BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA

November 18-20, 2026
Alumni Legacy Lounge, Strand Union Building
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT

AGENDA

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
MEETING AGENDA

November 18-20, 2026
Alumni Legacy Lounge, Strand Union Building
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT

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

12:00 PM **Great Room, MSU Alumni Foundation Building**
1501 S. 11th Ave., Bozeman, MT

Wednesday, November 18, 2026
Alumni Legacy Lounge, Strand Union Building

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Item 2 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT** – *15 Minutes, page #35*
McCall Flynn

Item 3 **COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT** – *15 Minutes, page #36*
Dr. Angela McLean

Item 4 **GOVERNOR'S OFFICE REPORT** – *15 Minutes, page #38*
Manish Bhatt

Item 5 **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT** – *15 Minutes, page #39*
Lydia Comstock

RECESS

Thursday, November 19, 2026
Alumni Legacy Lounge, Strand Union Building
8:30AM

CALL TO ORDER

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

- **REPORTS – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item)**

Item 6 **STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT** – *1 Hour, page #41*
State Superintendent Susie Hedalen

- **Assessment Update**
- **MAST Task Force Update**
- **Federal Update**
- **Content Standards Update**
- **Accreditation Update**
- **Intensive Assistance Update**
- **Future Ready Update**

- **MSDB COMMITTEE – Lisa Schmidt (Item 7)**

Item 7 **MSDB REPORT** – *30 Minutes, page #64*
Superintendent Paul Furthmyre

ACTION ITEMS:

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

- **MACIE LIAISON – Julia Maxwell (Item 8)**

Item 8 **MACIE REPORT** – *15 Minutes, page #210*
Jordann Lankford Forster

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Gisele Forrest, MIEA Representative**
- **Bonnie Rosette, SAM Representative**

❖ **CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE – Lisa Schmidt (Item 9)**

Item 9 **INFORMATION ON PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL FALL ENROLLMENT DATA** – *15 Minutes, page #213*
Christy Mock-Stutz

❖ **BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TOURS**

10:45AM **VISIT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER CLASSROOMS**
Hyalite Elementary, Bozeman, MT

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Item 18 **REVIEW OF THE ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 55, SPECIAL EDUCATION TECHNICIAN STANDARDS** – *15 Minutes, page #344*
Dr. Julie Murgel and Patrick Cates

Item 19 **STUDENT ATTENDANCE OVERVIEW** – *15 Minutes, page #367*
Dr. Julie Murgel and Krystal Smith

Item 20 **ACTION ON THE REQUEST TO REVISE ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 55, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND RELATED RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS** – *30 Minutes, page #376*
Dr. Hannah Nieskens

- **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 21)**

Item 21 **ACTION ON AND RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 64, TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS** – *5 Minutes, page #379*
Dr. Tim Tharp

RECESS

Friday, November 20, 2026
Alumni Legacy Lounge, Strand Union Building

- **BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION VISITS**

8:30AM **COFFEE WITH SUPERINTENDENT BERTRAM**
Bozeman High School, Bozeman, MT

8:45AM **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER PIR**
Bozeman High School, Bozeman, MT

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Item 25 **ACTION ON BILLINGS MULTILINGUAL ACADEMY AMENDMENT REQUEST** – *10 Minutes, page #394*
McCall Flynn

- **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – Dr. Ron Slinger (Item 26)**

Item 26 **ACTION ON THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHERN EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION** – *5 Minutes, page #412*
Dr. Ron Slinger

- **ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE – Renee Rasmussen (Item 27)**

Item 27 **INFORMATION ON THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT DATA OVERVIEW** – *30 Minutes, page #414*
Dr. Ryan Schrenk

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS January 14-15, 2027 – Helena, MT
Exiting Board Member – Last Meeting & Recognition
MACIE Update
Review Community Choice School Annual Reports
Action on Authorizing Public Charter Schools
Transportation Report
Assessment Update
Federal Update
Annual HiSet Report
Accreditation Report
Educator Licensure Report
Qualify Advanced Opportunity Grant Applications
Quality Educator Loan Assistance Program Report
Content Standards Revision Update
Action on MSDB Superintendent Contract Extension
MSDB Superintendent Performance Evaluation & Contract Extension Discussion

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.

ADJOURN

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MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Strand Union Building

Friday, November 20, 2026
Ballrooms, SUB, Montana State University

- **BOARD OF EDUCATION LUNCH**

11:30AM **Strand Union Building, Montana State University**

- **BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**

12:30PM **Strand Union Building, Montana State University** – *page #417*
AGENDA

Wednesday, November 18, 2026

12:00PM

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

Great Room, MSU Alumni Foundation Building
1501 South 11th AVE
Bozeman, MT

**********CONVENE AT 2:30PM**********

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 24-25, 2026 Meeting Minutes, October 22, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes, and October 30, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes

B. Financials

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

MEETING MINUTES
September 24-25, 2026
Dawson County High School, Auditorium
900 N Merrill Ave
Glendive, MT

