charter school has met the minimum requirements and has provided evidence that they have gone significantly above and beyond the minimum standard.
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided evidence of the use of a tool for measuring student ELA performance, along with data demonstrating an increase in student learning progression, growth, or proficiency with overall group performance data, and evidence of how the data from the tool is used to inform teaching and learning.
Approaches Standard	The public charter school has provided evidence of the use of a tool for measuring student ELA performance and data evidence demonstrating an increase in student learning progression, growth, or proficiency with overall group performance data.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school has no evidence to support student learning in ELA.

Definitions:

"Overall Group Performance Data" means the whole school.

"Learning progression" means the specific performance expectations in each content area and grade-level or grade-band from kindergarten through grade 12.

"Measure" means a way to assess the level of proficiency on a performance indicator aligned to the district graduate profile.

"Proficient" means that a student demonstrated a level of knowledge and skills that are expected to be learned signaling that a student is well prepared to progress on the learning continuum aligned to the content standards, learning progressions, and necessary readiness skills.

"Student performance standards" means the measurement of student performance and proficiency on annual state level summative assessments and graduation rates used to determine the accreditation status of a school.

"Student growth" means changes in student learning as measured from one point in time to another as determined by state or local measures, or both. The federal accountability system uses a growth model to demonstrate student learning across time as measured by statewide assessments.

Achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between major student subgroups

Guiding Question: How is the public charter school ensuring students in major student subgroups are learning in Math? Please name those subgroups. (This refers to a subgroup of students identified by a particular characteristic. The student subgroups used for the accountability system includes economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups (White, American Indian, and Hispanic), children with disabilities, and English learners.)

Math Subgroup Performance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The public charter school has met the minimum requirements and has provided evidence that they have gone significantly above and beyond the minimum standard.
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided evidence of the use of a tool for measuring student math performance for major student subgroups, along with data demonstrating an increase in student learning progression, growth, or proficiency with subgroup performance data, and evidence of how the data from the tool is used to inform teaching and learning.
Approaches Standard	The public charter school has provided evidence of the use of a valid and reliable tool for measuring math performance for major student subgroups and data evidence demonstrating an increase in student learning progression, growth, or proficiency with subgroup performance data.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school has no evidence to support student learning for major student subgroups in Math.

Definitions:

"Learning progression" means the specific performance expectations in each content area and grade-level or grade-band from kindergarten through grade 12.

"Measure" means a way to assess the level of proficiency on a performance indicator aligned to the district graduate profile.

"Proficient" means that a student demonstrated a level of knowledge and skills that are expected to be learned signaling that a student is well prepared to progress on the learning continuum aligned to the content standards, learning progressions, and necessary readiness skills.

"Student performance standards" means the measurement of student performance and proficiency on annual state level summative assessments and graduation rates used to determine the accreditation status of a school.

"Student growth" means changes in student learning as measured from one point in time to another as determined by state or local measures, or both. The federal accountability system uses a growth model to demonstrate student learning across time as measured by statewide assessments.

Guiding Question: How is the public charter school ensuring students in major student subgroups are learning in ELA? Please name those subgroups. (This refers to a subgroup of students identified by a particular characteristic. The student subgroups used for the accountability system includes economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups (White, American Indian, and Hispanic), children with disabilities, and English learners)

ELA Subgroup Performance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The public charter school has met the minimum requirements and has provided evidence that they have gone significantly above and beyond the minimum standard.
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided evidence of the use of a tool for measuring student ELA performance for major student subgroups, along with data demonstrating an increase in student learning progression, growth, or proficiency with subgroup performance data, and evidence of how the data from the tool is used to inform teaching and learning.
Approaches Standard	The public charter school has provided evidence of the use of a valid and reliable tool for measuring ELA performance for major student subgroups and data evidence demonstrating an increase in student learning progression, growth, or proficiency with subgroup performance data.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school has no evidence to support student learning for major student subgroups in ELA.

Definitions:

"Learning progression" means the specific performance expectations in each content area and grade-level or grade-band from kindergarten through grade 12.

"Measure" means a way to assess the level of proficiency on a performance indicator aligned to the district graduate profile.

"Proficient" means that a student demonstrated a level of knowledge and skills that are expected to be learned signaling that a student is well prepared to progress on the learning continuum aligned to the content standards, learning progressions, and necessary readiness skills.

"Student performance standards" means the measurement of student performance and proficiency on annual state level summative assessments and graduation rates used to determine the accreditation status of a school.

"Student growth" means changes in student learning as measured from one point in time to another as determined by state or local measures, or both. The federal accountability system uses a growth model to demonstrate student learning across time as measured by statewide assessments.

Attendance

Guiding Question: Is the public charter school's annual attendance rate meeting the state average of 33% of students attending school 95% or more?

Attendance Rate Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The public charter school has met the minimum requirements and has provided evidence that they have gone significantly above and beyond the minimum standard.
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided relevant and reliable evidence to show that their average daily attendance rate meets the state average.
Approaches Standard	The public charter school has provided relevant and reliable evidence to show that their average daily attendance rate falls slightly below the minimum standard at either 30-32% of students attending school 90-94%.

Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school's average daily attendance rate does not meet the state average and falls below 30% of students attending school 90%.
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Student Engagement

Guiding Question: Provide evidence to show how students are engaged in their learning.

Student Engagement Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The public charter school has met the minimum requirements and has provided evidence that they have gone significantly above and beyond the minimum standard.
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided at least two pieces of relevant and reliable evidence to show that students are engaged in their learning.
Approaches Standard	The public charter school has provided one piece of relevant and reliable evidence to show that students are engaged in their learning.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school has no evidence to show that students are engaged in their learning.

Support for Transitions (Grades K-8 Only)

Guiding Question: How is the public charter school supporting students as they transition into a new school setting, for example, kindergarten entry or transition to middle school or high school?

Transitions Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The public charter school has met the minimum requirements and has provided evidence that they have gone significantly above and beyond the minimum standard.
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided at least two pieces of relevant and reliable evidence to support transitions into new school settings for students.
Approaches Standard	The public charter school has provided one piece of relevant and reliable evidence to show support for students as they transition into a new school setting.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school has no evidence to show for students as they transition into new school settings.

Postsecondary Readiness (Grades 9-12 Only)

Guiding Question: How is the public charter school ensuring that students graduate college and career ready?

Postsecondary Readiness Rubric (College and Career Readiness)	
Exceeds Standard	The public charter school has met the minimum requirements and has provided evidence that they have gone significantly above and beyond the minimum standard.
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided two or more pieces of evidence to show that students are graduating ready for college and/or career opportunities.
Approaches Standard	The public charter school has provided one piece of evidence to show that students are graduating ready for college and/or career opportunities.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school has provided no evidence to ensure students are graduating ready for college and/or career opportunities.

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK – FINANCIAL

Is the public charter school financially healthy?

Public charter schools have the autonomy to manage their finances, consistent with state and federal law. The Board of Public Education's role is to define clear, measurable, and attainable financial standards and targets that a school must meet as a condition of renewal. The Board of Public Education has developed and utilized a good set of tools to assess and monitor a school's financial health while respecting a school's autonomy.

Financial Performance and Stability

Guiding Question: Does the public charter school materially comply with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the Charter Contract relating to financial reporting requirements including timely and complete submission of required documents?

Financial Performance and Stability Rubric	
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided relevant and reliable evidence that it materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the Charter Contract relating to financial reporting requirements including timely and complete submission of required documents, such as: • Public Charter Initial Statement. • Public Charter Financial Summaries. • Public Charter Annual Projections. • Trustee Financial Summaries.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school does not materially comply with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to financial reporting requirements due to failure to make timely and complete submission of required documents, including failure or unwillingness to provide additional information requested by the Board of Public Education.

Recurrent enrollment from year to year

Guiding Question: Is the public charter school within 95% of its projected enrollment or is the three-year average enrollment greater than its projected enrollment?

Recurrent Enrollment Rubric	
Meets Standard	The public charter school has provided relevant and reliable evidence to show that it is within 95% of its projected enrollment or the public charter school's three-year average is greater than its projected enrollment.
Does Not Meet Standard	The public charter school does not meet their recurrent enrollment targets and does not provide sufficient evidence to support these targets.

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK – ORGANIZATIONAL

Is the public charter school organizationally sound?

The Board of Public Education is responsible for holding public charter schools accountable for sound and well-functioning organizational practices to protect the public interest. The Organizational Framework provides a comprehensive lens to the extent to which public charter schools are meeting operational expectations and protecting student and public interests while simultaneously honoring public charter schools' rightful autonomy to design and deliver school models that meet students' needs.

Charter Governing Board performance and stewardship, including compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and terms of the charter contract

Guiding Question: Does the Charter Governing Board comply with basic governance requirements?

Governance Oversight Rubric	
Meets Standard	The Charter Governing Board has provided relevant and reliable evidence that it complies with basic governance requirements such as: • monitoring academic performance at least once a quarter. • reviewing financial reports at each board meeting. • engaging in strategic planning. • conducting evaluations of its school leader, in accordance with Charter Governing Board policies. • monitoring compliance with its charter contract. • monitoring compliance with applicable law and regulations. • ensuring compliance with the family and community engagement plan.
Does Not Meet Standard	The Charter Governing Board fails to materially comply with any one of the activities outlined above.

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

1. How has the public charter school prioritized innovation different from a program that the school district could operate or currently operate without the public charter designation?
2. Why is the public charter school innovating? What are the student needs in the community that are trying to be met?
3. How is the public charter school flexible and nimble in response to the needs of students?
4. What roadblocks or challenges is the public charter school encountering in efforts to innovate in the public charter school?
5. What have you learned, and what goals do you want to set moving forward?

❖ **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – (Items 23-27)**

Dr. Ron Slinger

ITEM 23

NOTICE OF SURRENDER IN BPE CASE
#2025-05

Brenton Craggs

ITEM 24

**INFORMATION ON THE ANNUAL
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT
PROVIDERS LIST**

**Marie Judisch
Aimee Konzen
Eva Cox**

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: November 2025

Presentation	Annual Professional Development Unit Provider List
Presenter	Marie Judisch Aimee Konzen Eva Cox
Position Title	Senior Manager of Academic Outcomes and Instruction Professional Learning Manager Professional Development Unit Specialist
Overview	FY 2025 Annual Professional Development Report and an overview of the Professional Development Unit Provider System Update
Requested Decision(s)	Informational Item
Related Issue(s)	10.55.714 - Professional Development 10.57.215 - Professional Development and Renewal Requirements 10.57.216 - Approved Professional Development and Renewal Activity
Recommendation(s)	None



Montana Office of Public Instruction



Professional Development Unit Provider Annual Report

July 2024 – June 2025

Report Created by:

Eva Cox, Professional Development Unit Specialist
Teaching and Learning Department
Montana Office of Public Instruction

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Professional Development Unit Provider System Overview

The Professional Development Unit (PDU) Provider System is used by approved professional development unit providers to report professional development unit learning opportunities to the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). The data gathered in the system includes the learning opportunity title, the date(s) and location(s) of the learning opportunity, and the number of participants who received an OPI PDU certificate.

Certificates are generated from the information entered into the Professional Development Unit Provider System by the approved professional development unit providers' users that manage those accounts. This information then feeds into the TeachMT Licensure system that was updated on June 1, 2022 for educators to find their professional development sessions in order to recertify their educator licenses.

The management of the Professional Development Unit Provider System and its processes is transitioning into an updated system. Currently the data is manually calculated to derive the information for this report. The upcoming system will be able to provide data on demand, increase provider compliance with the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM), and establish protocols for the review and acknowledgement of high-quality professional development. It will also record certificate issuance so accurate reporting

Provider Criteria and Requirements

Per the Administrative Rule of Montana 10.57.216 Approved Professional Development Activity, "organizations wishing to offer professional development activities for the award of Professional Development units must receive approval from the Superintendent of Public Instruction prior to offering activities." Status as an approved provider will continue as long as the provider meets the following guidelines by:

- Providing activities deemed appropriate for professional development in compliance with ARM 10.55.714 and 10.57.215,
- Following the professional development unit activity certificate reporting process, and
- Maintaining records of all professional development activities for which professional development unit certificates were awarded for five years following the date of completion.

All providers are assigned provider types for reporting. The types are: County Superintendents, Government Agencies, Professional Education Associations, School Districts, Tribal, and Universities and Colleges.

System Outreach and Cleanup Update

Between May and June 2025, the OPI Professional Development Unit Specialist reached out to all provider account holders to ensure information was compliant and up to date. Every account was reviewed, and every provider was emailed—either a thank-you for their ongoing compliance or a thank-you along with a note outlining items that needed correction to remain in compliance. A total of 883 users across 584 provider accounts were contacted. During this process:

- 32 users were identified with outdated contact information.
- 79 accounts were retired due to inactivity.
- 20 users had been previously retired incorrectly and were still appearing on the contact list despite not being active providers.
 - These provider accounts were correctly retired and removed from the contact list.
- 97 accounts were found to have issues with fiscal year reporting or inaccurate certificate counts, including 15 accounts with major issues spanning multiple events.
- 3 providers were retired due to non-compliance and invited to reapply once the new system is operational, which will prevent fiscal year issues and inaccurate certificate counts.
- 72 providers were identified as needing monthly check-ins:
 - 20 are new providers with no events listed and need support when entering their first events, and;
 - 52 were unaware of compliance requirements and need ongoing monitoring.
- 25 school districts listed as active providers either had incorrect users listed or did not respond to email outreach; these districts will be contacted in October of 2025 to update contact information.

By the end of the outreach, 95% of providers had responded, and identified issues were corrected, resulting in a cleaner system and more accurate reporting. This cleanup improved the reliability of provider data, ensured accurate certificate reporting, and strengthened the integrity of the professional development tracking process. It also ensured that all providers were made aware of the requirements under ARM and helped build positive relationships, better positioning the professional development team to support administrators, districts, professional development organizations, and educators in planning, monitoring, and aligning professional development activities with strategic goals.

Finally, this outreach will support the transition to the new system by ensuring provider information is accurate, addressing outstanding issues, and familiarizing all users with compliance expectations, thereby establishing a solid foundation and strengthening relationships for a smoother rollout.

Data Analysis

This report encompasses all professional development unit activities recorded in the Professional Development Unit Provider (PDUP) System for fiscal year 2025, covering the period from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. Professional learning providers that did not issue OPI PDU certificates during this time period were omitted from this report. For a comprehensive list of approved OPI Professional Development Unit Providers and their designated users, please refer to the [Approved Professional Development Unit Provider Directory](#), which is updated biweekly.

Teacher Learning Hub data is also included in this report; however, the event categories listed in the Hub do not align with those in the PDUP system, as the data is collected through the Learning Management System rather than directly from the PDUP system.

At the time of this report's publication, all providers are required to submit the following data points to the OPI:

- Title of the Activity
- Description of the Activity
- Professional Development Unit Activity Category
- Instructor's Name
- Starting and Ending Dates of the Activity
- Location of the Activity
- Number of Hours
- Number of Certificates Issued

During fiscal year 2025, some providers may have canceled PDU activities after they were entered into the system without following the required procedure to remove those events from their provider records. At present, providers cannot delete events directly from the portal and must email the professional development specialist to request removal. However, some providers did not return to the system to report the number of certificates issued for completed activities. OPI Professional Learning staff is actively working with these providers to ensure accurate reporting within the Professional Development Unit Provider System. Furthermore, the new system is being developed to prevent these issues from occurring in the future.

Fiscal Year 2025 Provider Report Summary

As of June 30, 2025, the PDUP System included 383 registered providers and 807 users. Collectively, they recorded 6,617 events, which resulted in the issuance of 892,802 professional development units (PDUs) to Montana educators. The number of certificates reported as issued throughout FY2025

MONTANA OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT PROVIDER SYSTEM
FISCAL YEAR 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

was 113,021. School districts, government agencies, and professional education organizations provided the majority of the professional development opportunities, units, and certificates. **The Teacher Learning Hub recorded 9,154 certificates issued for a total of 27,763 PDUs.** The tables in Appendix A present detailed provider-level data, including the number of professional development learning opportunities, PDUs, certificates issued per provider, and online offerings.

Key Data Points

This report provides a comprehensive overview of professional development unit (PDU) learning opportunities conducted by approved providers in Montana during fiscal year 2025. Key findings include:

- **Total PDUs Issued:** A total of 920,565 PDUs were issued across 6,927 professional learning opportunities.
- **Top Providers:** School districts, professional education organizations, and government agencies provided the majority of professional learning opportunities.
- **Certificates Issued:** A total of 122,175 certificates were issued (compared to 57,035 in the previous year).
- **Online Participation:** 6.5% of online PD opportunities were delivered through the Teacher Learning Hub (compared to 91% last year).

Highlights

- Teacher Learning Hub: 9,154 certificates issued, representing 8% of all attended PD.
- Online PD total: 2,390 online professional development opportunities were offered.

Professional Development Unit Opportunities Per Provider Type

A professional development (PD) learning opportunity is a structured learning offering designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and effectiveness of education professionals. Events consist of workshops, courses, institutes, or other instructional sessions that qualify for Professional Development Units (PDUs) under the requirements of ARM [10.55.714](#) , [10.57.215](#) , [10.57.216](#) , and [10.57.218](#).

Provider Type	Number of Events	Percentage of Total
School Districts	2627	38.8%
Professional Education Organizations	2305	34.1%
Government Agencies	1115	16.5%
Universities and Colleges	385	5.7%
Tribal	156	2.3%
Teacher Learning Hub	155	2.3%
County Superintendents	27	0.4%
Total Number of Events	6,770	

Professional Development Units (PDUs) Issued Per Provider Type

This table highlights the Professional Development Units (PDUs) issued by provider type. The figures are calculated by multiplying the total certificates issued for each event by the total PDUs available for that event. These numbers represent the hours accumulated by educators, categorized by provider type.