Thursday, September 24, 2026
8:30AM

CALL TO ORDER – 00:00:18
Chair Tim Tharp called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. Chair Tharp led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance, 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; Dr. Hannah Nieskens; Ms. Lisa Schmidt; Ms. Julia Maxwell; Ms. Renee Rasmussen; Ms. Amanda Mills; Ms. Lydia Comstock, Student Representative. Ex Officio members: Ms. Tyler Capece, Office of Public Instruction (OPI); Dr. Angela McLean, Office of Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE). Staff: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist; Ms. Julie Balsam, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Lea Ann Munkres, Program Officer; Mr. Rich Batterman, Board Legal Counsel. Guests: Dr. Jason Neiffer, Montana Digital Academy; Superintendent Stephen Schreibeis, Glendive Public Schools (GPS); Ms. Crystal Andrews, OPI; Mr. Matthew Bell, OPI; Mr. Patrick Cates, OPI; Mr. Nick Staffileno, Dawson Community College; Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI; Mr. Brenton Craggs, OPI; Ms. Christy Mock-Stutz, OPI; Ms. Kim Popham, Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE); Ms. Kristi Steinberg, University of Montana (UM); Dr. Kjersten Skatvold, OPI; Ms. Marie Judisch, OPI; Ms. Elsie Workman, OPI; Dr. Ryan Shrenk, OPI; Dr. Brooke Gondara, OPI; Superintendent Victoria Falls Down, Lame Deer Public Schools; Superintendent Pax Haslem, Stanford Public Schools; Superintendent Pete Joseph, Corvallis Public Schools; Mr. Jeremy MacDonald; Stone Child College; Ms. Susan Sutherland, Stone Child College.

PUBLIC COMMENT – 00:02:21
Public comment from Ms. Kim Popham inviting Board members to the fall MFPE Educator Conference in Great Falls in October.

CONSENT AGENDA – 00:05:00

Board member Rasmussen moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Board Member Schmidt.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ADOPT AGENDA – 00:05:35

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Board member Nieskens.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**********Items are listed in the order in which they are presented**********

- **REPORTS – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 1-5)**

Item 1 **CHAIRPERSON REPORT** – 00:06:01
Dr. Tim Tharp
Chair Tim Tharp summarized meetings and activities he has attended on behalf of the Board since the July meeting. Superintendent Stephen Schreibeis welcomed the Board and presented an overview of recent district

updates and initiatives. Chair Tharp concluded his report with a review of the Committee Assignments. Ms. McCall Flynn reviewed the revisions to the Bylaws.

Board member Rasmussen moved to approve the Board of Public Education Bylaws. Motion seconded by Board member Mills.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Board member Maxwell moved to approve the 2027 Board of Public Education Meeting Calendar and Agenda. Motion seconded by Board member Nieskens.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 2 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT** – 00:29:26
McCall Flynn

Ms. McCall Flynn thanked Superintendent Schreibeis for hosting the Board in Glendive, then shared a Board meeting map highlighting meeting locations, member residences, and completed public charter school site visits across Montana. Ms. Flynn outlined the upcoming schedule for the Special Education Technician rulemaking process and summarized her recent visits to various Montana Association of School Superintendents (MASS) meetings statewide.

Item 3 **STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT** – 00:37:37
Tyler Capece

Ms. Tyler Capece updated the Board on recent OPI staff travel to Washington, DC and Superintendent Hedalen's meetings since July. The report highlighted new requirements for Indian Education for All, the open application window for Purple Star Schools, a new OPI Student Art Contest, and new grants to support MAST and the School Nutrition Program. Additionally, Ms. Capece shared federal guidance on school screen time for children and detailed technical support OPI is offering schools before answering Board members' questions.

Assessment Update: Dr. Ryan Schrenk presented the 2026-2027 assessment schedule to the Board. Following this, Ms. Marie Judisch demonstrated a new district-level dashboard for MAST reporting and results. Dr. Schrenk, Ms. Judisch, and Dr. Julie Murgel answered Board members' questions.

Intensive Assistance Update: Dr. Murgel and Dr. Brooke Gondara provided an update on the Intensive Assistance process focusing on school outreach meetings held by Dr. Gondara.

Content Standards Update: Ms. Marie Judisch shared information on new Teacher Learning HUB Courses, highlighted a new Professional Learning Series for teachers, and this year's Content Standards Road Show. Ms. Judisch concluded by presenting the Montana Math Skills Map to the Board.

Accreditation Update: Ms. Crystal Andrews presented the Accreditation Update for K-12 Schools and Educator Preparation Programs and answered Board members' questions.

Annual Special Education Report: Mr. Patrick Cates and Dr. Kjersten Skatvold presented the Annual Special Education Report and answered Board members' questions.

Item 5 **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT** - 02:15:35
Lydia Comstock

Ms. Lydia Comstock updated the Board on her statewide advocacy for student representation on local school boards. Ms. Comstock highlighted recent presentations, and shared information from a meeting with the Commissioner of Higher Education regarding the student perspective on higher education and noted the upcoming State Student Council conference in November.

- **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 6-7)**

Item 6 **INFORMATION AND REVIEW OF MONTANA SCHOOL BUS STANDARDS RULEMAKING** – 02:20:08
Dr. Tim Tharp

Ms. McCall Flynn updated the Board on the continuing work to review the School Bus Standards and presented a high level review of the revisions.

Item 7 **ANNUAL MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY REPORT** – 02:33:13
Dr. Jason Neiffer

Dr. Jason Neiffer shared the Annual Montana Digital Academy Report and answered Board members' questions.

❖ **BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TOURS & ACTIVITIES**

Board members toured Glendive Public Schools classes and artwork throughout Glendive.

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Board member Nieskens noted that she is also confident that an additional year of planning will allow the district to work on testing participation.

Superintendent Joseph thanked the Board for their support.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

- **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – Dr. Ron Slinger (Items 10-16)**

Item 10 **ACTION TO ACCEPT AND PLACE ON FILE THE CLASS 7 LICENSURE CRITERIA FOR THE LITTLE SHELL TRIBE** – 06:39:47
Matthew Bell

Mr. Matthew Bell presented the Memorandum of Understanding between OPI and the Little Shell Tribe. Little Shell Tribal Chairman Gerald Gray spoke in support of the memorandum.

Vice Chair Slinger moved to accept and place on file the Class 7 Licensure criteria for the Little Shell Tribe. Motion seconded by Board member Maxwell.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 11 **UPDATE ON THE DAWSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARAPATHWAYS PARTNERSHIP** 06:43:05
Patrick Cates; Nick Staffileno, Dawson Community College; Val Hafele, Glendive Special Education Director

Mr. Patrick Cates and Mr. Nick Staffileno presented an update on the Parapathways Partnership. Mr. Staffileno shared enrollment figures, graduation statistics for the inaugural class, and student success stories. Mr. Cates outlined a newly received OPI grant to support the program and explained the three-tiered structure that assists students transition from associate to bachelor's degrees. Mr. Cates shared a letter of support from Ms. Val Hafele. Vice Chair Slinger and Board members complimented the program and shared their own positive experiences with the program.

Item 12 **ACTION ON THE DRAFT COUNCIL FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING** – 07:01:30
Dr. Julie Murgel, Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews and Dr. Julie Murgel reviewed the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

Dr. Ron Slinger moved to approve the draft Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation Memorandum of Understanding from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2030. Motion seconded by Board member Nieskens.

Ms. McCall Flynn pointed out a new section contained in the Memorandum.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 13 **ACTION ON THE STATE EXIT REPORT AND REGULAR ACCREDITATION STATUS FOR STONE CHILD COLLEGE'S EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION** – 07:05:42
Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews reviewed the accreditation report from the July 2026 Board meeting. Mr. Jeremy MacDonald thanked the Board for reviewing the Exit Report and detailed the steps the college has taken to address the stipulations. Ms. Susan Sutherland confirmed that a formal Plan of Action has been submitted and that corrective work has begun to resolve the remaining stipulations.

Dr. Ron Slinger moved to approve the State Exit Report and Regular Accreditation Status for Stone Child College's Educator Preparation Program in the College of Education. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.

Ms. Andrews noted that Stone Child College will present their progress at the September 2027 Board meeting.

No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 14 **ACTION ON THE INITIAL APPROVAL OF NEW CURRICULAR PROGRAM FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA PHYLLIS J. WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF EDUCATION** 07:10:22
Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews reviewed the presentation made at the July 2026 Board meeting and Ms. Kristi Steinberg highlighted recent progress and noted there is strong interest in the program from prospective students.

Dr. Ron Slinger moved to approve the initial approval of new curricular program for Special Education at the University of Montana Phyllis J. Washington College of Education. Motion seconded by Board member Nieskens.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 4 **COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT** 07:13:34
Dr. Angela McLean

Dr. Angela McLean updated the Board on the Future at Work Grantees, upcoming K-8 Licensed Middle School Math Professional Development opportunities, and her recent attendance at MASS Meetings.

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Schools Commission; Mr. Rich Batterman, Board Legal Counsel. Guests: Superintendent Stephen Schreibeis, GPS; Superintendent Paul Furthmyre, Montana School for the Deaf and Blind; Ms. Jordann Lankford Forster, Chair, Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education; Ms. Elsie Workman, OPI; Ms. Kristi Steinberg, UM; Mr. Paolo DeMaria, National Association of State Boards of Education.

- **CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE – Lisa Schmidt (Items 17-18)**

Item 17 **UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CHOICE SCHOOLS COMMISSION** – 00:04:54
Cathy Kincheloe

Ms. Cathy Kincheloe shared updates from the September Community Choice Schools Commission meeting. Ms. Kincheloe reviewed the Commission's Designed to Launch Program Overview and the newly established Policy for Pre-Opening Requirements and Conditions for opening Choice Schools. Ms. Kincheloe answered Board members' questions.

Item 18 **ACTION ON MOUNT ASCENSION LEARNING ACADEMY AMENDMENT** – 00:18:42
McCall Flynn

Ms. McCall Flynn reviewed a change request from Mount Ascension Learning Academy to transition to a high school only model. Ms. Flynn answered Board members' questions.

Board member Schmidt moved to approve the Mount Ascension Learning Academy Amendment Request. Motion seconded by Board member Maxwell.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

- **MSDB COMMITTEE – Lisa Schmidt (Item 19)**

Item 19 **MSDB REPORT** – 00:25:43
Superintendent Paul Furthmyre

Superintendent Furthmyre announced the signing of a Sign Language Resolution between the MSDB and Great Falls Public Schools, which has returned an instructor to Great Falls Public Schools. Superintendent Furthmyre discussed a new Memorandum of Understanding regarding Residential Advisors, noted that students are traveling home each weekend, and highlighted recent professional development opportunities for MSDB staff. Superintendent Furthmyre answered Board members' questions before a review of the action items.

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

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

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

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

- **MACIE LIAISON – Julia Maxwell (Item 20)**

Item 20 **MACIE REPORT** – 00:55:41
Jordann Lankford Forster

Ms. Jordann Lankford Forster reviewed the September 2, 2026, MACIE meeting before presenting the action items. Ms. Forster noted that MACIE will not meet in October and its next scheduled meeting will be November 4, 2026.