A PDU, equivalent to one clock hour of professional learning, was previously referred to as a renewal unit. According to ARM 10.57.215(2)(a): “One hour of attendance at a professional development activity = one professional development unit.”

Provider Type	Total Number of PDUs awarded	Percentage of Total
Government Agencies	344,926	37.5%
Professional Education Organizations	262,541	28.5%
School Districts	227,507	24.7%
Tribal	35,917	3.9%
Teacher Learning Hub	27,763	3.0%
Universities and Colleges	20,105	2.2%
County Superintendents	1,806	0.2%
Total Numbers of PDUs	920,565	

Certificates Issued per Provider Type

Only Professional Development Unit (PDU) certificates issued by the OPI approved providers are recognized for license renewal. The table below summarizes the number of certificates awarded by each provider during FY 2025.

Provider Type	Number of Certs	Percentage of Total
Professional Education Organizations	40,960	35.7%
School Districts	35,772	31.2%
Government Agencies	19,246	16.8%
Teacher Learning Hub	9,154	8.0%
Tribal	6,954	6.1%
Universities and Colleges	2,378	2.1%
County Superintendents	197	0.2%
Total Number of Certificates	114,661	

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Online Reporting Data

This fiscal year, 2,390 online professional learning opportunities were available statewide. Of these, 6.5% were offered through the Teacher Learning Hub, increasing access for educators across Montana.

Provider Type	Number of Online Offerings	Percentage of Total
Professional Education Organizations	940	39.3%
Government Agencies	738	30.9%
School Districts	433	18.1%
Teacher Learning Hub	155	6.5%
Universities and Colleges	119	5.0%
County Superintendents	5	0.2%
Tribal	0	0
Total Number of Online Events	2,390	

Categories in the Professional Development Unit Provider System

The table below shows the frequency of each professional development category selected by providers for all activities entered in the Professional Development Unit Provider System. Providers may select multiple categories or choose 'None of the Above' if applicable. Social/Emotional/Behavioral and Special Education were the most frequently selected categories.

Category	Number of Times Selected
Social/Emotional/Behavioral	857
Special Education	613
Para Pathways	132 of 613 Activities in Sp. Ed
General School Issues and Administration	562
English Language Arts & Literacy	472
Technology	466
General Montana Content Standards	384
Indian Education for All	323
Integration with Other Subjects	309
Assessment/Evaluation/Data	306
Health and Physical Education	302
Mathematics	297
Science	296
Social Studies	290
Differentiation	281
Career and Technical Education	232

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Category	Number of Times Selected
Arts	204
Mentoring/Induction	169
English Language Proficiency	142
Library Media	76
Nutrition	35

Categories in the Teacher Learning Hub

The table below shows the frequency of each professional development category selected by providers for all activities entered in the Teacher Learning Hub. Providers may select only one category. Mental Health & Behavior and Universal Instructional Strategies were the most frequently selected categories. Please note that the category options in the Teacher Learning Hub differ from those in the Professional Development Unit Provider System (PDUPs), which is why the two systems are reported separately.

Category	Number of Times Selected
Mental Health & Behavior	1,514
Universal Instructional Strategies	1,221
General School Issues & Administration	1,185
ELA & Literacy	1,146
Special Education	745
Indian Education for All	605
Mathematics	593
Support Staff	561
Technology	341
Assessment	235
Fine Arts	233
Suicide Prevention	209
Science	153
Social Studies	136
OPI Employee Training Center	97
MTSS	59
Career & Technical Education	42
PASS	42
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations	31
Other	6

The upgraded Professional Development Unit Provider System will provide a clearer view of professional development statewide, streamline event submission and tracking, ensure accurate reporting of participation and PDU issuance, properly vet professional development providers, and help administrators

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and districts better align activities with educator and district goals. These improvements will enhance learning opportunities for Montana educators and support improved student outcomes.

Appendix A- Professional Development Data Tables by Type

County Superintendents

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Lake County Superintendent of Schools	1	6	11	0
Fergus County Superintendent of Schools	5	33	49	1
Gallatin County Superintendent of Schools	7	49	53	0
Montana Catholic Schools	1	3	0	1
Powell County Schools	5	53	66	0
Richland County Superintendent of Schools	3	36	18	0
Hill County Superintendent of Schools	5	24	0	3

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Government Agencies

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Bozeman Public Library Youth Services	1	2	0	0
DLI/Jobs for Montana's Graduates	4	59	45	0
DPHHS - Early Childhood Services Bureau	5	45	100	0
Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest	10	45	140	0
Montana Board of Public Education	9	42	43	0
Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks	22	152	179	0
Montana Historical Society	73	475	430	41
Montana School Boards Association	8	48	207	5
Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind	84	261	416	25
Montana State Library	3	3	3	3
Montana Teachers' Retirement System	11	11	257	5
Montana Youth Challenge Academy	10	63	88	3
Office of Public Instruction - Accreditation and Licensure	7	30	48	7
Office of Public Instruction - Assessment	45	185	635	44
Office of Public Instruction - Coordinated School Health	32	175	350	1
Office of Public Instruction - CTAE Division	45	358	731	15
Office of Public Instruction - Education Innovations	3	66	38	3
Office of Public Instruction - Federal Programs	8	15	17	1
Office of Public Instruction - Indian Education	126	228	702	122
Office of Public Instruction - School Support	14	153	344	8
Office of Public Instruction - Special Education	344	1415	12,933	284
Office of Public Instruction - Standards, Instruction, and Professional Learning	85	290	1,076	70
OPI - School Improvement and Engagement	48	145	523	17
OPI - Single Event Providers	130	1670	122	89
OPI - Transformational Learning	1	7	0	0
OPI-MAST Pilot	1	2	0	0
STARBASE Montana	3	18	9	0

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Professional Education Organizations

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
3Be Research	1	13	28	0
406 Educational Consulting, LLC	26	160	504	0
ACE-Alliance for Curriculum Enhancement	19	330	1683	8
Action Potential Learning, LLC DBA Model Teaching	7	89	10	7
American Prairie Field School	2	30	0	0
American School Counselor Association	11	550	2	10
Angst Learning Services, LLC	12	58	382	0
Archie Bray Foundation	2	19	1	0
AVID Center	2	12	0	1
Big Sky Kodály (affiliate of the Organization of American Kodály Educators)	3	14	65	1
Big Sky Special Needs Coop	2	12	31	0
Bighorn Basin Paleontological Institute	2	45	0	0
Billings Area Family Violence Task Force	1	12	0	0
Bitterroot Valley Education Coop	12	64	6	0
Bonneville Environmental Foundation	4	9	4	4
Bridger Educational Services, LLC	5	120	0	0
Bridgercare	6	96	18	0
Brightways Learning	10	102	158	3
Buffalo Bill Center of the West	4	63	133	3
Bureau of Education & Research	2	10	2	2
Business Professional of America-Montana Association	1	9	48	0
Cabinet Mountain Cooperative	4	42	52	0
Carter County Museum	107	286	511	0
CE Credits Online	32	1350	3	32
Center for Emotional Education	2	34	2	2
Central Montana Learning Resource Center Co-op	7	42	133	1
Chickadee Community Services	3	130	41	3
Child Care Resources	27	101	41	18
Childhelp Speak Up Be Safe Curriculum	24	72	0	24
Chrysalis School	15	128	103	4
Code Girls United	1	26	35	1
Delta Kappa Gamma Omicron Chapter	15	202	56	0
Discovery Education	332	756	6,690	175
Dolce Canto, Inc.	2	50	3	0
Domestic and Sexual Violence Services	4	7	115	0
Edufest	72	302	30	36
Equity and Community LLC dba Change Impact	13	26	270	13

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Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Flathead Special Education Cooperative	1	8	4	0
Friends of the Children	7	15	112	7
Glacier Institute	15	116	3	0
Golden Triangle Cooperative	294	2,840	6,976	62
Great Divide Education Services	11	58	284	0
Helena Xpress Singers	1	8	0	0
High Trust Teacher Center	5	126	124	0
Hockaday Museum of Art	6	144	66	0
Insight Educational Services, Inc.	4	24	56	0
Inspired Classroom	5	5	140	0
Institute for Multi-Sensory Education	4	120	4	0
Intermountain Children's Home and Services	16	47	76	2
Jack Creek Preserve Foundation - Conservation Field School	1	5	0	0
Jeremy Bullock Safe Schools Summit	4	48	344	0
JIGSAW Consulting	4	20	18	2
Kaleva Law Office	8	52	781	4
Koterba-Coach, Life Coach for Teachers	1	17	4	0
Land To Hand Montana	8	26	56	0
Leadership Montana	3	30	0	0
MALT (Montana Association of Language Teachers)	4	18	98	0
Mindful Pathways Education Consulting	17	34	0	0
Missoula Area Education Cooperative	5	7	132	5
Missoula Writing Collaborative	5	20	12	0
MJ Murdock Charitable Trust	3	62	3	0
Montana 4-H	3	19	22	1
Montana Afterschool Alliance	34	137	390	13
Montana Art Education Association	2	14	0	0
Montana Association for Career and Technical Education	1	12	125	0
Montana Association for Pupil Transportation	6	61	34	0
Montana Association for the Education of Young Children	1	16	0	0
Montana Association of Family and Consumer Sciences	2	16	69	0
Montana Association of School Business Officials	32	211	7	17
Montana Association of School Psychologists	12	40	219	10
Montana Audubon Center	1	15	1	0
Montana Business Education Association	1	24	8	0
Montana Center for Inclusive Education/Professional Learning	48	144	383	18

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Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Montana Coaches Association	1	19	283	0
Montana Council for Exceptional Children (MCEC)	12	102	202	0
Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics	2	30	28	1
Montana Council on Economic Education	6	32	88	4
Montana Environmental Education Association	31	311	52	3
Montana Farmers Union	14	101	43	4
Montana Football Hall of Fame	1	3	0	0
Montana Learning Center	2	48	33	1
Montana Library Association	8	77	35	0
Montana Mindfulness Project	2	16	22	1
Montana Music Educators Association	2	38	250	0
Montana Natural History Center	1	20	0	0
Montana PBS	56	120	1,393	56
Montana Pediatrics	5	5	22	5
Montana Post Secondary Educational Opportunities Council	1	5	231	0
Montana Professional Learning Collaborative (MTPLC)	57	571	5,829	24
Montana Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf	6	11	43	0
Montana Repertory Theatre	2	20	0	0
Montana School Counselor Association	19	58	477	13
Montana Small Schools Alliance	26	133	559	12
Montana State Literacy Association	5	60	295	0
Montana State Music Teachers Association	1	10	1	0
Montana Youth in Transition	1	15	0	0
Northwest Earth and Space Sciences Pathways at Central Washington University	3	45	135	3
Northwest Montana Reading Council	2	12	183	0
OPI Montana DRIVE Program	1	8	0	0
Ortho Montana	5	32	85	0
Pacific Northwest Library Association	1	21	0	0
Park County Special Education Coop	5	30	130	0
PESI, Inc	37	108	57	0
Prairie View Curriculum Consortium	22	38	247	14
Prairie View Special Services	3	14	29	0
Professional Development Institute	1	50	0	1
Rachel Bemis	1	4	0	0
Reach Higher Montana	1	24	0	0
Red Lodge Clay Center	3	35	2	0
Region I CSPD	38	153	748	28
Region II CSPD	51	176	498	38

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Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Region III CSPD/Montana Center	39	243	849	3
Region IV CSPD	22	127	449	6
School Administrators of Montana	41	543	1,608	10
School Services of Montana	91	351	2,048	23
Society of Health & Physical Educators (SHAPE) Montana	2	19	0	0
Special Olympics Montana Unified Champion Schools	39	58	461	0
STRIVE	6	40	384	6
Tamarack Grief Resource Center	2	5	23	0
Teaching Channel	11	420	11	11
TeachMe Professional Development	102	276	190	102
The Clay Studio of Missoula	13	26	0	0
The Family Tree Center	1	2	7	0
The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History	7	105	7	7
The National Energy Education Development Project	3	18	20	0
The Source for Learning	43	64	20	43
Thrive Education	7	84	8	0
Tim Tharp, Certified Instructor for Youth MHFA and QPR	5	21	64	0
Transformative Reading Teacher Group	5	58	143	0
Treasure State Orff (Montana Chapter of American Orff Schulwerk Association)	14	80	321	0
Uplevel U: Music	10	48	0	10
Walsworth Yearbooks	1	16	0	0
WM-CSPD	35	144	449	17
Yellowstone Art Museum	2	15	4	0
Yellowstone Bighorn Research Association	1	24	0	0
Yellowstone Forever	9	360	0	0
Yellowstone-West/Carbon County Special Services Coop	4	16	94	0
Youth Entrepreneurs	5	52	18	0

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School Districts

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Absarokee Public Schools	1	8	16	0
Amsterdam School District	1	6	9	0
Anaconda School District #10	21	87	896	3
Arlee Joint School District #8	2	6	43	0
Ashland Public School	6	68	42	1
Bainville Public School	1	16	20	0
Baker Public Schools	6	39	52	0
Bear Paw Cooperative	6	59	40	0
Belfry School District	3	16	0	0
Belgrade Public Schools	64	433	334	1
Big Sky School District #72	2	22	18	0
Big Timber Grade School	2	4	38	0
Bigfork School District #38	1	60	1	0
Billings Catholic Schools	41	438	3,061	1
Billings Public Schools	320	2,498	2,963	134
Bonner School	5	17	0	2
Box Elder School District 13G	4	48	84	1
Bozeman Public Schools	94	331	415	77
Bridger School District	5	13	86	1
Brockton Public Schools	19	44	335	0
Browning Public Schools	36	847	754	5
Butte Central Catholic High School	1	10	15	0
Butte Central Catholic Schools	1	6	0	0
Butte School District #1	33	142	1,079	13
Cascade Public Schools	1	6	25	0
Cayuse Prairie School	2	13	14	0
Chinook Public Schools	1	4	0	1
Choteau School District 1	5	35	57	0
Circle Schools	8	71	0	6
Clancy Elementary	6	29	76	0
Colstrip Public Schools	5	8	91	4
Columbia Falls Schools	55	411	661	3
Corvallis School District	22	162	429	0
Cottonwood Day School	2	18	0	1
Culbertson K-12 Schools	11	52	185	4
Cut Bank Public Schools	321	1,383	2,030	0
Darby Public Schools	5	29	67	1
De La Salle Blackfeet School	11	224	108	0

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Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Dillon Elementary	1	3	1	0
Dodson School District	6	50	102	0
Drummond Public Schools	3	12	30	1
East Glacier Park Grade School	4	24	24	0
East Helena Public Schools District #9	32	153	495	0
Elder Grove School	5	40	84	0
Elysian School	7	34	36	1
Eureka Public Schools	15	63	188	6
Evergreen School District # 50	46	219	967	0
Fair-Mont-Egan School District #3	3	16	8	0
Fairfield Public Schools - District #21	1	6	4	0
Fairview Public Schools	5	10	140	0
Florence-Carlton School	5	27	68	0
Forsyth Public Schools	18	44	138	0
Fort Benton High School/Middle School	1	2	0	0
Frazer School District	1	14	0	1
Frenchtown School District #40	6	30	472	1
Fromberg School	3	5	49	0
Gallatin Gateway School District #35	8	75	126	0
Gardiner Public School	5	33	0	0
Glasgow K-12 Schools	9	47	0	2
Glendive Public Schools	7	26	51	0
Great Falls Central Catholic High School	2	19	3	0
Great Falls Public Schools	63	398	1,135	1
Greenfield School District #75	3	27	0	3
Hamilton K-12 Schools	26	99	406	0
Hardin Public Schools	13	220	573	0
Harlem Public Schools District #12	1	4	80	0
Harlowton Public Schools	2	6	5	2
Havre Public Schools	62	393	757	11
Helena Public Schools	141	1,026	1,193	11
Hellgate Elementary School District	7	102	0	0
Heritage Academy	8	156	47	3
Heritage Christian School	15	17	120	0
Hinsdale Public School	1	1	1	1
Hobson School District #25	8	340	16	4
Huntley Project K-12 Schools	2	15	48	0
Jefferson High School	1	2	25	0
Joliet Public School	3	30	32	1
Kalispell Public Schools	199	1,432	1,090	31

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Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Kila School	3	76	27	0
Lambert Public Schools	2	14	7	1
Lame Deer Public Schools	6	12	127	0
Laurel Public Schools	29	104	1,625	4
Lewistown Public Schools	4	66	105	1
Libby K-12 Schools	19	75	643	2
Lincoln K-12 Schools	2	12	39	0
Livingston School District #1 and #4	15	65	230	1
Lockwood School	14	185	74	8
Lolo School District	2	24	108	0
Lone Rock School District	2	11	0	0
Malta Public Schools	2	32	16	1
Manhattan Christian School	6	13	195	0
Manhattan Public Schools	5	17	232	1
Marion Public schools	2	10	0	0
Miles City Unified School District	11	50	411	0
Missoula County Public Schools - The Lifelong Learning Center	15	178	0	0
Missoula County Public Schools	138	862	2,576	2
Monforton School District #27	12	38	54	3
Montana City School	1	2	36	0
Montana Digital Academy	28	102	106	21
Nashua K-12 Schools	5	11	70	0
Noxon School District #10	2	8	70	0
Olney Bissell School District 58	1	2	0	0
Opheim School	3	13	8	3
Philipsburg K-12 Public Schools	6	6	102	0
Pine Hills Correctional Facility	1	18	13	0
Plains Public Schools	7	27	195	0
Plentywood K-12 Schools	9	85	294	1
Plevna School District	7	54	47	0
Polson Public Schools	66	227	1,673	0
Poplar Elementary	11	63	80	0
Poplar Public Schools	1	2	80	0
Potomac School District #11	3	14	25	0
Ramsay Schools	2	15	0	0
Red Lodge School District #1	2	24	20	0
Roberts School District	1	16	0	0
Rocky Boy Schools	4	16	68	0
Ronan School District #30	12	24	20	0

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Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Roundup School District 55 & 55H	8	20	0	7
Roy School District	2	8	16	0
Scobey K-12 Schools	2	32	2	2
Shepherd Public Schools	1	12	65	0
Sheridan School District #5	2	2	0	2
Shields Valley Schools	6	50	47	3
Sidney Public Schools	3	61	27	1
Smith Valley School District 89	14	82	209	0
Somers School District 29	28	182	627	0
St Regis K-12 School District	17	255	340	0
St. Andrew School	10	60	9	4
St. Ignatius School District	3	18	150	0
St. Jude Thaddeus School	2	4	6	2
St. Labre Indian Schools	7	147	0	0
Stanford School District #12	2	6	28	0
Stevensville Public Schools	3	16	0	1
Swan Valley Elementary School	1	12	5	1
Sweetgrass County High School	2	10	30	0
Target Range School District #23	1	16	0	0
Thompson Falls Public Schools	14	48	450	0
Three Forks Schools	5	17	174	0
Townsend School District #1	7	65	93	2
Trinity Lutheran School - Billings	1	6	13	0
Troy Public Schools	6	50	242	2
Two Eagle River School	1	72	26	0
Ulm Elementary School	2	12	14	0
Valier School District #18	2	16	28	0
Vaughn School	1	17	1	0
West Glacier Elementary	1	3	10	1
West Valley School District	2	4	10	0
West Yellowstone School District 69	27	251	406	0
Westby School District	1	21	15	0
White Sulphur Springs School District 8	1	12	10	0
Whitefish Public Schools	60	407	386	14
Whitehall Public Schools	1	2	18	0
Wibaux Public Schools	2	12	0	0
Willow Creek Schools	1	1	0	1
Winnett Schools	1	9	6	0
Wolf Point School District	9	60	335	0
Yellowstone Academy	2	20	8	0

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Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch	1	6	10	0

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Tribal*

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
CSKT Education Department	156	715	6,954	0

* Note that some organizations that could be considered tribal have previously self-identified under other provider categories. The new system will allow entities to identify as both tribal and an additional category.