Board member Maxwell moved to approve the renewal of MACIE as an advisory council to the Board of Public Education and the Office of Public Instruction per 2-15-122, MCA. Motion seconded by Vice Chair Slinger.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Board member Maxwell moved to approve the Montana School Boards Association Indian School Board Caucus Member as presented. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 21)

Item 21 **ACTION ON THE PROPOSED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND TIMELINE PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 64, TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS AND AUTHORIZE FILING OF THE NOTICE WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MONTANA ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER** – **McCall Flynn** 01:00:26

Ms. McCall Flynn reviewed the proposal notice for the Transportation Standards, outlined the rulemaking process and timeline, and answered Board members' questions.

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the proposed Notice of Public Hearing and timeline pertaining to rulemaking in ARM Title 10, Chapter 64, Transportation Standards and authorize filing of the notice with the Secretary of State for publication in the Montana Administrative Register. Motion seconded by Board member Nieskens.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

- **STRATEGIC PLANNING – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 22)**

Item 22 **WORK SESSION ON BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN**
McCall Flynn

The Board held a Strategic Planning work session with Mr. Paolo DeMaria from the National Association of State Boards of Education.

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Ms. McCall Flynn called for nominations for Chair of the Board of Public Education.

Vice Chair Slinger nominated Dr. Tim Tharp for Chair.

Vice Chair Slinger and Board member Rasmussen thanked Dr. Tharp for his work.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Chair Tim Tharp noted that he and Dr. Slinger represent the Eastern part of Montana and thanked the Board for their support.

Board member Rasmussen stated her support for both Chair and Vice Chair and expressed appreciation for the perspective they bring to the Board.

Board member Nieskens stated her support for the motion.

Board member Maxwell commended the Chair and Vice Chair for their leadership and their support of each Board member and their perspectives and opinions.

No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. McCall Flynn announced that the first round of applications for the Executive Director position closes today though the position will remain open until filled. Ms. Flynn noted that final interviews will be conducted during a full, public Board meeting.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS November 18-20, 2026, Bozeman, MT
Board of Education Meeting
Joint Montana Council of Deans of Education Meeting
MACIE Update
Assessment Update
Federal Update
Annual Data Collection Report
Action on Variance to Standards Requests & Renewals
Accreditation Report
Annual Professional Development Unit Providers Report
Content Standards Revision Update

PUBLIC COMMENT
No public comment was made.

ADJOURN
The meeting adjourned at 11:29AM

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BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES

October 22, 2026
Zoom

Thursday, October 22, 2026
12:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER – 00:00:01
Chair Tim Tharp called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM. Chair Tharp led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance, 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; Dr. Hannah Nieskens; Ms. Lisa Schmidt; Ms. Renee Rasmussen; Ms. Amanda Mills; Ms. Lydia Comstock, Student Representative. Ex Officio members: State Superintendent Susie Hedalen, Office of Public Instruction; Dr. Angela McLean, Office of Commissioner of Higher Education; Mr. Manish Bhatt, Governor's Office. Staff: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist; Ms. Julie Balsam, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Lea Ann Munkres, Program Officer; Mr. Rich Batterman, Board Legal Counsel; Ms. Cathy Kincheloe, Director of Planning, Community Choice Schools Commission. Guests: Superintendent Paul Furthmyre, Montana School for the Deaf and Blind; Ms. Kim Popham, Montana Federation of Public Employees; Mr. Jeff Plum, Department of Administration State Human Resources; Ms. Nancy Hall, Office of Budget and Program Planning; Dr. Rob Watson, School Administrators of Montana; Mr. Dylan Klapmeier, OPI; Ms. Tyler Capece, OPI; Ms. Kate Johnson, Legislative Fiscal Division; Ms. Trish Schreiber, Chair, Community Choice Schools Commission.

ADOPT AGENDA – 00:02:05

Board member Rasmussen moved to approve the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Vice Chair Slinger.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

- **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp**

12:35PM **INTERVIEW #1 – ROBERT RADAKOVICH** – 00:03:01
Dr. Tim Tharp
The interview of Mr. Robert Radakovich began at 12:35 PM. Board members conducted the interview in a roundtable format using a list of pre-approved questions. Mr. Radakovich discussed his background as an educator and shared examples from his current role as the Education Director at Shodair Children's Hospital. Following a brief question-and-answer period between Mr. Radakovich and the Board, the interview concluded at 1:14 PM.

1:30PM **INTERVIEW #2 – JEREMY SHIELDS** – 00:46:58
Dr. Tim Tharp
The interview of Mr. Jeremy Shields began at 1:30 PM. Board members conducted the interview in a roundtable format using a list of pre-approved questions. Mr. Shields discussed his educational background, his career in public education, and his experience in his current position. Following a brief question-and-answer period between Mr. Shields and the Board, the interview concluded at 2:02 PM.

2:30PM **INTERVIEW #3 – TRAVIS ANDERSON** – 01:21:01
Dr. Tim Tharp
The interview of Mr. Travis Anderson began at 2:30 PM. Board members conducted the interview in a roundtable format using a list of pre-approved questions. Mr. Anderson discussed his background as a teacher and administrator in public schools, his experience in higher education, and his current role as the Education Director

for the Department of Corrections. Following a brief question-and-answer period between Mr. Anderson and the Board, the interview concluded at 3:18 PM.

The Board convened an Executive Session at 3:20PM, pursuant to § 2-3-203, MCA.

BOARD DISCUSSION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CANDIDATES – 02:05:53
Dr. Tim Tharp

The Board concluded the Executive Session at 4:10PM.

ACTION ON SELECTION OF BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – 02:08:15
Dr. Tim Tharp

Chair Tharp noted that reference checks would be completed on the candidates and a special meeting would be convened to make a final selection.

Dr. Ron Slinger moved to convene a meeting on Friday, October 30, 2026 to act on a finalist for the Executive Director position. Motion seconded by Dr. Hannah Nieskens.

The special meeting was scheduled for 2:00PM

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT
No public comment was received

Chair Tharp thanked Mr. Rich Batterman and Mr. Jeff Plum for their advice during the selection process.

ADJOURN
Meeting adjourned at 4:13PM.

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BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES

October 30, 2026
Zoom

Friday, October 30, 2026
2:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER – 00:00:07
Chair Tim Tharp called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. Chair Tharp led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance, 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; Dr. Hannah Nieskens; Ms. Renee Rasmussen; Ms. Amanda Mills. Ex Officio members: Ms. Tyler Capece, Office of Public Instruction (OPI); Dr. Angela McLean, Office of Commissioner of Higher Education; Mr. Manish Bhatt, Governor's Office. Staff: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist; Ms. Julie Balsam, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Lea Ann Munkres, Program Officer; Mr. Rich Batterman, Board Legal Counsel. Guests: Mr. Craig Barringer, OPI; Mr. Jeff Plum, Department of Administration State Human Resources.

ADOPT AGENDA – 00:02:18

Board member Rasmussen moved to approve the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Vice Chair Slinger.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

- **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 1)**

Item 1 **ACTION ON THE SELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION** – 00:02:43
Dr. Tim Tharp

Chair Tharp reviewed the interviews from the previous week and noted that reference checks had been completed.

Vice Chair Slinger moved to offer the position of Executive Director to Mr. Robert Radakovich. Motion seconded by Board member Mills.

Vice Chair Slinger noted that Mr. Radakovich's experience with accreditation and assessment was a key factor in making the motion.

Board member Mills expressed appreciation for Mr. Radakovich's passion for education and innovative thinking.

Board member Rasmussen commended Mr. Radakovich's comments regarding his ability to adapt quickly and effectively in his current role.

Board member Nieskens encouraged Mr. Radakovich to focus on building strong relationships between the Executive Director and the Board, the Office of Public Instruction, the Commissioner's Office, the Governor's Office, and the Legislature. Board member Nieskens expressed concern regarding his lack of legislative experience and noted it is an area that will need immediate growth.

Chair Tharp noted that legislative experience would be a challenge for any candidate.

Board member Rasmussen stated that the Board will need to assist the new Executive Director in building relationships with the Legislature.

No further discussion. Motion passed 4-1 with Board member Nieskens voting in opposition.

Chair Tharp stated he would contact Mr. Radakovich.

Chair Tharp noted the next Board meeting will be in Bozeman beginning on Wednesday, November 18, 2026, at noon, and thanked the Board for their work in the hiring process.

PUBLIC COMMENT
No public comment.

ADJOURN
The meeting adjourned at 2:11 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, email at: kmstockton@mt.gov or phone at 406-444-0302.

CONSENT AGENDA

FINANCIALS

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

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2027 through 05 (Nov)/2027

OBPP Program	Subclass	Fund	Org	Acct Lvl 1	Acct Lvl 2	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	A Accrual Amt	ORG Bud Balance
01 K-12 EDUCATION						586,093.00	218,677.25	0.00	367,415.75
	235H1 ADMINISTRATION					565,840.00	214,163.43	0.00	351,676.57
		01100 General Fund				565,840.00	214,163.43	0.00	351,676.57
			1 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION			565,840.00	214,163.43	0.00	351,676.57
				61000 Personal Services		380,919.00	120,965.52	0.00	259,953.48
					61000 Personal Services	380,919.00	0.00	0.00	380,919.00
					61100 Salaries	0.00	85,801.66	0.00	(85,801.66)
					61300 Other Compensation	0.00	2,000.00	0.00	(2,000.00)
					61400 Employee Benefits	0.00	33,163.86	0.00	(33,163.86)
				62000 Operating Expenses		184,921.00	93,197.91	0.00	91,723.09
					62000 Operating Expenses	184,921.00	0.00	0.00	184,921.00
					62100 Other Services	0.00	21,566.23	0.00	(21,566.23)
					62200 Supplies & Materials	0.00	2,201.06	0.00	(2,201.06)
					62300 Communications	0.00	3,515.14	0.00	(3,515.14)
					62400 Travel	0.00	20,786.14	0.00	(20,786.14)
					62500 Rent	0.00	9,375.00	0.00	(9,375.00)
					62800 Other Expenses	0.00	35,754.34	0.00	(35,754.34)
	235H4 STATE ITSD/RST					20,253.00	4,513.82	0.00	15,739.18
		01100 General Fund				20,253.00	4,513.82	0.00	15,739.18
			1 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION			20,253.00	4,513.82	0.00	15,739.18
				62000 Operating Expenses		20,253.00	4,513.82	0.00	15,739.18
					62000 Operating Expenses	20,253.00	0.00	0.00	20,253.00
					62100 Other Services	0.00	1,088.68	0.00	(1,088.68)
					62200 Supplies & Materials	0.00	2,620.32	0.00	(2,620.32)
					62300 Communications	0.00	804.82	0.00	(804.82)
Grand Total						586,093.00	218,677.25	0.00	367,415.75

❖ REPORTS – (Items 1-6)

Dr. Tim Tharp

ITEM 1

CHAIRPERSON REPORT

- **Montana Cognia Advisory Committee Appointment**
- **NASBE Report**

Action Item:

- **Strategic Plan**

Dr. Tim Tharp

State of Montana

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Board of Public Education

BIG SKY, BRIGHT FUTURES
Montana Board of Public Education
Strategic Plan

Introduction
The education of Montanans has always been an important purpose of state government. Article X, Section 1, of the Montana Constitution clearly states, “It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of educational opportunity is guaranteed to each person of the state.” Section 9, paragraph (3)(a) establishes the Board of Public Education “to exercise general supervision over the public school system and such other public educational institutions as may be assigned by law.”