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Universities and Colleges

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Carroll College	1	4	2	0
Dawson Community College	4	72	4	0
DIG Field School - University of Washington	1	40	2	0
Flathead Valley Community College	5	76	4	0
Fort Peck Community College	3	90	45	0
Great Falls College MSU	11	80	157	0
Helena College	2	16	8	2
Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center at the University of Montana	2	2	0	2
Michael Cunningham AGBU Armenian Virtual College, Yerevan, Armenia	53	342	0	53
Miles Community College	4	52	6	1
Missoula College UM, Outreach Office	4	96	5	4
Montana Early Childhood Project / MSU	2	2	2	0
Montana State University - Modern Languages and Literature	3	60	39	0
Montana State University American Choral Directors Chapter	1	12	13	0
Montana State University Billings - Elk River Writing Project	3	60	47	0
Montana State University Dyslexia & Innovation Symposium	1	3	40	0
Montana State University Extension Directors Office	4	48	104	0
Montana State University Music Department	2	27	0	0
Montana State University Science Math Resource Center	5	48	14	4
Montana State University Teacher Education Program	5	55	10	0
Montana State University-Northern College of Arts, Sciences, and Education	3	15	13	0
Montana Team Nutrition Program	1	3	0	0
Montana Tech - Petroleum Engineering Dept	2	62	9	0
Montana Tech Athletics	3	21	0	0
Montana Tech of the University of Montana	11	276	77	0
MSU - Department of Education	2	17	4	0
MSU Center for Research on Rural Education	13	26	264	0
MSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Program	3	48	24	0
MSU Valley County Extension	5	80	0	0
MSU-Billings College of Education	7	14	23	0

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Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at University of Montana (MOLLI)	51	315	3	10
Rocky Mountain College	5	196	5	0
Salish Kootenai College	18	141	207	3
spectrUM Discovery Area (University of Montana science museum)	20	80	140	15
Stone Child College	14	67	182	0
The Art of Education	2	30	2	2
The University of Montana - Montana Safe Schools Center	1	8	0	1
The University of Montana – Office of Educational Initiatives and Innovation	5	30	20	0
TRIO Upward Bound at the University of Montana	16	371	16	0
UM - Center for Children, Families and Workforce Development	14	86	359	8
UM - College of Education	26	284	157	0
UM - Rural Institute	5	15	29	3
UM Bitterroot	1	10	4	0
UM Dept of English	2	14	10	0
University of Montana - Flathead Lake Biological Station	1	6	7	0
University of Montana Conference Services	3	34	62	0
University of Montana Department of Psychology	2	4	18	1
University of Montana Linguistics Program	21	70	203	0
University of Montana School of Public and Community Health Sciences	10	20	09	10
Yellowstone Writing Project	1	7	37	0
Youth Aware of Mental Health	1	36	1	0



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT PROVIDER SYSTEM UPDATES (PDUPS)

**PREPARED FOR BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
NOVEMBER 2025**



Current Definition of Terms

The Professional Development Unit Provider System (PDUPS), manages events, providers, and users for those providing professional development for Montana educators. The frequently used terms in the current PDUPS System are defined below:

PDUPS

This system houses the providers and users who issue official OPI professional development unit certificates (PDUs) which are used for teacher licensing. It also preserves the events, certificates, and hours of professional development.

Provider

Any entity or individual who is providing professional development for Montana educators. Each provider must have at least one user listed.

User

A representative of the provider who is responsible for maintaining records, data, and communication on behalf of the provider. This person is authorized to add events and issue certificates on the provider's behalf.



Problem Statement

Following the 2023 updates to ARM, the Standards, Instruction, and Professional Learning (SIPL) Unit identified three primary issues with the current Professional Development Unit Provider System policies and functionalities, including inconsistencies and non-compliance with ARM requirements.

RELEVANT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE OF MONTANA 10.55.714 , 10.57.215 , 10.57.216 AND 10.57.218

#1

**Inconsistent
Reporting of
Provider Data**

#2

**Limited
Registration
Requirements
for Providers**

#3

**Lack of Evaluative
Data on
Professional
Development Events**

Current Provider Vetting System



1

Provider submits request to PDUPS system using the form pictured here.

The SIPL unit recently coordinated with IT to add the compliance check boxes. This was not previously a requirement.

2

Coordinators review submitted information and approve or deny.

Coordinators are only able to deny if the information is incorrect, a provider account already exists, or an obvious violation of ARM requirements is discovered during review of name.

3

Approved providers receive their account information, user manual, and tutorial video.

No further actions or evaluations are conducted.



OPI Professional Development Unit Provider System

Req

Provider Type:
Provider Name:
Mailing Address:
City: State:
Zip Code: -
Phone: (406) -
Website:

CONTACT (Enter one contact. Additional contacts can be entered after the information is saved.)

Last Name: First Name:
Email: Phone: (406) -

[Requirements of Approved Renewal Unit Providers document](#)

☐ I have read the Requirements of Approved Office of Public Instruction Providers in its entirety

[Data Reporting Requirements of Approved Renewal Unit Providers document](#)

☐ I agree to follow the reporting requirements

Submit

OPI Professional Learning staff (OPIRUPS@mt.gov) will notify you of the status of your application within seven business days.

Evidence/Data

883

users across 584 provider accounts

79

accounts retired due to inactivity

6,772

The number of events (excluding the Teacher Learning Hub), that were entered into PDUPS during FY 25. This is 3,053 more events than FY 24. OPI has no evaluative data regarding the objectives or quality of the events.

0%

of providers are adequately vetted by the current system before being granted "approved OPI provider" status.

17%

of accounts were found to have issues with fiscal year reporting or inaccurate certificate counts, including 15 accounts with major issues spanning multiple events.



Solutions

PROVIDER GROWTH

Establish a robust **approval and review process** for providers. This process should include a tiered system that fosters continual improvement and clarifies procedures for revoking provider status.



CONTINUED ACCOUNTABILITY

Identify parameters for **reviewing event alignment** to Professional Learning Standards, ARM, and ISAP where appropriate.



VETTING & EVALUATIONS

Create an **effective system** that collects data, communicates with existing agency systems, increases staff capacity, and houses an internal evaluation form tied to certificates.



SYSTEM FUNCTIONALITY & MAINTENANCE

Field test and pilot the approval process with internal and external providers to ensure alignment with agency priorities.



Periodically offer professional development **provider training**.



Updated Definition of Terms



The updated PDUP system now distinguishes between hosts and instructors, enabling feedback to be collected for each role separately. This enhancement strengthens quality assurance by allowing for more targeted feedback and greater oversight of individual professional learning events.

Instructor

An individual who delivers professional development to educators.

Host

Any organization, entity, or institution that organizes opportunities for educators to engage in professional development.

User

The authorized person or persons who act as the host account user. They input the event and participant data and act as an account administrator on behalf of the host.

COMPARISONS



Function	Old System	New PDUPS System	<i>How the Update Helps</i>
Reporting	Manual reporting; limited data	Automated reporting of PDUs, participation, and compliance metrics	<i>Reduces workload, improves accuracy, supports compliance</i>
User Management	Contact info updates ad hoc; no reminders	Annual pop-up reminders for users, hosts, instructors	<i>Ensures accurate communication and system integrity</i>
Search & Discovery	Limited or no search functionality	Search by topic, category, instructor, host, or region	<i>Simplifies finding relevant events and instructors</i>
Provider Management	Manual tracking of providers; limited history	Automated directories, weekly updates, 6-year activity tracking, account merges, reusable forms	<i>Improves data management, saves time, maintains historical records</i>
Data Integrity & Compliance	Manual tracking of inactive users, privacy, and ARM compliance	Automatic removal of inactive users/providers, archive events after 6 years, ARM compliance feedback	<i>Maintains compliance, improves privacy, ensures up-to-date data</i>
Certificates & Feedback	Manual certificate issuance; feedback collection inconsistent	Evaluations required before certificate issuance, TeachMT integration, manual override available	<i>Ensures compliance, links PDUs to licensure, improves feedback collection</i>

COMPARISONS



Function	Old System	New PDUPS System	<i>How the Update Helps</i>
Alignment with Standards	Inconsistent	Full alignment with ARM and district ISAP goals	<i>Ensures all PD qualifies for PDUs and meets state standards</i>
Communication & Engagement	Emails sent externally; no opt-in lists	Direct system emails to providers; participants can opt-in for event notifications	<i>Improves engagement, reduces administrative work, enhances outreach</i>
Event Management Tools*	Limited editing; no bulk upload	Bulk upload via Excel/CSV, duplicate/edit past events, manage event types, fees, conference settings	<i>Saves time, simplifies management, ensures consistency</i>
Registration & Attendance*	Paper-based or external tracking	Online registration, auto-populated attendance sheets, real-time stats	<i>Saves time, reduces errors, links attendance to event records</i>
Event Calendars*	Minimal tracking; no central calendar	Internal OPI calendar + optional external calendar for educators and hosts	<i>Improves transparency, comprehensive tracking, and public access</i>

UPDATED SYSTEM HIGHLIGHTS

RELEVANT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE OF MONTANA 10.55.714 , 10.57.215 , 10.57.216 AND 10.57.218



NEW SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS:

- **Automated** tracking and reporting improve accuracy and compliance oversight.
- Providers must document alignment to district goals, evidence-based practices, and adult learning principles.
- **Dashboards** and automated reminders reduce administrative workload and support consistent compliance.
- **Evaluation**-linked certificate issuance, ensuring every professional learning experience is meaningful and auditable.
- **Direct certificate uploads to TeachMT**, reducing errors and administrative burden for educators.
- **Real-time** attendance tracking, increasing transparency and accuracy.
- Enhanced event **governance**, with more robust requirements for event entry.

CUSTOMER SERVICE FOCUS:

- **Educators** receive timely, accurate PDU credit without the need for manual uploads.
- **Hosts and instructors** benefit from simplified workflows, clear expectations, and timely feedback.
- **Administrators** gain real-time, reliable data to guide planning, compliance, and professional learning decisions.



Customer Service Enhancements



In FY2025, OPI conducted outreach to 883 users across 584 provider accounts, achieving:

- 95% response rate
- Updated contact information
- Correction of reporting errors
- Retirement of inactive or non-compliant accounts

CAPACITY AND SUPPORT ENHANCEMENTS:

- Dedicated support for providers and educators, including training, FAQs, and technical guidance.
- Streamlined workflows for submitting events, approvals, and updates, reducing administrative bottlenecks.
- Robust data analytics to identify trends in professional learning participation and outcomes.
- Continuous feedback loops from hosts, instructors, and educators to inform ongoing system improvements.
- Scalable infrastructure designed to accommodate future growth and additional reporting requirements.

BENEFITS BY AUDIENCE:

- **Educators:** Benefit from streamlined workflows for certificate uploads and PDU credit tracking and participate in continuous feedback loops to improve the system and professional learning experiences.
- **Hosts/Instructors:** Guidance on event setup, attendance tracking, and data entry.
- **OPI:** Enhanced oversight and data analytics strengthen quality assurance and continuous improvement across the system.



ROLES AND DUTIES

IT Specialist

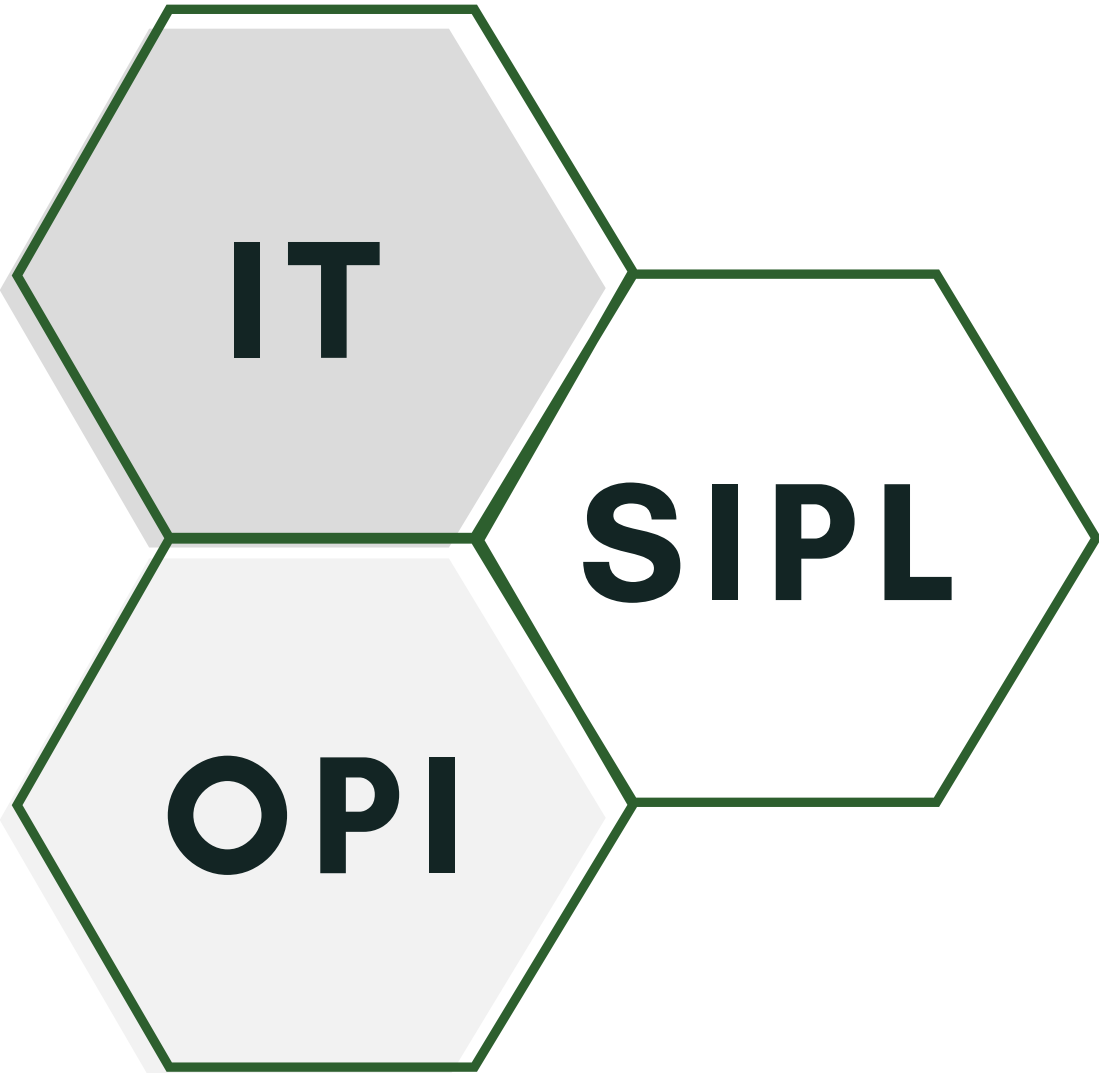
- Collaborate with the SIPL team to create and pilot a functional system for PDUPS that meets both internal and external needs and overcomes the problems identified in this presentation.

Licensure

- Provide feedback on system functionality to ensure unit needs compliance.

OPI Staff

- Participate in an internal pilot of the system.
- Apply for an internal provider vetting task force that meets periodically to review applications.



Professional Learning Manager

- Establish goals, objectives, and key performance indicators (KPIs) for the system.
- Collaborate with stakeholders, including educators, administrators, and community members, to gather input and foster support.
- Facilitate communication and outreach regarding the new system.