These constitutional provisions establish a shared responsibility and complementary roles among the institutions entrusted with fulfilling these guarantees. The Board exercises general supervision over Montana’s public school system, while Article X, Section 8 expressly vests the supervision and control of each school district in its locally elected board of trustees. The Board recognizes and respects these distinct but interconnected responsibilities as essential to a strong public education system.

The role of the Board is further amplified in Montana law in 20-2-121, MCA, and includes responsibilities for teacher certification, school accreditation, assessment, school facilities, and more.

The nature of the charge to the Board is such that the Board can also serve as a voice in raising issues or opportunities that may need the state’s attention in the interest of education excellence and reaching the fullest potential for every student. It is in pursuit of these various authorities and responsibilities that this strategic plan is created.

Vision
The Montana Board of Public Education envisions a Montana K–12 education system that ensures opportunity and excellence for every student and empowers learners to reach their full potential.

Mission
The mission of the Montana Board of Public Education is to fulfill its constitutional responsibility to lead Montana’s public education system. This is done through advocacy and developing policies that support innovation and flexibility, maintain public trust, and ensure that every student is prepared for their chosen future.

Values
In order to frame the strategic direction of education in Montana, this plan identifies key values that underpin the work of the Board:

- **Student focused:** Our actions and direction should always be centered on what is best for students, empowering them to reach their fullest potential.
- **Flexibility (facilitate not dictate):** We respect that there are many ways to deliver education. The role of the state should be to create conditions for success and not dictate specific actions or practices.
- **Educator Leader Importance:** We recognize that the people who work in education, including teachers, principals, and support staff, are the most important contributors to student success. We will support educators to be highly effective and exercise leadership in delivering what is best for students.
- **Data discipline:** Our decisions and actions will be informed by accurate and meaningful data that helps identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.
- **Partnerships:** We will always be stronger if we work together. This plan forms a foundation for many stakeholders to join together to continue to catalyze the improvement of our education system.
- **Systemic approach:** We believe that education should not be a collection of one-off initiatives and practices, and we are committed to a systemic approach to supporting students as they acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for success. A systemic approach requires coherence, alignment, and integration.
- **Public trust and transparency:** We recognize that the work of education is a public good. Consequently, our work will be done in the open, and in a way that gains the trust of the people.
- **Minimize added administrative burden:** We acknowledge that the primary work of the education system, including educators, schools, and districts, is educating students. We will be attentive to and limit the requirements it imposes on these entities that may detract from the primary focus of their work.

Overview

This plan is organized into the following four focus areas:

- Focus Area 1: Student Success
- Focus Area 2: Qualified Educators
- Focus Area 3: Accountability, Data, and School Improvement
- Focus Area 4: System Alignment and Partnership for Future Success

Each of the focus areas articulates various elements that form the foundation for activity and action by the Board and the state. Additionally, each focus area identifies key measures of success that can help gauge the extent to which progress is being made.

We recognize that circumstances change, and even the best plans need to be adjusted from time to time. Regardless, we believe this document represents the areas most in need of attention as we continue our pursuit of educational opportunity and success for all.

Focus Area 1: Student Success

The primary focus for Montana's education system should be to support all students in reaching their fullest potential and equipping them with the knowledge necessary to succeed in future education, work, and life.

- ***Student Learning Outcomes*:** Promote integrated and systemic student-centered approaches and actions that prioritize academic growth, progress, and access to learning opportunities, including Indian Education for All.
- ***Student Well-Being*:** Support conditions to promote well-being for all students so they feel safe, connected, valued, engaged, and ready to succeed.
- ***Pathways*:** Strengthen pathways that prepare students for success in postsecondary education, careers, and civic life.

Measuring Success: The primary measures of success are those included in the state's reporting system and include the following:
- Proficiency levels for math, English Language Arts, and science Assessments; all students and disaggregated
- Graduation and dropout rates
- College enrollment and remedial math/writing rates
- Indian Education for All reporting and funding
- Survey data around student safety, connection, and well-being, including relevant items in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey
- Workforce readiness and dual enrollment data

Focus Area 2: Qualified Educators

The most important contributors to excellence in the Montana education system are the state's educators. We must support them and also insist on high-quality practices that achieve desired results.
- ***Recruitment and Preparation:*** Establish consistent and coherent policies that support recruitment, preparation, and retention of high-quality educators and education leaders while reducing unnecessary barriers. Ensure educator preparation and licensure systems maintain high standards while supporting workforce needs.
- ***Educator Licensure:*** Increase the number of initial licenses granted each year and reduce the number of individuals working under an Emergency Authorization, particularly in grades K–8.
- ***Educator Retention:*** Identify and promote strategies to improve teacher and leader retention.
- ***Leadership Quality:*** Ensure systemic and deliberate efforts to support school leaders.

Measuring Success: The primary measures of success are those reflected in the state's current Annual Educator Licensure Report and include the following:
- Initial license and emergency authorization of employment data, as well as additional reporting of educator licensure activity
- Endorsement areas offered by the ten Montana Professional Educator Preparation Providers and one alternative program
- Data on enrollment, number of completers, and completers by subject area

Focus Area 3: Accountability, Data, and School Improvement

Montana's education system has not yet reached its ultimate goal of helping all students reach their fullest potential. Therefore, our commitment must be to continually improve

toward that end. Improvement is driven by data, reporting results, and support for practices designed to improve the system's performance.

- ***Accountability***: Advance policies and accountability system designs that support school improvement.
- ***Data***: Encourage the collection of relevant and meaningful data at the school, district, and state levels and support professional development for effective data use to drive improvement.
- ***School Improvement***: Prioritize and support proven school improvement practices and continuous improvement processes to increase the number and percentage of schools granted "regular" accreditation status and decrease the number and percentage of schools that are in "deficiency" and "advice" status.

Measuring Success: The primary measures of success are those included in the state accreditation report and include the following:

- Corrective action plan review and reporting
- Intensive assistance review and reporting

Focus Area 4: System Alignment and Partnership for Future Success

In the spirit of partnership, we must work across sectors and in collaboration to reach the goals we have established. Partners not only include state agencies and education-focused organizations, but parents, communities, tribes, and the entirety of the state.

- ***Cross-Sector Coordination:*** Strengthen coordination and alignment across Montana's public education system. Ensure work across P–12, higher education, and the workforce promote coherent pathways and shared priorities that support student success and future readiness. Engage with businesses and industries to gain specific understanding of career pathways and critical needs.
- ***Family and Community Partnerships:*** Support strategies that promote effective parent, family, and community engagement and partnerships in support of student success and learning.

Measuring Success:

- Maintain MACIE as an integral partner and meet in-person annually
- Convene advisory councils to inform the Board's work
- Submit annual reports to the Legislature to inform them of the work of the Board and to gather feedback
- Gather FAFSA completion data

Conclusion

The Montana Board of Public Education commits to strengthening public education through its goals and focus areas and translating the strategic plan into action. We look forward to continued collaboration with the Office of Public Instruction, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, Governor's Office, Legislature, and other education stakeholders to advance the elements highlighted in this plan. This plan will guide our continued stakeholder engagement, advocacy, partnerships, and policy direction toward advancing a Montana K–12 education system that ensures opportunity and excellence for every student and empowers learners to reach their full potential.

BIG SKY BRIGHT FUTURES

MONTANA BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION — STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR CHARGE

Article X of the Montana Constitution establishes the Board to exercise general supervision over the public school system, alongside locally elected boards of trustees. This strategic plan sets the Board's direction for advocacy and policy to ensure opportunity and excellence for every Montana student.

MISSION To fulfill its constitutional responsibility to lead Montana's public education system through advocacy and policies that support innovation and flexibility, maintain public trust, and ensure every student is prepared for their chosen future.

VISION A Montana K–12 education system that ensures opportunity and excellence for every student and empowers learners to reach their full potential.

1 Student Success

Support all students in reaching their fullest potential.

- Academic growth and access to learning, including Indian Education for All
- Well-being: students feel safe, connected, and ready to succeed
- Stronger pathways to postsecondary education, careers, and civic life

HOW WE MEASURE

Proficiency, graduation and dropout rates, college enrollment, dual enrollment and workforce readiness

2 Qualified Educators

Educators are the most important contributors to excellence.

- Consistent policies to recruit, prepare, and retain educators, with fewer unnecessary barriers
- More initial licenses, fewer Emergency Authorizations, especially in K–8
- Better retention strategies and stronger support for school leaders

HOW WE MEASURE

Annual Educator Licensure Report: initial licenses, emergency authorizations, program completers

3 Accountability, Data & School Improvement

Continual improvement, driven by data.

- Accountability systems designed to support school improvement
- Meaningful data at school, district, and state levels, with training to use it well
- More schools with "regular" accreditation; fewer in "deficiency" or "advice" status

HOW WE MEASURE

State accreditation report: corrective action plan and intensive assistance reviews

4 System Alignment & Partnership

Working across sectors toward shared goals.

- Coherent P–12, higher education, and workforce pathways, informed by business and industry
- Parent, family, community, and tribal engagement in support of student learning

HOW WE MEASURE

MACIE partnership, advisory councils, annual reports to the Legislature, FAFSA completion data

OUR VALUES

Student focused | Flexibility: facilitate, not dictate | Educator leadership | Data discipline | Partnerships | Systemic approach | Public trust and transparency | Minimal administrative burden

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Montana Board of Public Education | PO Box 200601, Helena, MT 59620-0601

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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 2026

- MASS Meeting Attendance
- Future at Work/Future Ready
- Workforce Initiatives
    - Non-Credit SIS
    - Workforce Pell Pilot with NWCCU and NAC AI Hub
    - Marketing Campaign

ITEM 4

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE REPORT

Manish Bhatt

ITEM 5

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Lydia Comstock

Thursday November 19, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

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

ITEM 6

STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

- **Assessment Update**
- **MAST Task Force Update**
- **Federal Update**
- **Content Standards Update**
- **Accreditation Update**
- **Intensive Assistance Update**
- **Future Ready Update**

State Superintendent Susie Hedalen

Susie Hedalen, Superintendent
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501