Professional Learning Specialist

- Manage day-to-day operations of the professional learning unit, including scheduling and logistics for training sessions and events. (internal)
- Implement the vetting process for professional learning providers, ensuring compliance with established standards.
- Provide training and support to educators on using the professional learning system and accessing available resources.

SIPL Team Members

- Support the work as determined by the Professional Learning Manager.
- Offer historical context and experiential knowledge.
- Support the onboarding of the new specialist.



INTERNAL TIMELINE

Key Partners: SIPL team, Managers, Senior Managers, IT, and Legal.

JULY 2023

- **ARM 10.55.714 was updated**
 - to align with Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning
 - to include connection to ISAP and graduate profile
 - to include safety, well-being and mental health
 - to include opportunities for reflection and feedback
 - to include coaching and expert support

SEPT. 2024

- **Established standardized vetting protocols** for all host and instructor applications, as well as for individual event submissions.
- **Assigned clear responsibilities** for communications, provider outreach, and technical support.
- **Hired a Professional Development Specialist** dedicated to managing and supporting this work.
- **Approval to move forward.**

NOV. 2024

- **Began developing the core messaging** for the new system and evaluation tool.
- **Created FAQs** to support clarity and understanding.
- **Established a communication timeline** for rollout and outreach.



INTERNAL TIMELINE

Key Partners: SIPL team, Managers, Senior Manager, IT, and Legal.

FEB. 2025

- **Drafted and refined the provider application process**, including eligibility criteria and required documentation.
- **Developed the initial provider appeal process** for denied applications.
- **Mapped workflows** for provider approval, renewal, and event submissions.

SEPT. 2025

- **Began receiving sandbox environments** and provided detailed feedback for system refinements.
- **Finalized the standardized Professional Learning Evaluation Tool** and began planning and developing associated training materials.
- **Reviewed project milestones and revised implementation timelines** to align with system updates and training needs.

DEC. 2025

- Form the **internal task force**
- **Internal providers** are allowed to **apply** and test the evaluation tool.
- **Gather feedback and refine** communication materials as necessary



EXTERNAL TIMELINE

Key Partners: Professional Learning Providers including - School Districts, Government Organizations, Professional Education Organizations, Tribal Organizations, and Colleges/Universities as well as any other entities or persons tasked with the delivery or administration or professional development.

MAY. 2026

- Send **initial email communication** to all **current** professional learning **providers** with a detailed overview of the upcoming changes.
- Share a **public-facing announcement** on the OPI website and press releases.
- Begin **outreach to** our most **popular PL providers**.

JUNE 2026

- **Offer a "sandbox" environment** for hosts and instructors to explore the tool and begin preparing for the re-application process.
- **Provide technical support, resources, and dedicated contact points** for questions

JULY 2026

- **Open** the official **re-application process**. All communications should emphasize that all providers must re-apply by the **September 2026** deadline.
- Conduct **informational webinars** for PL providers to introduce the tool, answer questions, and provide an initial timeline for re-application.
- Distribute **recorded versions** of the webinars and supplemental materials.



EXTERNAL TIMELINE

Key Partners: Professional Learning Providers including - School Districts, Government Organizations, Professional Education Organizations, Tribal Organizations, and Colleges/Universities as well as any other entities or persons tasked with the delivery or administration or professional development.

JULY 2026

- **Launch training sessions** focused on the actual re-application process using the new tool.
- Host **virtual office hours** where providers can receive one-on-one assistance in real-time.

AUG. 2026

- **Targeted outreach** to providers who have not yet responded or completed their applications
- Use regional meetings and conferences to **amplify messaging** and remind providers of the upcoming deadline.

AUG. 2026

- One-month countdown **communication blasts** (emails, social media, website announcements) to ensure all providers understand the urgency of completing the re-application process.
- **Aug 30th - Turn off the old system**
- **Sept 1 - Launch new system**

NEXT STEPS

PROVIDER AND USER SUPPORT

- Create tutorials once system is complete and share out.
- Customer support calls
- Finalize provider outreach and support materials to ensure a smooth transition.
- Collect feedback from educators, hosts, and instructors to refine workflows and enhance usability.

SYSTEM READINESS AND TESTING

- Finalize system components for full functionality and compliance.
- Incorporate sandbox feedback to optimize the user experience.
- Phased launch: internal staff first, then all hosts and instructors.
- Validate reporting and certificate processes to ensure accuracy and reliability.

MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Review applications and approve submissions to maintain quality and compliance.
- Collect and analyze system feedback from educators, hosts, and instructors to refine workflows.
- Use data from dashboards to guide system enhancements and professional learning decisions.

LONG TERM GOALS/WISHLIST



- Special Circumstances
- Automated secure systems for registration and PDU delivery
- Conference planning tool
- Statewide calendar of professional development events
- Categories such as alignment to graduate profile, ISAP, etc.
- Post-launch plan detailing ongoing technical support, user assistance, and system updates, ensuring the PDUPS continues to operate smoothly and meets user needs after launch.
- Badging, Micro-credentials, and more!



THANK YOU

Contact:

Eva Cox

- Professional Development Specialist
- opipdupsemt.gov
- 406-444-0256

ITEM 25

**ACTION ON THE SUPERINTENDENT'S
REQUEST TO REVISE TITLE 10, CHAPTER
55, SPECIAL EDUCATION STANDARDS AND
INITIAL REVIEW OF NEW RULES
PERTAINING TO A CLASS 9 SPECIAL
EDUCATION TECHNICIAN LICENSE**

**Dr. Julie Murgel
Patrick Cates**

Montana Board of Public Education Executive Summary

Date: November 19-21, 2025

Presentation	Presentation for Revision Timeline for ARM Title 10, Chapter 57 Education Licensure to include a new certificate for Special Education Technicians
Presenter(s)	Patrick Cates and Julie Murgel
Position Title	Senior Manager of Safety and Student Supports Chief Program Officer Office of Public Instruction
Overview	This agenda item is presented to the BPE to consider approval for the timeline and process for the revision of ARM Chapter 57: Educator Licensure Attached is a rationale statement, proposed timeline, and overview for the addition of a Special Education Technician Certificate.
Requested Decision(s)	Action Item
Related Issue(s)	ARM 10.57 20-4-106, MCA
Recommendation(s)	Superintendent of Public Instructions recommends approval to open Chapter 57 for a limited addition.





CHAPTER 57: Licensure Standards Revision Timeline and Overview

Rationale: Using the rulemaking process involving independent stakeholder groups, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Susie Hedalen is seeking to revise Chapter 57 Educator Licensure to add a new certification option for a Special Education Technician. According to 20-4-106(2), MCA, “the superintendent of public instruction shall issue specialist certificates, and the board of public education shall adopt specialist certification policies. The specialist certificate may be issued to an otherwise qualified applicant who has the training, experience, and license required under the standards of the board of public education for the certification of a profession other than the teaching profession.”

The purpose of the Special Education Technician certification is to increase the capacity of Montana’s paraprofessionals to provide a higher level of support to Montana students with disabilities. In particular, the purpose is to certify a technician, who meets requirements to provide technical services to a special education supervising teacher.

FAQs:

- 1. What is a special education technician?** “Special education technician” means an individual who is certified to provide services to students receiving special education, works under the direction of the supervising special education teacher, and meets established requirements.
- 2. What is the difference between a special education technician and a special education para-professional?** A special education technician must complete approved online special education modules, 1,000 hours of documented special education work, or relevant work, and 4 introductory college education courses as determined by the State Superintendent. Whereas a paraprofessional providing instructional support to individuals with disabilities is not required to have documented field-work or post-secondary training or education.
- 3. Who can supervise a special education technician?** A supervising special education teacher can supervise a special education technician. “Supervising special education teacher” means an individual who holds a Class 1 professional license or Class 2 standard license with a special education (PK-12) endorsement as outlined in 10.57.410 and 10.57.411 and has a minimum of one year of teaching experience as a special education teacher specified in 10.57.102(19).
- 4. What services may a special education technician provide?** Special education technician under the direction of a supervising special education teacher may:
 - schedule and coordinate special education meetings;
 - collect, prepare and organize student specific data and information;

- deliver instruction in 1:1 and small group settings; and
- conduct mandatory statewide assessments.

5. What services may a special education technician NOT provide?

- conduct or interpret formalized and standardized special education evaluations unless otherwise qualified to do so;
- access the Student Information System (SIS) for purposes of creating and the development of documents related to the special education record with the exception of the access/contact log.
- make independent decisions of implementing the student's IEP; or
- convene and conduct a special education meeting.

6. What are the qualifications to receive a certification of completion to become a special education technician? The proposed requirements and qualifications for special education technician license are:

- hold at least a high school diploma or high school equivalency credential;
- completion of the approved special education technician online modules as determined by the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- proof of 1,000 hours of documented special education work, or relevant work experience (acceptable documentation of relevant work experience is determined by the Superintendent of Public Instruction).
- verified completion of four introductory courses in education as determined by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and provided by an approved professional development provider pursuant to ARM 10.57.216; and
- verified completion of the online course "An Introduction to Indian Education for All in Montana."

7. What age group can a special education technician provide services to? A special education technician can provide services in a school setting from early childhood through grade twelve. This may include students ages three through twenty-one.

Proposed Timeline:

Presentation to BPE to open Chapter 57:	November 19-21, 2025
Board Approval of Timeline Revision:	November 19-21, 2025
Research and Development:	November 2025 – December 2025
Adoption Phase	January 2025 - May 2025
Adoption	May 2025
Implementation	July 1, 2025

Contact Information:

Patrick Cates, Senior Manager of Safety and Student Supports: patrick.cates@mt.gov

ITEM 26

**ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR
PREPARATION PROVIDER REPORT**

Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: November 19-21, 2025

Presentation	Presentation for Education Preparation Program Report
Presenter	Crystal Andrews
Position Title	Accreditation and Licensure Senior Manager Office of Public Instruction
Overview	This presentation will provide an overview of Montana's ten Educator Preparation providers as outlined in ARM Chapter 10.58.104(1) and 10.58.104(2). The report will cover the following topics: The accreditation review schedule for the eleven (1 alternative) educator preparation programs. • The accreditation status of the ten educator preparation programs. • The endorsement areas offered at the eleven (1 alternative) educator preparation programs. • Information demonstrating progress and efforts in addressing Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations from prior accreditation decisions. • Data on enrollment, number of completers, and completers by subject area from the ten accreditation programs. • Information on the MACK.
Requested Decision(s)	Information Item- No action required.
Related Issue(s)	None
Recommendation(s)	N/A





2025 Educator Preparation Program Report

Compiled October 2025

Introduction:

This report provides an overview of Montana's ten Educator Preparation providers as outlined in ARM Chapter 10.58.104(1) and 10.58.104(2).

[10.58.104 ACCREDITED PROGRAMS](#)

(1) The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall report to the public the educator preparation providers' accreditation status in meeting the Board of Public Education's standards for professional educator preparation.

(2) Pursuant to [20-4-121](#), MCA, the report shall include educator preparation providers and the corresponding regional and national accreditation agencies. The report shall include the initial and expiration dates of all accredited programs.

The report covers the following topics:

- The accreditation review schedule for the eleven (1 alternative) educator preparation programs.
- The accreditation status of the ten MT educator preparation programs, including the corresponding regional and national accreditation agencies, the initial and expiration dates of all accredited programs.
- The endorsement areas offered at the eleven (1 alternative) educator preparation programs.
- Information demonstrating progress and efforts in addressing Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations from prior accreditation decisions
- Data on enrollment, number of completers, and completers by subject area from the ten MT accreditation programs.
- Information about the Montana Assessment for Content Knowledge Verification (MACK).



Section 1: Accreditation Review Schedule

MONTANA EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDERS (EPPs) ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT SCHEDULE Seven-year Cycles: Current – 2018-2025; Future – 2026-2033

EPP	SCHEDULE 2018-2025	SCHEDULE 2026-2033
Carroll College	S2019 STATE (<i>S2021*</i>)	S2026 STATE
Stone Child College	S2019 STATE	S2026 STATE
American Board (alternative program)	S2024 STATE (Initial)	S2026 STATE
University of Providence	S2019 STATE (<i>S2022*</i>)	F2026 STATE
University of Montana-Missoula	S2020 CAEP-MT (<i>S2022*</i>)	S2027 CAEP-MT
Rocky Mountain College	F2020 STATE (<i>S2021*</i>)	F2027 STATE
University of Montana-Western	F2022 CAEP-MT	F2029 CAEP-MT
Montana State University-Bozeman	F2022 CAEP-MT (<i>F2023*</i>)	F2029 CAEP-MT
Salish Kootenai College	S2024 STATE	S2031 STATE
Montana State University-Northern	S2024 STATE	S2031 STATE
Montana State University-Billings	S2024 CAEP-MT (<i>S2025*</i>)	S2031 CAEP-MT

* *Good Cause Extension*

CAEP- Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation



Section 2: Accreditation Status

CARROLL COLLEGE

Mailing Address	1601 N. Benton Helena, MT 59625-0002
Website Address	www.carroll.edu
Director of Teacher Education	Joe Helbling, Ph.D.
Email Address	jhelbling@carroll.edu
Licensure Official	
Email Address	
Telephone	(406) 447-4354
Regional Accreditor	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	April 2021	Required Action	None

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Biology	Major/ Minor		1970	2019		
Chemistry	Major/ Minor		1970 (no program from 91-95)	2019		
Computer Science			1992	2012		
Economics			1970	1991		
Elementary Education	Major		1970		YES	April 2021
Elementary Ed & Special Education Combined	Major				YES	April 2021
English	Major		1970		YES	April 2021
English as a Second Language			1997	2004		
French	Major/ Minor		1992	2019		
French 7-12			1970	1982		
History	Major/ Minor		1970	2019		
Latin			1970	1982		



Mathematics	Major		1970		YES	April 2021
Health and Physical Education 7-12			1970	1986		
Health and Physical Education K-12	Major/Minor		1987	2012		
Physics	Minor		1980	2019		
Government/Political Science	Major		1970	2019		
Psychology	Major/Minor		1970	1991		
Psychology	Minor		1992	2019		
Reading Specialists K-12	Minor		1987		YES	April 2021
Science Broadfield	Major		2021		YES	April 2021
Social Studies Broadfield	Major		1970		YES	April 2021
Sociology			1970	1991		
Spanish	Major/Minor		1991	2019		
Spanish 7-12			1970	1990		
Special Education			1970	1985		
Special Education P-12	Major/Minor		1991		YES	April 2021
Speech Drama			1970	1990		



MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS- COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Mailing Address	1500 University Dr. Billings, MT 59101
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Interim Dean	Melanie Reaves, Ph.D.
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Licensure Official	Melanie Reaves, Ph.D.
Email Address	melanie.reaves@msubillings.edu
Telephone	(406) 657-1670
Regional Accreditor	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	April 2017: Joint Review with CAEP 2019 MSUB COE Program Prioritization Updates	Required Action	None

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Art K-12	Major/ Minor		1978		YES NASAD	April 2017
Biology	Major/ Minor		1978	2019		April 2017
Business Education			1978	Graduate 1986 Major/ Minor 1993		
Chemistry	Major/ Minor		1978	2019		April 2017
Computer Science			1999	2003		
Dramatics			1978	1982		
Early Childhood Education P-3	Minor		2016		YES	May 2016 BPE Approval
Earth Science	Minor		1978	2019		April 2017
Economics	Minor		1978	2017		
Economics- Sociology			1986	1989		



Educational Technology- Area of Permissive Special Competency		Graduate	2009	2017		
Elementary Education	Major	Graduate	1986		YES	April 2017
English/Language Arts	Major/Minor		1978		YES	April 2017
Exceptional Children			1978	1986		
French			1978	2005		
Geography	Minor		1978	2019		April 2017
German			1978	Major 1996		
Health	Minor		1984		YES	April 2017
History	Major/Minor		1978	Graduate 1996	YES	April 2017
History- Political Science			1986	1997		
Library Media K-12			1978	1992		
Mathematics	Major/Minor		1978	Graduate 1996	YES	April 2017
Music K-12	Major		1978	Minor 1985, Graduate 1996	YES NASM	April 2017
Physical Education and Health	Major/Minor		1978		YES	April 2017
Physical Science			1978	Discontinued from 1981-1991 and in 1997		
Physics	Minor		1978	2019		April 2017
Government / Political Science	Minor		1978		YES	April 2017
Psychology	Minor		1978	2019		April 2017
Reading Specialists K-12	Minor	Graduate	1978	Major 1985	YES	April 2017
Science Broadfield	Major		1978		YES	April 2017
Social Studies Broadfield	Major		1978		YES	April 2017



Sociology	Minor		1978	2019		April 2017
Spanish	Major/ Minor		1978	2019		April 2017



Special Education K-12	Double Major	Graduate	1978		YES	April 2017
Speech-Communication	Minor		1978	2017		
Speech- Drama	Minor		1982	2019		April 2017
Special Education Supervisor		Graduate	1978		YES	April 2017
School Counseling		Graduate	1978		YES	April 2017



MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY- COLLEGE OF EDUCATION HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Mailing Address	PO Box 172940 Bozeman, MT 59717-2940		
Website Address	www.montana.edu		
Dean	Tricia Seifert, Ph.D.		
Email Address	ehhddean@montana.edu		
Licensure Official	Rhona Coombs		
Email Address	rhonda.coombs@montana.edu		
Telephone	(406) 994-6227		
Regional Accreditor	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)		
Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	September 2023: Joint Review with CAEP	Required Action	None

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Agriculture	Major	Graduate 1986	1973		YES	September 2023
American Indian Education			1973	1983		
Art K-12	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Biology	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Business Education			1973	1983		
Chemistry	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Computer Science	Minor		2019	2024		September 2023
Distributive Education			1973	Minor 1981, Major 1989		
Drama			1973	2002		
Earth Science	Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Economics	Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Early Childhood Education P-3	Major		2017		YES	September 2023



Elementary Education	Major		1973		YES	September 2023
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English	Major/ Minor		1973	Minor 2012	Major YES	September 2023
ESL (English as a Second Language)		Graduate	2025		YES	
Family and Consumer Sciences	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
French	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Geography			1973	1985		
German	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Government	Minor		1980		YES	September 2023
Health			1973	2001		
History	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Industrial Trades & Technology Ed	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Library Media K-12		Graduate	1973	Major 1986 Minor 2010	YES	September 2023
Mathematics	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Music K-12	Major		1973	Minor 1983	YES	September 2023
Physical Education and Health	Major		1973	Minor 1998	YES	September 2023
Physical Science			1973	Major 2000		
Physics	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Psychology			1973	2001		
Reading Specialists K-12	Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Science Broadfield	Major		1973		YES	September 2023
Social Studies Broadfield	Major		1973, Minor 1980	Minor 1982	YES	September 2023
Sociology			1973	2002		
Spanish	Major/ Minor		1973		YES	September 2023
Speech- Communication			1973	1985		
Theatre Art			1980	2002		

Susie Hedalen, Superintendent
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501



Phone: 406.444.3680
opi.mt.gov

K-12 Principal		Graduate	1950		YES	September 2023
Superintendent		Graduate	1950		YES	September 2023



Supervisor		Graduate	1950	2018		
School Counseling		Graduate	1993		YES CACREP	September 2023



MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHERN - TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Licensure Official	Beth Durodoeye		
Email Address	beth.durodoeye@msun.edu		
Telephone	(406) 265-3735		
Regional Accreditor	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)		
Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	April 2024	Required Action	Areas of stipulation will be addressed in Spring 2026 to retain accreditation.

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Art K-12	Minor		1982		YES	April 2024
Biology			1977	2001		
Business Education	Major/ Minor		1977	2013		
Chemistry			1977	2001		
Computer Science	Minor		1995	2008		
Drama			1977	2000		
Elementary Education	Major	Graduate	1977	Graduate 2005	YES	April 2024
English Language Arts	Major		1977	Minor 2021 YES	YES	April 2024
French			1977	1997		
Health			1977	1989		
History			1977	2001		
Industrial Trades and Technology Education	Major	Graduate (1988)	1977, Minor 1982	Minor 1990	YES	April 2024

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K-12 Principal		Graduate	2001	2012		
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Mathematics	Major		1977	Major 2021, Minor 2000		
Music K-12			1977, Minor 1982	Major 1982 Minor 1990		
Health and Physical Education	Major		1977	Minor 2017	YES	April 2024
Government/ Political Science			1977	1989		
Reading Specialists K-12	Minor		1977, Minor 1982	Major 1986	YES	April 2024
School Counseling		Graduate	1977, Minor 1984	Major/ Minor 2004	YES	April 2024
Science Broadfield 5-12	Major	Graduate (1992)	1982		YES	April 2024
Social Studies Broadfield 5-12	Major		1977		YES	April 2024
Supervisor		Graduate	1986			
Trade and Industry	Major	Graduate (1988)	1977	Major 2016, Minor 1986		
Traffic Education	Minor		1977		YES	April 2024



ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLLEGE- TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Mailing Address	1511 Poly Drive Billings, MT 59102		
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Telephone	(406) 657-1046		
Regional Accreditor	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)		
Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	March 2021	Required Action	None

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Art K-12	Major/ Minor		1977, Minor 1996		YES	March 2021
Biology	Major/ Minor		1977		YES	March 2021
Business Education			1977	1986		
Chemistry			1977	2005		
Earth Science			1977	1992		
Economics			1977	2005		
Elementary Education	Major		1977		YES	March 2021
English/Language Arts	Major		1977		YES	March 2021
English Education	Minor		2008		YES	March 2021
Geology			1977	1983		
History	Major/ Minor		1977, Minor 1989		YES	March 2021
History- Political Science	Major		1977		YES	March 2021



Mathematics	Major		1977	1992, Reinstated	YES	March 2021
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Music K-12	Major		1977		YES	March 2021
Physical Education and Health K-12	Major/Minor		1977		YES	March 2021
Government/Political Science	Minor		1977		YES	March 2021
Psychology	Major/Minor		1977		YES	March 2021
Reading Specialists K-12	Minor		2008		YES	March 2021
Science Broadfield- *Broadfield with Chemistry or *Broadfield with Biology	Major		1977, 2012	1999, Provisional 2012	YES	March 2021
Social Studies Broadfield	Major		1977		YES	March 2021
Spanish			1977	1991		
School Principals, Superintendents, Supervisors, and Curriculum Directors		Graduate	2008		YES	March 2021
Theatre Arts in Education			2005			



SALISH KOOTENAI COLLEGE- EDUCATION DIVISION

Mailing Address	58138 Hwy 93 PO Box 70 Pablo, MT 59855					
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Regional Accreditor	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)					
Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation		Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education		
BPE Site Review	November 2024		Required Action	2024 Approval		
Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Broadfield Science	Major		2010		YES	May 2024
Early Childhood Education	Major		2015		YES	May 2024
Elementary Education	Major		2007		YES	May 2024
Mathematics	Major		2014		YES	May 2024
M.Ed. in Curr. & Instr.- K-12 Reading		Graduate	2023		YES	May 2024



STONE CHILD COLLEGE- EDUCATION DIVISION

Mailing Address		8294 Upper Box Elder Rd Box Elder, MT 59521				
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Education Department Head		Wilma Tyner				
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Telephone		406-395-4875 ext. 1217				
Regional Accreditor		Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)				
Accreditation Status		Regular Accreditation		Accrediting Entity		Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review		November 2019		Required Action		None
Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Elementary Education	Major		2019		YES	November 2019



THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA- COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	April 2022: Joint Review with CAEP and BPE	Required Action	None

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Art K-12	Major		1977	Graduate 1982, Minor 1996	Major YES	April 2022
Biology	Major/ Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/ Minor YES	April 2022
Business Education	Major/ Minor	Graduate	1977	Major/ Minor 2018 Graduate 1982		
Chemistry	Major/ Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/ Minor YES	April 2022
Computer Science	Minor		2017	2022		
Theatre	Major/ Minor		1977	Graduate 1982; Minor 2006	Major YES Minor reinstated 2015	April 2022
Earth Science	Major	Graduate	1977	Major 2025 Graduate 1982		April 2022
Economics	Major/ Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/ Minor YES	April 2022



Early Childhood Education P-3	Major/ Minor	Graduate	Minor 2015, Major 2017		YES	April 2022
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Elementary Education	Major	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major YES	April 2022
English	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
English as a Second Language	Minor		1992	2025		April 2022
French	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
Geography	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
German	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
History	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
K-12 Principal		Graduate	1977		YES	April 2022
Latin	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
Library Media K-12	Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Minor YES	April 2022
Mathematics	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
Music K-12	Major	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major YES	April 2022
Physical Education and Health K-12	Major	Graduate	1977, 2024	Graduate 1982, Minor 2006	Major Reinstated 2024	September 2024
Physics	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
Government/Political Science	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
Psychology	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
Reading Specialists K-12	Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Minor YES	April 2022
Russian	Major/Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/Minor YES	April 2022
Science Broadfield	Major	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major YES	April 2022
Social Studies Broadfield	Major	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major YES	April 2022



Sociology	Major/ Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/ Minor YES	April 2022
Spanish	Major/ Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/ Minor YES	April 2022
Special Education K- 12	Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Minor YES	April 2022
School Counseling		Graduate	1977		YES CACREP	Spring 2022
School Principals, Supervisors, and Curriculum Directors		Graduate	1977		YES	April 2022
School Psychologists		Graduate	1977		YES NASP	April 2022



UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA WESTERN- EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

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Regional Accreditor	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)		
Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education, CAEP, NWCCU
BPE Site Review	October 2022: Joint Review with CAEP	Required Action	None

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Art K-12	Major/ Minor		1978		YES	October 2022
Biology	Major/ Minor		1978		YES	October 2022
Business Education	Major/ Minor		1978		YES	October 2022
Chemistry	Minor		1978	2009		
Computer Science	Minor		1999		YES	October 2022
Theatre	Minor		1999		YES	October 2022
Early Childhood Education P-3	Major/ Minor		2002		YES	October 2022
Earth Science	Major/ Minor		2006/ 1998		YES	October 2022
Elementary Education	Major		1978		YES	October 2022
English	Major/ Minor		1978		YES	October 2022
History	Minor		1978		YES	October 2022



Industrial Trades and Technology Education	Minor		1978	2015		
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Library Media K-12	Minor		1981		YES	October 2022
Mathematics	Major/ Minor		1978		YES	October 2022
Music K-12	Major/ Minor		1978		YES	October 2022
Physical Education and Health K-12	Major/ Minor		1978		YES	October 2022
Physical Science	Major/ Minor		1978	2004		
Physics	Major		1978	1986		
Reading Specialist K-12	Minor		1981		YES	October 2022
School Counseling		Graduate	1983	1989		
General Science (Broadfield)	Major		1978		YES	October 2022
Social Studies Broadfield	Major		1978		YES	October 2022
Special Education	Minor		1999		YES	October 2022



UNIVERSITY OF PROVIDENCE- TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	October 2022	Required Action	None

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Art K-12	Major/ Minor		1979	2019		
Biology	Major/ Minor		1979	2019		
Chemistry	Major/ Minor		1979	2019		
Computer Science			1992	Major 1996 Minor 1998		
Elementary Education	Major	Graduate	2020	Graduate 1990	YES	October 2022
English/ Language Arts	Major/ Minor		1979	2019		
French			1979	1981		
German			1979	1981		
History	Major/ Minor		1979	2019		
History and Political Science			1979	1997		
K-12 Principal		Graduate	1988	2001		
Library Media K-12			1979	1981		
Master of Arts in Teaching		Graduate	1995/ 2006	2012		

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Master of Education		Graduate	1996/2005	2012		
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Mathematics	Major/ Minor		1979	2019		
Music K-12			1979	Major 1981 Minor 1996		
Permissive Special Competencies: Gifted Education	Emphasis			2019		
Physical Education and Health K-12	Major/ Minor		2020		YES	October 2022
Government/ Political Science	Minor		1979	2019		
Psychology	Minor		Reapproved 2005	2019		
Reading Specialists K-12	Minor		1979	2019		
School Counseling K-12		Graduate	1998	2001		
Science Broadfield	Major		1983	2019		
Social Studies Broadfield	Major		1979	2019		
Sociology	Major/ Minor		1979	2019		
Spanish	Minor		1979, Minor 1994	Minor 2019 Major 1981		
Special Education K-12	Major		1979, Minor 1998	2019		
Speech- Communication			1979	2001		



Section 3 Endorsement Areas

Endorsement Areas	Montana Educator Preparation Programs										
	Carroll College	MSU-B	MSU	MSU-N	Rocky Mountain College	Salish Kootenai College	Stone Child College	U of M	U of M Western	U of Providence	American Board
Agriculture 5-12			M								
Art K-12		Mm	Mm	m	Mm			M	Mm		
Biology 5-12			Mm		Mm			Mm	Mm		C
Business Ed									Mm		
Chemistry 5-12			Mm					Mm			C
Computer Science									m		
Drama/Theatre								Mm	m		
Early Childhood P-3		m	M			M		MmG	Mm		
Earth Science 5-12			m						Mm		
Economics 5-12			m					Mm			
Elementary K-8	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	C
Elem/Sp. Ed. Combo	M										C
English 5-12	M	Mm	Mm	M	Mm			Mm	Mm		C
ESL			G								
FCS			Mm								
French K-12			Mm					Mm			
Geography								Mm			
German K-12			Mm					Mm			
Government		m	m		m			Mm			
Health 5-12		m									
History 5-12		Mm	Mm		Mm			Mm	m		C
Indus. Trades & Tech. Ed.			Mm	M							
Latin								Mm			



Library Media K-12			G					m	m		
Mathematics 5-12	M	Mm	Mm		M	M		Mm	Mm		C
Music K-12		M	M		M			M	Mm		
PE & Health K-12		Mm	M	M	Mm			M	Mm	Mm	
Physical Science											
Physics 5-12			Mm					Mm			C
Political Science 5-12		m			m			Mm			
Principal K-12			G		G			G			
Psychology 5-12					Mm			Mm			
Reading K-12	m	mG	m	m	m	G		m	m		
Russian								Mm			
School Counselor		G	G	G				G			
School Psychologist								G			
Science BF 5-12	M	M	M	M	M	M		M	M		C
Social Studies BF 5-12	M	M	M	M	M			M	M		
Sociology 5-12								Mm			
Spanish K-12			Mm					Mm			
Special Education	Mm	MG						m	m		C
Superintendent			G		G			G			
Supervisor		G			G			G			
Tech Ed 5-12											
Traffic Ed				m							
Teaching Elem			G								
Teaching Secondary			G								
Curriculum & Instruction		G			G			G			



Section 4: Title II Higher Education Report

The 2025 Montana State Report includes data reported to the Department in October 2025. For many data elements, such as the number of individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs, the OPI reported on **AY 2023-2024 data**.

Total State Enrollment

Year	Total Enrolled	Subset of Program Completers
2021-2022	1824	555
2022-2023	1755	547
2023-2024	1479	495

Comparison of Completers over 3 years

Year	This Year	Last Year	Change over 1 Year
2023-2024	495	547	-9.51%
2022-2023	547	555	-1.44%
2021-2022	555	649	-14.48%

Total Enrollment by Program 2023-2024

Program	Total Enrolled	Subset of Program Completers
Carroll College	33	14
Montana State University-Billings	231	84
Montana State University-Bozeman	227	103
Montana State University-Bozeman Alt	53	16
Montana State University-Northern	33	12
Rocky Mountain College	63	16
Salish Kootenai College	29	11
Stone Child College	25	4
University of Montana	184	87
University of Montana-Western	569	142
University of Providence	32	6



Section 6: Updates on Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulation

Summary of EPPs' Reported Progress by Standard

10.58.312 Initial Candidate Partnerships and Practice

- We have now had students complete their student teaching and multi-model assessments were used in EDU 489 & EDU 490. In addition, all student teachers are assessed by mentor teachers and a university supervisor in their placements.
- Helping build the CORE school in Great Falls and working more with other districts for what is expected during the 40+ days of field experience prior to student teaching.
- Clinical experiences have been a focus of the Department of Teaching and Learning and the accreditation team for the past three years directly through the work of the Clinical Experiences Committee (CEC). The committee's scope shifted from policy issues to the broader work of clinical partnerships and practice.

10.58.313 Initial Candidate Quality, Recruitment, Progression, and Support

- The college made two significant programmatic changes in 24-25 as a direct effort to recruit and retain quality educators. The first is a streamlined and remote-available post-bac secondary education program, and the second is a shift of the school counseling program to an online modality. With a rural state the size of Montana, there is a direct need in the field for these types of programs. We are also finalizing agreements with three additional community colleges across the state to expand our current 2+2 elementary education cohort program, beginning formally in Autumn 2026. The 2+2 cohorts allow candidates to complete their elementary education degrees remotely from five communities across the state which do not currently have teacher preparation programs thereby reaching areas of the state with teacher shortages.

10.58.314 Initial Program Impact

- Completer and Employer Surveys and an Alumni interview for 2023-2024 were completed, shared, and contextualized with initial program faculty and staff. The 2024-2025 Completer and Employer Surveys and Alumni interviews will be disseminated in November 2025 for a January 2026 completion date.
- Data is collected on completers and used for continuous quality improvement.
- Determining what additional surveying could be successful without conflict or overlap with the state tools in place. Revision of our lesson plan assessment tool and working on the Teacher Work Sample is in progress.

10.58.315 Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

- The EPP held a Data Day event in April 2025 for initial (and advanced) faculty and stakeholders to analyze assessment data, and evaluate, revise, and implement program Action Plans for continuous improvement. A visual design of the EPPs quality assurance system was formally presented to introduce stakeholders to the Elementary Education program's online mode of delivery. Continuous improvement was further exemplified by the hiring of a full time Teacher



Education faculty member in August 2025, complimenting the hiring of a part-time Teachers-in-Training Faculty Mentor in September 2024. Three faculty earned Quality Matters certification for their online courses in Fall 2024.

- The EPP's Division of Education worked during the 2024-2025 academic year to complete the Critical Assignments Database which captures the measures of candidate progress aligned with the PEPPS, InTASC Standards, and the EPP's Central Beliefs as part of its comprehensive Quality Assurance system. This database serves to inform department faculty of both student progress and program effectiveness and will be an important component in future self studies. The CAD has been completed and is in use for the Early Childhood Education P-3 and Elementary Education K-8 programs. Work is continuing with the revision of the Secondary Broadfield Science and Secondary Mathematics degrees due to changes in leadership in those programs, and therefore some of the courses and course assignments are still in development. Once this curriculum development work is finalized this fall term, the EPP will be able to populate and implement the database for those programs as well. That work is on track to be completed this fall and full implementation of the CAD in all state-accredited programs in the Division will be achieved prior to the end of the current 2025-2026 academic year.
- The EPP has improved our assessment collection & analysis methods so that we can aggregate and disaggregate data for evaluations at the student-level as well as the program level. A major change we've made involves the creation of electronic data collection (e.g., Google Forms / Microsoft Forms and Questionnaires embedded within our LMS) so that data can be exported to a spreadsheet. Previously, our data was largely kept in paper form (e.g., in folders within filing cabinets). This worked fine for student-level analysis, but not for program level. We now have a system in place to measure student performance on teaching standards (10.58.501) throughout the program with increasing levels of proficiency. Rubrics with evaluative criteria have been created for each component of the 501s. These rubrics break down each component into subcomponents so that we can analyze student performance as well as our program's coverage & effectiveness at a more granular level. In a similar fashion, our dispositions and field-experience evaluation system has been improved. We use the same evaluative criteria for dispositions and teaching performances so that progress can be measured more accurately across multiple field experiences. These assessments are completed by the cooperating teachers, the college field supervisors, and by the preservice teachers (self-assess). We are now in a position where we can make better data-informed decisions about our students' progress, provide interventions as needed, and evaluate our program and make program changes as needed. We have already taken steps to improve our program based on aggregated data analysis and stakeholder/community partners feedback. This includes new program requirements such as increased GPA requirements for admission to the program and admission to student teaching, new course requirements (e.g. Middle School Teaching), new course proposals (e.g. Science Concepts for Elementary Education, Social Studies for Elementary Education), increased attention to English Language Learners, Social & Emotional needs of students, and Teacher Wellness in our courses, and improved advising for our 1st year students.

The EPP held a Data Day event in April 2025 for initial (and advanced) faculty and stakeholders to



analyze assessment data, and evaluate, revise, and implement program Action Plans for continuous improvement. A visual design of the EPPs quality assurance system was formally presented to introduce stakeholders to the Elementary Education program's online mode of delivery. Continuous improvement was further exemplified by the hiring of a full time Teacher Education faculty member in August 2025, complimenting the hiring of a part-time Teachers-in-Training Faculty Mentor in September 2024. Three faculty earned Quality Matters certification for their online courses in Fall 2024.

10.58.608 Advanced Program Satisfaction with Preparation

- Completer and Employer Surveys for 2023-2024 were completed, shared, and contextualized with advanced program faculty and staff. The 2024-2025 Completer and Employer Surveys will be disseminated in November 2025 for a January 2026 completion date. The EPP held a Data Day event in April 2025 for advanced (and initial) faculty and stakeholders to analyze assessment data, and evaluate, revise, and implement program Action Plans for continuous improvement.

10.58.609 Advanced Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

- Updated information from the last report includes the implementation of Advanced Education Advisory Council meetings since Fall 2024. In August 2025, the university hired a temporary, full-time Counselor Education faculty member/CACREP Process Facilitator with a background in School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling to strengthen curriculum alignment and support student success.
- The work during the 24-25 academic year focused on creating assessments with rubrics and finishing revisions on the clinical experiences model. As a result of these changes, the Quality Assurance System (QAS) isn't simply tightening up what we're currently doing, but looking at overall program and assessment revisions. Members of the leadership team and the QAS committee have reviewed the curriculum and assessment changes and will begin the review of new assessment data after the summer collection cycle



Section 7: Montana Assessment for Content Knowledge (MACK) Information

Information from August 21, 2024.

Montana Assessment for Content Knowledge Verification

Teacher candidates must earn at least 7 points on the Montana Assessment for Content Knowledge prior to recommendation for licensure/endorsement. The possible range for the Content Knowledge Score (CKS) is 0-10. Teacher candidates earning fewer than 7 CKS points or who score zero on any of the three rubric components shall not be recommended for licensure/endorsement. For candidates who receive a score of 1* on rubric components 1, 2, or 3, the program will conduct a further individualized review of the candidate's content knowledge and teaching skills, based on established policy, to ensure that the candidate merits recommendation for licensure/endorsement.

1. **Assessment of Content Knowledge Coursework GPA**

The range for awarding points is 0-4 and will be calculated as follows:

GPA	Points
3.50 – 4.00	4
3.00 – 3.49	3
2.65 – 2.99	2
2.00 – 2.64	1*
Below 2.00	0

2. **Assessment of Content Knowledge Demonstrated During Student Teaching/ Clinical Practice** The range for awarding points is 0-3 and will be calculated as follows:

Descriptor	Points
Knowledge is Advanced	3
Knowledge is Proficient	2
Knowledge is Basic	1*
Knowledge is Insufficient	0

Note: The assessment is completed by a cooperating teacher, college or university supervisor, or faculty member.

3. **Assessment of Content Knowledge on appropriate Praxis Subject Assessment test**

The range for awarding points is 0-3 and will be calculated as follows:

Score Range	Points
Meets/Exceeds MT score	3
At least 90% of MT score	2
At least 80% of MT score	1*
Below 80% of MT score	0

ITEM 27

UPDATE ON CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
NORTHERN EDUCATOR PREPARATION
PROGRAM PROVIDER ACCREDITATION

Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: November 19-21, 2025

Presentation	Update from Montana State University- Northern on progress of stipulations from 2024 State Exit Report.
Presenter	Crystal Andrews
Position Title	Accreditation and Licensure Senior Manager Office of Public Instruction
Overview	This presentation provides the Board of Public Education with a brief update from Montana State University- Northern on the progress of the three stipulations that they received in their 2024 State Exit Report.
Requested Decision(s)	Information Item- No action required.
Related Issue(s)	None
Recommendation(s)	N/A





Montana State University Northern

Stipulation: A standard or component is not met. The site visiting team identified a deficiency related to one or more components or the BPE standard. A stipulation is of sufficient severity that a standard may be determined to be unmet. A stipulation must be addressed within two years to retain accreditation.

Initial Standards

ARM	TITLE	STATUS
10.58.311	Initial Content and Pedagogical Knowledge	Met with Notation
10.58.312	Initial Candidate Partnerships and Practice	Met with Area for Improvement
10.58.313	Initial Candidate Quality Recruitment, Progression, and Support	Met with Area for Improvement
10.58.314	Initial Program Impact	Stipulation
10.58.315	Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Stipulation

Advanced Standards

ARM	TITLE	STATUS
10.58.605	Advanced Content and Pedagogical Knowledge	Met with Notation
10.58.606	Advanced Clinical Partnerships and Practice	Met with Notation
10.58.607	Advanced Candidate Quality, Recruitment, Progression, and Support	Met with Area for Improvement
10.58.608	Advanced Program Satisfaction with Preparation	Stipulation
10.58.609	Advanced Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Met with Area for Improvement



10.58.314 Initial Program Impact	Descriptions	Evidence
(1) The provider:		
(a) demonstrates the effectiveness of its completers' instruction on P-12 student learning and development and completer and employer satisfaction with the relevance and effectiveness of preparation;	The Unit demonstrates the impact of program completers on P-12 student learning and application of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions in P-12 classrooms, completer satisfaction, and employer satisfaction via Completer and Employer Surveys.	• Completer Survey January 2025 • Employer Survey January 2025
(b) demonstrates that program completers effectively contribute to P-12 student learning using valid and reliable data, including employer and program completer surveys;	The Completer Survey provides insight into program completers' satisfaction with, and perceptions of effectiveness of The Unit's programs. OPIs Final State Exit Report 2024 provided recommendations for MSUNs EPP to address stipulations by expanding Completer and Employer data beyond 2022-2023. Completer and Employer Satisfaction Surveys were completed in January 2025 and analyzed. A third year of Completer and Employer Satisfaction data will also be administered in January 2026 and analyzed.	• Completer Survey January 2025 • Employer Survey January 2025
(c) demonstrates, through structured and validated instruments, including, but not limited to, surveys, interviews, and observations, that program completers effectively apply the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions as described in ARM 10.58.501;	One Completer responded to the 2023-2024 Initial Programs Alumni Interview invitation following the administration of the Initial Completer and Employer surveys. Four interview questions were posed, including one inquiring about any additional comments. The program balanced the feedback with the small sample size. The first question asked about the best features of the program that prepared Completers for their on-the-job responsibilities. The Completer answered with their "Instructors," and the instructor-completer relationships that were formed. They appreciated their hands-on experience with Adjunct Faculty on the Great Falls Campus. Their courses in Classroom Management and Lesson Planning were also noted positively with the Completer stating, "I still use things I learned then." In terms of least liked aspects of their preparation, the Completer indicated that some evening courses covered too much information at night, which was difficult to handle at the end of the day. When asked about what the Completer would change in the preparation program, they responded that the program should make sure to let Student Teachers know that it would be okay to switch Cooperating Teachers if there were significant conflicts. It was emphasized that this message should be advertised even more in Practicum. In response to the additional response question, the completer said of	• Initial Programs Alumni Interview Template



10.58.314 Initial Program Impact	Descriptions	Evidence
	their experience “Everyone was on your side and wanted things to work for you.” The interview ended with the Completer providing an overall preparation rating of “Very Effective” on a scale ranging from “Not Effective” to “Very Effective.” The Completer’s overall evaluation of their preparation suggests a high level of satisfaction and perceived readiness for teaching. Program preparation strengths include supportive faculty, practical experiences provided by Adjunct Faculty, impactful coursework, and a student-centered program. Evening course structure on the Great Falls Campus and the need for better policy directives and early program alerts related to switching classes were noted as areas for improvement. The faculty will review course scheduling, course sequencing for support earlier in the program, and effective program policy delivery.	
(d) demonstrates, using valid and reliable data, that employers are satisfied with the program completers' preparation for their responsibilities working with P-12 students and their families; and	Four Employers responded to the Initial Employer Satisfaction Survey 2023-2024, consisting of 19 content items plus one item to share additional comments about satisfaction with teacher preparation. Responses ranged from “Very Satisfied” to “Somewhat Unsatisfied.” All Employers were “Very Satisfied” with the teacher's respect for families and legal applications. Seventy five percent of Employers viewed each of the following areas positively overall: collaboration to meet language needs of students, demonstration of content knowledge, and participation in professional development opportunities. Employers indicated general approval for the majority items that fell between the “Somewhat Satisfied” and “Very Satisfied” responses. These items included instruction based on learner development, differentiated instruction for English Learners, student engagement, use of instructional technology, encouraging critical thinking, data analysis, planned instruction, instruction aligned with state content standards, use of varied instructional strategies, impact of instructional choices, and the incorporation of IEFA. Several items suggested a need for more attention. Seventy-five percent of the Employers were “Somewhat satisfied” and 25% were “Somewhat Unsatisfied” with teacher responses to negative behavior and engaging with colleagues in a professional manner. The initiation of professional conversation with a supervisor was even more divided amongst Employers, with 50% “Very Satisfied,” 25% “Somewhat Satisfied,” and 25% “Somewhat Unsatisfied.” Two Employers elected to leave comments. One Employer praised the teacher as wonderful, they	• Employer Survey January 2025



10.58.314 Initial Program Impact	Descriptions	Evidence
	encouraged "more teacher intensive prep on classroom management. The second Employer provided contextual information including how teachers were regularly involved in professional development, the use of collaboration in the elementary setting, and content specific classes falling under 10 students. The small sample size of four Employers still allows for several directional insights. Overall, Employer responses reflect a strong foundational satisfaction with teacher preparation. Additional teacher support in professionalism and classroom management may be suggested. The faculty will focus on adding these areas as workshop topics for the program's in-person and online EdExcellence forums. These areas can also be edified with student presentations by the program's TNT Faculty Mentor.	
(e) demonstrates, using valid and reliable data, that program completers perceive their preparation as relevant to the responsibilities they encounter on the job and that the preparation was effective.	One Completer provided responses to the Initial Program Completer Satisfaction Survey 2023-2024, which consisted of 20 content items plus one item for additional comments. The distribution of responses was 0% "Very effective," 10% "Effective," 65% "Somewhat effective," and 25% "Not effective." The Completer suggested strong satisfaction with the program's preparation in the use of instructional technology and with the encouragement of critical thinking. Modest satisfaction was expressed in the areas of instruction based on learner development, differentiated instruction for English Learners, student engagement, teacher responses to negative behavior, demonstration of content knowledge, instruction aligned with state content standards, use of varied instructional strategies, data analysis, teacher's respect for families, legal applications, engagement with colleagues in a professional manner, the initiation of professional conversations with a supervisor, and relevant preparation for one's teaching responsibilities. The Completer did not perceive their training to be effective in the areas of collaboration to meet language needs of students, instruction based on knowledge of students in their community context, participation in professional development opportunities, impact of instructional choices, and the incorporation of IEFA. Additional comments were not provided. The Completer's overall evaluation of their preparation suggested a perception that there are many areas where the program appears to perform moderately. However, there remain several areas that require strengthening, particularly those related to diversity, professional development, and student community/ instructional choice contexts. The program will review curriculum in support of	Completer Survey January 2025



10.58.314 Initial Program Impact	Descriptions	Evidence
	culturally responsive education and community-based instruction content. The program will also develop additional opportunities for professional development and reflection.	

History: [20-2-114](#), MCA; IMP, [20-2-121](#), MCA; NEW, 2014 MAR p. 2936, Eff. 7/1/15; AMD, 2023 MAR p. 86, Eff. 7/1/23.



10.58.315: Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Descriptions	Evidence
(1) The provider:		
(a) develops a quality assurance system that consists of valid and reliable data from multiple measures of candidates' and completers' positive impact on P-12 students and supports continuous improvement that is sustained and evidence-based. The provider uses the results of inquiry and data collection to establish priorities, enhance program elements and capacity, and highlight innovations;	Data collection is essential to students, instructors, and the EPP. It monitors student progress, helps inform instruction, and has become a part of the continual improvement cycle for MSUN. This philosophy of the importance of data to drive our work creates assessments that measure and inform us in each stage of the EPP. In previous years of accreditation, students submitted lesson plans from each course with critical assessment rubrics that documented aligned InTASC Standards. Student feedback told us that students did not understand this process but rather saw it as a checklist that needed to be completed without reflection, understanding, or application. Because of this, we knew we needed to make a change in what data was collected, how it was collected, and how it was used. We started with a calibration discussion that helped us build a shared and consistent understanding of what graduates need to be successful in education and how MSUN needed to respond to those needs. Central to this discussion was the importance of using one continual thread of data collection throughout the program. The state of Montana utilizes the Danielson Model for teacher evaluation. Therefore, it was decided that using the Danielson Framework for teaching, which has already been aligned with InTASC (see Danielson Alignment Chart), would allow us to provide Teacher Candidates the instruction and reflection needed to later succeed as Montana educators. Additionally, the Danielson model encourages reflective practice, and we wanted to emphasize reflection to create teacher clarity and growth. We then knew that all data collected through each stage of the Teacher Preparation Program would need to be aligned and consistent with the Danielson Framework.	• Danielson Alignment Chart



10.58.315: Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Descriptions	Evidence
(b) implements and maintains a quality assurance system comprised of multiple measures that can monitor candidate progress, completer impacts, and provider operational effectiveness. The provider documents the process of data entry and how data are reported and used in decision making to make programmatic improvement;	The BOR approved the EPPs online Elementary Education (K-8) program on May 16, 2024, enabling this new mode of delivery to go into effect AY 2024-2025. In-person and virtual meetings with stakeholders were held over the previous year in response to the transition. Program review of the data collected over the previous year in anticipation of the transition indicated stakeholder concern with the efficacy of online classes and the need for in-person experiences. The EPPs three faculty members submitted one course each for review by Quality Matters (a quality assurance system for online learning). All three courses achieved QM certification by the end of Fall 2024. Faculty will apply the Quality Matters Rubric to the remainder of their classes. EdExcellence Forums were built into the program, allowing students to meet with their peers and professors in-person three times a semester. In response to subsequent student feedback about the Forums, the option was provided for students to join the Forums online. A more personalized learning experience was also provided with the hiring of a part-time Teachers iN Training (TNT) Faculty Mentor in Fall 2025, to work closely with Pre-Education and Education majors both in person via a dedicated Teachers' Lounge and Resource Lab space, and online.	• EDU Elementary Ed Online Flyer EdExcellence Forum • Schedule AY2024-2025 EdExcellence Survey • QM Certification Exemplars • TNT Faculty Mentor Calendar AY 2024-2025
(c) ensures that the quality assurance system relies on relevant, verifiable, representative, cumulative, and actionable measures to ensure interpretations of data are valid and consistent;	Many of the rubrics the programs use have been updated over the past few years. This is partially due to state requirement/standards changes and partly due to what the data are telling the faculty. Throughout the first four sections of this report, data, assessments, and stakeholder feedback have shown how and why changes have been made to the programs. Based on the data, best practices, and stakeholder feedback, faculty have implemented changes to improve student learning and create a continuous improvement cycle.	• Program and Block Objectives Employer Survey 2022-2023 • Employer Survey 2023-2024 Completer Survey • AY2022 – 2023 Completer Survey • AY2023-2024 Data Day 2025 Agenda • MSUN EDU Quality Assurance Map (PowerPoint) • Education Handbook



10.58.315: Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Descriptions	Evidence
		Student Edition 2024-2025 • Level 1 Application – Elementary • Level 1 Application - Secondary Praxis Summary
(d) regularly and systematically assesses program performance against its goals and relevant standards, monitors results over time, tests innovations, and uses results to improve program elements and processes;	Faculty review data annually, solicit stakeholder feedback on a consistent basis, and compare data longitudinally. The information provided in the previous four sections provide details on ways in which faculty look at data, the changes that have been implemented based on the data, and the consistent outreach to stakeholders for feedback for programmatic improvement. Faculty have made numerous changes to assessments over the past few years, testing what is working or not working for their programs and making changes based on that information. As faculty monitor their candidates' progress through the programs, changes have been made to improve student learning. One notable change in 2024 involved moving the Elementary Education (K-8) program online and including personalized elements throughout to foster student success. This change was made based on student feedback, partner feedback, and assessment data.	• Employer Survey 2023-2024 Data Day 2025 Agenda • MSUN EDU Quality Assurance Map (PowerPoint) • Initial Education Advisory Council Meeting Minutes 3-13-25 • EDU Elementary Ed Online Flyer
(e) ensures that data from the quality assurance system are based on established best practices; summarized, analyzed, shared widely, and acted upon in decision making related to programs, resource allocation, and future direction; and	The programs show alignment to state standards, along with Danielson (which is the state model), and InTASC Standards. Completer, Employer, and Partner surveys continuously allow the program to be responsive to stakeholder interests and needs. Moreover, data are shared widely with faculty, staff, and administrators internally, and externally with partners, employers, and the Initial Education Programs Advisory Council. Data and feedback are used to make programmatic improvements. In terms of resource allocation, continuous efforts have been made to reduce reliance on Adjunct Faculty to deliver courses and to replace an open faculty line. A new Assistant Professor of Teacher Education was hired with an effective start date of Fall 2025. The EDU program now has three full-time core faculty. The Education Department also has a dedicated Administrative Associate IV/Education Advisor. In addition to advising, this position's duties include licensure and certification support for initial and advanced programs.	• Program and Block Objectives • Hi-Line Mass Agenda Feb 1, 2024 • Employer Survey 2023-2024 • Completer Survey 2023-2024 Data Day 2025 Agenda • MSUN EDU Quality Assurance Map (PowerPoint) • Faculty Weekly Meeting Agendas 10-17-24 and 2-20-25 • Initial Education Advisory Council Meeting Minutes



10.58.315: Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Descriptions	Evidence
		3-13-25
(f) assures that internal and external stakeholders, including, but not limited to, faculty staff, candidates, completers, employers, practitioners, and school and community partners are engaged in program design, evaluation, and continuous innovative improvement processes.	In AY2024-2025, Education Faculty held one-hour program meetings two times per month. These meetings provided faculty many opportunities to review and assess its online program format and quality of candidate interactions within the courses. For example, faculty worked together in the fall to decide on which online courses to begin submitting for QM certification via support from the Office of Teaching and Learning Excellence. EDU 201 was the first to be certified and then moved through the course revision process at the college and University levels. Faculty also monitored their work for one year on grants, including one for “A Culturally Responsive Approach to Online Teacher Education” via MUS Educator Prep Program Distance Delivery Support funds. This grant assisted faculty to infuse cross-cultural distance delivery pedagogy into such courses as EDU 340 Classroom Management and EDU 382 Assessment, Curriculum, and Instruction. Faculty also used regular meetings to assess online course format and the quality of candidate interactions to ensure candidates are effectively prepared through a Fall 2024 survey of EdExcellence Forum students. Faculty collaborated in department meetings and online to follow up on the results. Feedback resulted in changing the EdExcellence Forums from 2 in person meetings per month to 1 online and 1 in-person meeting per month for Spring 2025. The EPP held its first Data Day event in Spring 2025 to formally introduce initial and advanced stakeholders to the current quality assurance system. Three interconnected levels were illustrated representing major components of the quality assurance system process that serves as the foundation of the virtual needs of the online program. Major stakeholders were updated to include MSUNs Office of Teaching and Learning Excellence, which offers online teaching alignment, support, and resources at an institutional level. Figures were also used to highlight the program’s annual Fall/Spring/Summer assessment cycle involving analyses, recommendations, and decisions continuously impacting the assessment process, decisions, and goals. Formative “in-the-moment feedback” data indicated	• OTLE Online Resources Link • MSUN EDU Quality Assurance Map (PowerPoint) • Data Day 2025 Agenda • Education Department Meeting Agendas for 11-14-24, 1-9-25, and 2-20-25 • Initial Education Advisory Council Meeting Minutes 3-13-25 • OCHE Distance Delivery Support Grant



10.58.315: Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Descriptions	Evidence
	that the program was well received, with collated information presented to initial and advanced Fall 2025 advisory council meetings. Data Day will occur each spring semester.	



10.58.608 Advanced Program Satisfaction with Preparation	Descriptions	Evidence
(1) The provider:		
(a) demonstrates, using valid and reliable data that employers are satisfied with the advanced program completers' preparation for their responsibilities working with P-12 students and their families; and	One employer provided responses to the Advanced Program Employer Satisfaction Survey 2023-2024, which consisted of 19 content items and one item for open-ended commentary. The response distribution was as follows: 84% "Very satisfied;" 16% "Somewhat satisfied." School counseling strengths were suggested in program effectiveness; collaboration and consultation; application of relevant theories; academic, career, and personal/social development; intervention and prevention; stakeholder collaboration; use research to inform school counseling practices; accountability and data use; promotion of student success; deliver developmentally appropriate curriculum; provision of effective counseling interventions; professional development; provide effective school counseling services to students at risk; professional affiliations; ethics and integrity; incorporation of the ASCA model; and constructive feedback and self-improvement. Three "Somewhat satisfied" responses suggested improvement for specialized content areas including counseling for diversity; staying current with SPED knowledge and application; and medication knowledge and impact. The employer's open-ended commentary noted that their "Somewhat satisfied" responses meant that the student might not be involved in the topics at that point in their program or could still be learning in these areas. The employer response suggests strong overall program effectiveness. The somewhat satisfied responses did not appear to suggest program flaws; nevertheless, there remains an opportunity to strengthen these areas. As we balance the feedback with the fact that there is a small sample size, faculty will review the program's academic map in Fall 2025 (for implementation in Fall 2026) to determine course sequencing that places specialized content earlier in the program. Faculty will also review didactic and clinical course content to reinforce areas related to specialized content.	• Employer Survey 2023-2024
(b) demonstrates, using valid and reliable data, that advanced program completers perceive their preparation as relevant to the responsibilities they encounter on the job, and that the preparation was effective.	Four School Counseling Completers provided responses to the Advanced School Counseling Completer Satisfaction Survey 2023-2024, consisting of 19 content items and one item for open ended commentary. Responses ranged from "Very Satisfied" to "Somewhat Unsatisfied." Seventy five percent of completers viewed each of the following program areas positively overall: effectiveness, relevance, collaboration with stakeholders, promotion of student success, current SPED	• Completer Survey 2023-2024



10.58.608 Advanced Program Satisfaction with Preparation	Descriptions	Evidence
	knowledge and application, and delivery of a comprehensive School Counseling program. Completers were split between “Somewhat Satisfied” and “Very Satisfied” in the areas of preparation for counseling services for diverse students, current research to inform School Counseling practice, delivery of developmentally appropriate curriculum, provision of effective counseling interventions, accountability and data use, effective school counseling services to students at risk, ethics and integrity, and constructive feedback and self-improvement. Most completers were “Somewhat Satisfied” with collaboration and consultation. While reflecting moderate satisfaction overall, the results suggest that these topics would benefit from strengthened consistency and depth. Targeted areas for improvement in the program include professional preparation involving academic, career, and personal/social development; professional development; medication knowledge and impact; and professional affiliations. Each of these areas was deemed “Somewhat Unsatisfactory” by 25% of the Completers. These results indicate a need to review and address potential gaps in the program. Completers opted not to share any additional comments regarding their preparation. While the completer responses suggest numerous program strengths, they also suggest inconsistencies and areas in need of improvement. Balancing the feedback with the small sample size, faculty will crosswalk syllabi with updated CACREP standards to improve advanced curriculum planning, encompassing professional preparation involving academic, career, and personal/social development counseling and the impact of medication on K-12 student populations. Faculty will focus on distributing information and highlighting activities to support professional school counselor identity through organizational affiliations and networking. Students will also be encouraged to continuously enhance their awareness, knowledge, and skill-building through participation in a range of professional development opportunities, including those that are no or low cost.	

History: [20-2-114](#), MCA; [IMP](#), [20-2-121](#), MCA; [NEW](#), 2014 MAR p. 2936, Eff. 7/1/15; [AMD](#), 2023 MAR p. 86, Eff. 7/1/23.

❖ **MACIE LIAISON – (Item 28)**

Julia Maxwell

ITEM 28

MACIE REPORT

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Regalia Protections Letter**

Jordann Lankford Forster



MONTANA ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDIAN EDUCATION
ADVISORY TO THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Montana Board of Public Education
MACIE Summary
November 2025

Presentation	MACIE Report
Presenter	Jordann Lankford Forster
Position Title	MACIE Chair
Overview	The purpose of MACIE is to provide recommendations and guidance to the Board of Public Education and the Office of Public Instruction on initiatives and actions aimed at increasing American Indian student achievement. As your advisory board, and partner in American Indian education improvement, we offer the following report:
Related Issue(s)	October MACIE Meeting November MACIE Meeting
Recommendations	Approve Signing on to the MACIE Regalia Protections Letter



MONTANA ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDIAN EDUCATION
ADVISORY TO THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

On behalf of the Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education (MACIE), the Montana Office of Public Instruction, and the Montana OPI Indian Education Unit, we affirm our unwavering support for the rights of Native students across the United States to wear their tribal regalia at public ceremonies, including graduations. Wearing regalia is a deeply significant expression of cultural identity, spiritual tradition, and personal achievement for Indigenous students and their families. These garments are not “decorations.” Instead, they are often handmade, passed down through generations, and serve as powerful symbols of personal achievement and cultural pride. The ability to wear regalia in spaces of academic recognition honors the sovereignty and dignity of Native nations and acknowledges the resilience and perseverance of Native youth within educational systems that have not always embraced them.

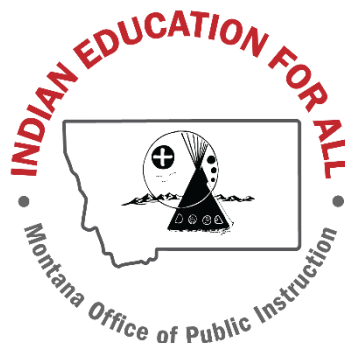
The passage of the [Montana Code Annotated § 2-1-315](#) stands as a powerful example of how state-level legislation can protect and uplift Indigenous cultural expression in public institutions. We encourage other districts, states, and educational leaders to follow this model by adopting inclusive dress code policies that recognize and respect tribal sovereignty and student identity. Denying Native students the right to wear regalia is not only culturally insensitive but harmful and erases visibility at moments of pride and success. We urge schools and lawmakers across the country to stand in solidarity with Native communities and ensure that every Indigenous student has the right to fully express their heritage at milestone events that celebrate their academic journey.

Respectfully,

The Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education

The Montana Office of Public Instruction

The OPI Indian Education Unit



❖ ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE – (Item 29)

Renee Rasmussen

ITEM 29

ACTION ON THE PROPOSED NOTICE OF
PUBLIC HEARING AND TIMELINE
PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING IN ARM
TITLE 10, CHAPTER 54, EARLY LITERACY
TARGETED INTERVENTIONS AND TITLE
10, CHAPTER 63, EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION STANDARDS, AND
AUTHORIZE FILING OF THE NOTICE WITH
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
PUBLICATION IN THE MONTANA
ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER

McCall Flynn



MONTANA
ADMINISTRATIVE
REGISTER



BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

MAR NOTICE NO. 2025-479.1

Summary

Amendment of ARM 10.54.901 through 10.54.903 pertaining to the Early Literacy Targeted Interventions Standards and ARM 10.63.101 through 10.63.107, 10.63.109, and 10.63.115 pertaining to the Early Childhood Education Standards.

Hearing Date and Time

Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

Virtual Hearing Information

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/81268592378>

Comments

Comments may be submitted using the contact information below. Comments must be received by Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

Accommodations

The agency will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in this rulemaking process or need an alternative accessible format of this notice. Requests must be made by Tuesday, December 23, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

Contact

McCall Flynn
(406) 444-6576
bpe@mt.gov

General Reasonable Necessity Statement

REASON: In 2023, Representative Brad Barker (HD 55) sponsored HB 352 to provide targeted interventions to support 3rd grade reading proficiency. The bill established duties of the Board of Public Education to identify an evaluation methodology to determine whether the child is above, at, or below a developmental trajectory leading to reading proficiency upon completion of 3rd grade. The Board of Public Education was also required to choose a home-based early literacy program and design a framework for jumpstart programs for early literacy targeted interventions in schools.

Building upon this foundation, in 2025, Representative Melissa Romano (HD 80) sponsored HB 338 to provide targeted interventions to support 3rd grade numeracy proficiency. The bill established duties of the Board of Public Education to identify an evaluation methodology to determine whether the child is above, at, or below a developmental trajectory leading to numeracy proficiency upon completion of 3rd grade. It also allowed for enrollment and program screening year-round.

The Board of Public Education presents these rules to align to the requirements in statute and maintain consistency throughout other necessary rules. ARM 10.54.9 should be renamed as “Early Targeted Interventions”.

Rulemaking Actions

AMEND

The rules proposed to be amended are as follows, stricken matter interlined, new matter underlined:

10.54.901 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY FOR EARLY LITERACY TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

- (1) The local board of trustees shall adopt and ensure use of an evaluation methodology to identify, enroll, and admit children to early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions. The evaluation methodology used must be overseen by and include application of professional judgment of qualified employees. A child may not be evaluated for the purposes of these interventions unless requested by the child's

parent or guardian. The district must maintain evidence of the request. The evaluation methodology ~~may be administered in April, May, or June, and must~~ assess at least one of the following literacy skills:

- (a) For four-year-olds:
 - (i) oral language;
 - (ii) phonological awareness;
 - (iii) alphabet knowledge.
- (b) Prior to kindergarten:
 - (i) oral language;
 - (ii) phonological awareness;
 - (iii) alphabet knowledge.
- (c) Prior to first grade:
 - (i) phoneme awareness;
 - (ii) listening comprehension;
 - (iii) developmental spelling;
 - (iv) vocabulary (expressive or receptive);
 - (v) word reading (nonsense or real);
 - (vi) reading composite.
- (d) Prior to second grade:
 - (i) listening comprehension;
 - (ii) developmental spelling;
 - (iii) vocabulary (expressive or receptive);
 - (iv) word reading (nonsense or real);
 - (v) connected text reading fluency;
 - (vi) connected text accuracy;
 - (vii) reading composite.
- (e) Prior to third grade:
 - (i) developmental spelling;
 - (ii) vocabulary (expressive or receptive);

- (iii) word reading (nonsense or real);
 - (iv) connected text reading fluency;
 - (v) connected text accuracy;
 - (vi) reading comprehension;
 - (vii) reading composite.
- (2) The list of approved evaluation methodology screening tools must be reviewed in odd years through a process of review complying with the provisions of Title 2, chapter 3, MCA, to ensure continuous adherence to developmentally appropriate and research-based screening tool requirements. Any changes to the list must be published and made publicly available by the Board of Public Education no later than 30 days after adoption of any changes. The removal of an evaluation methodology screening tool shall not be effective until July 1 following such removal.
- (3) A local board of trustees adopting and using one of the approved evaluation methodology screening tools shall be construed to have complied with this rule.
- (a) Use of one of the approved evaluation methodology screening tools shall not, however, be required, provided that the district's adopted evaluation methodology screening tool conforms to the requirements of (1).
- (4) For the purposes of this rule, "evaluation methodology" means an age-appropriate research-based methodology, instrument, or assessment selected by the Board of Public Education to determine, based on a child's age or grade level, whether the child is above, at, or below a developmental trajectory leading to reading or math proficiency on completion of third grade.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.54.902 JUMPSTART PROGRAM FRAMEWORK FOR EARLY ~~LITERACY~~-TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

- (1) The local board of trustees may offer a jumpstart program to support early ~~literacy~~ targeted interventions based on evaluation methodology identified in ARM 10.54.901 as aligned to the Montana Early Childhood Education Standards and the Montana Content Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy and Mathematics.

- (2) The jumpstart program must be overseen by and include application of professional judgment of qualified employees and must be designed in a manner to increase the likelihood of a child being evaluated at the end of the ensuing school year to be at or above a trajectory leading to reading or math proficiency at the end of third grade.
- (3) For the purposes of this rule, "jumpstart program" means a program that is at least four weeks in duration and provides at least 120 instructional hours and takes place during the time between the end of one school calendar year and the start of the next school calendar year, as determined by the trustees, preceding a child's entry into kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-1803, MCA

**10.54.903 EARLY NUMERACY INTEGRATION FOR 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR EVALUATION
METHODOLOGY FOR EARLY NUMERACY TARGETED INTERVENTIONS**

- (1) ~~A local school district that administered the evaluation methodology for early literacy targeted interventions in accordance with ARM 10.54.901 in preparation for the 2025-2026 school year may admit qualified students in the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds.~~ The local board of trustees shall adopt and ensure use of an evaluation methodology to identify, enroll, and admit children to early targeted interventions. The evaluation methodology used must be overseen by and include application of professional judgment of qualified employees. A child may not be evaluated for the purposes of these interventions unless requested by the child's parent or guardian. The district must maintain evidence of the request. The evaluation methodology must assess at least one of the following numeracy skills:
 - (a) For four-year olds:
 - (i) number naming;
 - (ii) one-to-one correspondence;
 - (iii) oral counting;
 - (iv) quantity comparison.
 - (b) Prior to kindergarten:
 - (i) number naming;
 - (ii) one-to-one correspondence;

- (iii) oral counting;
 - (iv) quantity comparison;
 - (v) cardinality.
- (c) Prior to first grade:
 - (i) oral counting;
 - (ii) quantity comparison;
 - (iii) cardinality;
 - (iv) subitizing;
 - (v) numeral identification;
 - (vi) math composite.
- (d) Prior to second grade:
 - (i) subitizing;
 - (ii) number order;
 - (iii) strategic counting;
 - (iv) numeral identification;
 - (v) number comparison;
 - (vi) addition and subtraction;
 - (vii) math composite.
- (e) Prior to third grade:
 - (i) numeral identification;
 - (ii) number comparison;
 - (iii) addition and subtraction;
 - (iv) problems in context;
 - (v) math composite.
- (2) The early targeted interventions may include both English Language Arts and Literacy and Mathematics and Numeracy Content Standards as described in ARM 10.63.110(2). The list of approved evaluation methodology screening tools must be reviewed in odd years through a process of review complying with the provisions of Title 2, chapter 3, MCA, to ensure continuous adherence to developmentally appropriate and research-based screening tool requirements. Any changes to the list must be published and made publicly available by the Board of Public Education

no later than 30 days after adoption of any changes. The removal of an evaluation methodology screening tool shall not be effective until July 1 following such removal.

- (3) A local board of trustees adopting and using one of the approved evaluation methodology screening tools shall be construed to have complied with this rule.
 - (a) Use of one of the approved evaluation methodology screening tools shall not, however, be required, provided that the district's adopted evaluation methodology screening tool conforms to the requirements of (1).
- (4) For the purposes of this rule, "evaluation methodology" means an age-appropriate research-based methodology, instrument, or assessment selected by the Board of Public Education to determine, based on a child's age or grade level, whether the child is above, at, or below a developmental trajectory leading to reading or math proficiency on completion of third grade.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.101 APPLICATION AND PROCEDURES

- (1) The early childhood education standards are focused on developmentally appropriate supports and strategies to enhance learning outcomes for a child between the ages of 3 and 5 for preschool programs and between the ages of 4 and 5 for early literacy-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten. Use of these standards for a public preschool program is subject to the funding limits of 20-7-117(2) and 20-9-311(7)(a), MCA. Use of these standards for early literacy-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten is subject to the provisions of Title 20, chapter 7, part 18, MCA.
- (2) The trustees of a school district, pursuant to Title 20, chapter 6, MCA, may establish a public early childhood education program to meet the unique developmental needs for children between the ages of 3 and 5 for preschool programs and between the ages of 4 and 5 for early literacy-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten. When early childhood education programs are established they must be an integral part of the public school and must be governed according to the following accreditation standards for the early childhood

education standards of early learning content and accreditation in coordination with the standards outlined for schools within ARM Title 10, chapter 55, excluding 10.55.601, 10.55.602, 10.55.603, 10.55.704, 10.55.705, 10.55.709, 10.55.710, 10.55.712, 10.55.715, and ARM Title 10, chapter 55, subchapters 10 through 21. For the purposes of the accreditation process detailed in ARM 10.55.606, early childhood education programs will be assessed on the program's assurance standards only.

- (3) Early childhood education programs shall meet this chapter's curriculum, instruction, and program delivery standards, supporting children's development of the knowledge and skills outlined in the content standards in ARM 10.63.110, which describe the expectations for what young children should know, understand, and be able to do across the four core developmental domains of learning upon entrance to kindergarten.
- (4) Montana's early childhood education standards shall be reviewed and revised on a recurring schedule with input from representatives of accredited schools.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.102 DEFINITIONS

- (1) For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms apply:
 - (a) "Accreditation" means certification by the Board of Public Education that a school meets the adopted standards of the Board of Public Education for a specified school year.
 - (b) "Assessment" means the gathering, organizing, and evaluation of information about student learning in order to monitor and measure student learning, the effectiveness of the instructional program, and to inform local policies and decisions.
 - (c) "Developmental domain" means the broad, interrelated categories or dimensions of early childhood development reflective of early childhood education children's learning and growth. The four core domains include social and emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.
 - (d) "Early childhood curriculum" means an articulated educational plan for young children, which is grounded in research-based understandings of child

development and developmentally appropriate practices. Curriculum guides the teaching process from identifying what to teach, including early content standards in each of the four developmental domains and how to teach, including developing learning experiences based upon individual and group outcomes, and assessing what was learned then using this data to inform future planning and teaching. For early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten, the curriculum must embrace the four developmental domains while focusing on the subjects of literacy and numeracy with a goal of establishing a trajectory leading to reading or math proficiency at the end of third grade.

- (e) "Learning center" means a self-contained area of the classroom featuring a wide variety of hands-on materials that children can choose and use independently which are organized around a curriculum area (science, math, art, music, dramatic play, literacy) or a specific kind of play material (blocks, sensory, manipulative).
- (f) "Paraprofessional" means an adult with the qualifications detailed in ARM 10.63.105 who works under the direct supervision of a teacher and who may work independently in a teacher's absence, but for the majority of the time works directly with the teacher in the same space with the same group of students.
- (g) "Teacher" means a licensed individual as defined in ARM 10.55.602, with primary responsibility for a group or class of early childhood education students.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.103 LEADERSHIP

- (1) The early childhood education program leadership shall effectively implement policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program management so all students, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.

- (2) Professional development for early childhood education educators as required by ARM 10.55.714 should be tailored to early childhood development and learning.
- (3) Professional development completed by elementary (K-8) educators providing early literacy-targeted interventions should be tailored to such interventions. The elementary (K-8) educators providing early literacy-targeted interventions, the employing districts, and accredited educator preparation providers, pursuant to ARM 10.58.102, are encouraged to collaborate to develop professional development options that support attainment of qualifications leading to an early childhood education (P-3) endorsement.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.104 TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR PUBLIC PRESCHOOL AND EARLY LITERACY-TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

- (1) Teachers shall be assigned at the levels for which they are licensed and endorsed in accordance with state statutes and Board of Public Education rules.
- (2) Teachers with an early childhood (P-3) endorsement shall be considered to be appropriately licensed, endorsed, and assigned to teach in an accredited preschool program.
- (3) While teachers with an early childhood (P-3) endorsement are encouraged, teachers with either an early childhood (P-3) endorsement or an elementary (K-8) endorsement shall be considered to be appropriately licensed, endorsed, and assigned to teach early literacy-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten. Teachers with an elementary (K-8) endorsement who are teaching early literacy-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten are encouraged to pursue professional development as outlined in 10.63.103 to ensure delivery of high-quality early literacy-targeted interventions.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.105 EARLY CHILDHOOD PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.106 EARLY CHILDHOOD PARAPROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.107 CLASS SIZE

- (1) ~~There must be one appropriately licensed and endorsed teacher for ten-10 students, with an early childhood paraprofessional for any additional students over ten, for up to no more than 18 total students in a classroom with two adults. The school district must assign qualified human resources that comply with all fingerprint and background check requirements when exceeding maximum class sizes at a rate of 1 1/2 hours per day, per student overload. An overload of five students per classroom is considered excessive.~~
- (2) With classrooms exceeding 10 students, an early childhood paraprofessional is required at a rate of one hour per day, per student overload up to 16 students. At 16-18 students, a minimum of one appropriately licensed and endorsed teacher and one early childhood paraprofessional are required.
- (3) School districts are encouraged to exceed these standards for classrooms exceeding 10 students with additional staffing beyond the requirements in (2).

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.109 ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY

- (1) A child must have reached three years of age before the districts' official start date of the preschool program or have been enrolled by special permission by the board of trustees.
- (2) A child who is 4 years of age or older on or before September 10th of the year in which the child is to participate in early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten and who has not completed kindergarten and who is determined through the evaluation methodology process outlined in ARM 10.54.901 or ARM 10.54.903 to be below a trajectory leading to reading or math proficiency at the end of third grade is eligible for enrollment in early ~~literacy~~-targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

10.63.115 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- (1) The early childhood education program staff shall establish and maintain collaborative relationships with each child's family and community to foster student's development in all settings.
- (2) To ensure collaborative relationships between the community, school, and families, early childhood education programs shall have protocols which:
 - (a) establish intentional practices designed to foster strong reciprocal relationships with families;
 - (b) ensure that families are an integral part of the decision-making team through communication and family conferences which promote dialogue and partnership regarding their student's educational goals and services;

- (c) collaborate with families to help students participate successfully in early childhood settings;
- (d) ensure that all families, regardless of family structure, socioeconomic, racial, religious, and cultural diversity, gender, abilities, or preferred languages are included in their child's educational experience;
- (e) assist families in locating, contacting, and using community resources that support the student's well-being, development, and goals;
- (f) promote awareness and understanding of the unique legal and political structures of Montana Tribal Nations in order to best meet the needs of Indian students and families;
- (g) collaborate with community-based programs to ensure that parents and families have the resources they need to be involved in their student's education, growth, and development; and
- (h) provide access to health screenings and referrals for all students in the program.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

Small Business Impact

The Board of Public Education adopts rules that primarily impact teachers, administrators, and school district operations. The Board works in cooperation with public schools across the state to implement the rules that are adopted. Given that the Board does not work directly with small businesses, the small business impact analysis performed as required under 2-4-111, MCA, indicates that no small businesses are likely to be directly impacted by the proposed rule changes.

Bill Sponsor Notification

The bill sponsor contact requirements apply and have been fulfilled. The primary bill sponsor was contacted by email on May 7, 2025.

Interested Persons

The Board maintains a list of interested persons who wish to receive notices of rulemaking actions proposed by this agency. Persons who wish to have their name added to the list shall make a written request that includes the name, email, and mailing address of the person to receive notices and specifies for which program the person wishes to receive notices. Notices will be sent by email unless a mailing preference is noted in the request. Such written request may be mailed or delivered to the contact person above or may be made by completing a request form at any rules hearing held by the Board.

Rule Reviewer

McCall Flynn

Approval

Dr. Tim Tharp
Board Chair

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

January 15-16, 2026

Helena, MT

Exiting Board Member – Last Meeting & Recognition

MACIE Update

Review Community Choice School Annual Reports

Action on ABCTe Program Approval

Action on Authorizing Public Charter Schools

Transportation Report

Assessment Update

Federal Update

Accreditation Report

Teacher Licensure Report

Qualify Advanced Opportunity Grant Applications

Action on Transformational Learning Phase II Grants

Quality Educator Loan Assistance Program Report

Content Standards Revision Update

Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Annual HiSet Report

**MSDB Superintendent Performance Evaluation & Contract
Extension Discussion**

Friday, November 21, 2025

❖ **BOARD OF EDUCATION LUNCH**

12:00 PM University of Montana, University Center

❖ **BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**

**1:00 PM University of Montana, University Center,
Ballroom**

AGENDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

Greg Gianforte
GOVERNOR



Kristen Juras
LT. GOVERNOR

State Board of Education Meeting

November 21, 2025 · 1:00 p.m.
University of Montana Missoula, University Center Ballroom

- 1:00 Call to order and attendance
Lieutenant Governor Kristen Juras
- 1:05 Approval of 2024 State Board of Education Minutes- **ACTION**
- 1:07 Motion to adopt the agenda- **ACTION**
- 1:10 Welcome and Opening Remarks
Lieutenant Governor Kristen Juras
- 1:15 Remarks on behalf of the Office of Public Instruction
Superintendent Susie Hedalen
- 1:20 Remarks on behalf of the Board of Regents
Chair Todd Buchanan
- 1:25 Remarks on behalf of the Board of Public Education
Chair Tim Tharp
- 1:30 Board of Regents and Board of Public Education Joint Resolution Supporting FAFSA Completion and Direct Admissions - **ACTION**
- 1:40 Public Comment
Limited to 3 minutes. Comments may also be emailed to Rachel.green@mt.gov

Adjourn after public comment

Minutes
Montana Board of Education
November 22, 2024 | MSU-Bozeman

Friday, November 22, 2024

Members present: Governor Gianforte, Board of Regents Chair Buchanan, Regent Dombrowski, Regent Lozar, Regent Bough, Regent Folkvord, Regent Mortenson, Board of Public Education Chair Tharp, Board Member Hedalen, Board Member Slinger, Board Member Hamman, Board Member Quinlan, Board Member Schmidt, Superintendent Arntzen, Commissioner Christian.

Members excused: Regent Southworth and Board Member Rasmussen

Opening by Governor Gianforte | 00:02:55

Governor Gianforte called the meeting to order and took attendance.

Approval of 2023 Board of Education Minutes

Governor Gianforte asked for any corrections or additions to the minutes. There were none so the minutes stood approved.

Adoption of the 2024 Board of Education agenda

Chair Buchanan moved and Regent Folkvord seconded adoption of the agenda. It was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

Remarks by Governor Gianforte | 00:04:48

Governor Gianforte began his remarks by acknowledging that the Board's primary responsibility today is to approve the unified education budget proposal for the 2025 legislative session. He thanked the Board staff and Budget Office staff for their work in compiling the unified budget. The Governor then spoke about the success that has been achieved in education in the current biennium before highlighting his educational goals for the upcoming legislative session. These include increasing teacher pay, expanding personalized learning, expanding career and technical education, reducing youth time on cell phones and social media, and investments in school infrastructure. He also spoke of post-secondary funding to support infrastructure and modernization on campuses as well as a continued focus on supporting college CTE programs.

Remarks by Chair Buchanan | 00:13:08

Chair Buchanan began by acknowledging Governor Gianforte's election to another term and Susie Hedalen's election as the new Superintendent of Public Instruction and that he looks forward to continuing to work with them. He then noted the university system's budget includes investments in infrastructure and present law adjustments to combat inflation. He stated that the MUS is well-prepared to respond to changing economic conditions and diverse student learning needs. He then spoke about accountability to taxpayers and the legislature, shared policy goals, accessibility, affordability, diverse pathways for students, public-private partnerships, K-12 partnerships, innovation and career oriented short-term training.

Remarks by Superintendent Arntzen and Chair Tharp | 00:17:45

Superintendent Arntzen began by acknowledging successful new education initiatives through partnerships with the Board and Regents. She handed out a memo outlining her legislative priorities. She then turned it over to Chair Tharp. Chair Tharp began by explaining what the Board of Public Education does and that they have been extremely busy with a focus on innovation and flexibility for schools. Examples he cited include charter schools, changes to math standards, changes to teacher licensure regulations, and accreditation reform. He also complimented the budget focus on infrastructure.

- Recognition of Montana Teacher of the Year | 00:25:25

Superintendent Arntzen recognized the 2025 Montana Teacher of the Year Dawn Sievers and Ms. Sievers spoke briefly about her experience.

- Presentation and Action on the 2025 Unified Education Budget | 00:28:20

Budget Office analysts Nancy Hall and Ben Ternes walked the Board through the 2025 unified education budget. The only Board discussion was by Superintendent Arntzen requesting further dialogue on proposed legislation impacting adult education and Board Member Quinlan requesting clarification on how school infrastructure funding will flow. Board Member Hedalen and Superintendent Arntzen offered their support of the budget. There was one public comment that was meant for general public comment, not on the unified budget. Board Member Slinger moved and Regent Bough seconded a motion to approve the budget. It passed unanimously on a voice vote.

- Joint Resolution Supporting Math Attainment and Proficiency | 00:41:15

Chair Tharp gave background on the Board of Public Education and Regents separately passing resolutions supporting a third year of math in high school and greater emphasis on math proficiency resulting in a joint resolution for the Board's consideration. Chair Buchanan and Board Member Hedalen expressed their support and flexible pathways for math attainment. No public comment. Dr. Tharp moved and Regent Dombrowski seconded a motion to support the resolution which passed unanimously on a voice vote.

- General Public Comment | 00:46:00

In-person public comment was received from:

Gary Lusin, Bozeman Trustee who spoke of his recent meeting to provide stakeholder feedback to the constitutional education officers. The meeting was meant to be a consensus building forum to discuss the worst and best case scenarios if we make change or fail to make change in education.

Trevor Nichols, Bozeman High School science teacher who attended the meeting organized by Gary Lusin who spoke about the future of education as a current teacher

Laslo Baumgartner, Gallatin high school student who attended the meeting organized by Gary Lusin and gave his perspective on the future of education as a current student

Sandy Wilson, retired teacher, trustee, and Bozeman parent who attended the meeting organized by Gary Lusin

Carrie Fischer, Belgrade schools business officer who attended the meeting organized by Gary Lusin

Tim Tharp spoke as a private citizen to thank the Governor for his efforts to reduce cell phone use in schools and more broadly talked about mental health challenges in youth related to social media and constant online access

Bridger Beach, MSUN student who spoke about college faculty pay being too low

Tricia Seifert, Dean of MSU College of Education and Health, spoke about her participation in Gary Lusin's meeting and the role of teacher prep programs

Sarah Hays, school administrator from Bozeman who spoke about her participation in Gary Lusin's meeting

Written public comment was received by Laura Crist of Great Falls. She is a parent and recent graduate who spoke about her participation in Gary Lusin's meeting. A joint written comment was submitted by Pam Birkeland (Madison Co. Supt.), John Nielson (Gallatin Co. Supt.), and Rhonda Long (Fergus Co. Supt.) speaking to their participation in the meeting organized by Gary Lusin.

- Meeting Adjourned | 01:05:55



Montana Board of Education

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Montana Constitution and the Montana Board of Education affirm that access to educational opportunity is essential to the well-being of Montana's students, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, Montana's high schools play a vital role in helping students explore and prepare for the full range of postsecondary and career options available in Montana, including pathways through colleges, universities, apprenticeships, and workforce training programs; and

WHEREAS, completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a key step in accessing financial aid, including grants, scholarships, work-study programs, the upcoming Workforce Pell, and federal student loans, that can make higher education and workforce training more affordable for Montana families; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, Montana's FAFSA completion rate was 44 percent, compared to the national average of 54 percent, leaving an estimated \$12 million in financial aid unclaimed by Montana students; and

WHEREAS, the Montana University System's proposed Direct Admissions initiative will help simplify the college exploration process by proactively informing high school students of the in-state postsecondary options for which they already qualify, without requiring any application fee or obligation to enroll; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montana Board of Education encourages all Montana public high schools to:

1. Improve students' and families' understanding of, and completion of, the FAFSA by incorporating FAFSA awareness into financial literacy curriculum, hosting FAFSA completion events; and
2. Participate in the Montana University System's Direct Admissions initiative to help students and families better understand their postsecondary opportunities in Montana; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana Board of Education encourages the Montana Office of Public Instruction and the Montana Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education to assist interested school districts in these efforts through technical assistance, data-sharing protocols, and outreach to families and communities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Montana Board of Education shall charge a stakeholder working group, including representatives of the Montana University System, the Montana Office of Public Instruction, school administrators, counselors, families, and community partners, to develop coordinated approaches that strengthen access to postsecondary opportunities and support local implementation efforts.

RESOLVED BY THE MONTANA BOARD OF EDUCATION ON NOVEMBER 21, 2025.

Todd Buchanan
Chairperson
Board of Regents

Dr. Tim Tharp
Chairperson
Board of Public Education