Phone: 406.444.3680
opi.mt.gov

November 2026 BPE Assessment Update

2026–27 Assessment Windows

	Anticipated SY2026-27 Test Windows	Required Subjects	Student Group	Grades Tested	Window Period
Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST)	Window 1 October 19-December 11	Math and ELA	General	Grades 3–8	3 windows: 8 weeks each
	Window 2 January 11-March 5				
	Window 3 March 29-May 21				
Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate ELA and Math	Fall Window September 14- December 18	Math and ELA	SwSCDs	Grades 3-8, 11	2 windows: 15 weeks each
	Spring Window February 1- May 21				
WIDA ACCESS Alt ACCESS	January 4-March 5	English Language Proficiency	English Learners	Grades K–12	9 weeks
Montana Science Assessment (MSA)	March 1-May 21	Science	General	Grades 5, 8	8 weeks
Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate Science	February 1- May 21	Science	SwSCDs	Grades 5, 8, 11	15 weeks
ACT with Writing	Window 1 March 23-April 2	Math, ELA, and Science	General	Grade 11	3 windows: 2 weeks each
	Window 2 April 6-16				
	Window 3 April 20-30				
Updated by the Office of Public Instruction on May 5, 2026.				**Note**: Dates and information listed in this schedule are subject to change at any time or without notice.	

MAST Window 1 Is Open

MAST Window 1 opened October 19 and runs through December 11, and schools are testing at a strong pace.

- **Testing when ready:** Students took more than 10,000 testlets at every grade level in the first two weeks of Window 1.
- **Responding to the field:** Testlet reports have been updated to be more instructionally relevant and timely, based on educator feedback.
- **Waypoint testlet reports:** Results post in the interactive reporting tool, Waypoint, the Monday after the testing week, so teachers can act on them while the content is still being taught.

MAST Schedule and Report Cadence

Each eight-week window pairs short math and ELA testlets with reports that reach teachers within days.

	Window 1 (Oct 19–Dec 11)	**Window 2 (Jan 11–Mar 5)**	**Window 3 (Mar 29–May 21)**
Math	3–5 testlets	3–5 testlets	3–5 testlets
ELA	2 BOY testlets	2 MOY testlets + Performance Task	2 EOY testlets

Timely and actionable reporting

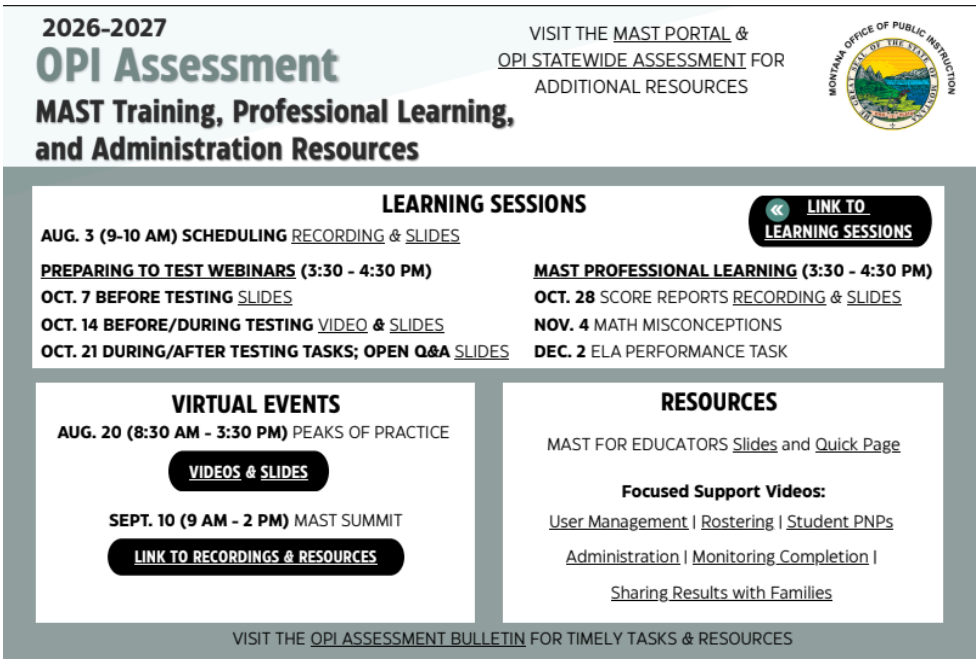
Report type	**Waypoint (online)**	**Kite**
Testlet	Monday after the test week (student, class, school, district)	Thursday after the test week (student testlet only)
ELA Performance Task	End of PT window (student, class)	End of PT window (student PT testlet only)
Progress report	End of Windows 1 and 2 (student, class, school, district)	End of Windows 1 and 2 (student progress only)
Through-year	Once, at end of year (student, class, school, district)	Once, at end of year (student through-year only)

Field Support and Professional Learning

The Assessment Unit, with support from Content Specialists, has delivered five live sessions and two virtual events so far this year, with four more sessions scheduled through December 2. Recordings and slides are posted on the MAST Portal and OPI Statewide Assessment pages.

- **MAST Teacher Leader Cohort**
  - Led by KnowledgeWorks and OPI Professional Learning Manager, Aimee Konzen
  - **21 Members** have continued with this year-long commitment out of the initial 50.
  - **Purpose**: Build instructional leadership capacity and to create a sustainable network of educators who can model, support, and lead high-quality professional learning across the state. In practice, the cohort is a way to multiply OPI's reach: members become regional experts on using MAST data in instruction
- **MAST Virtual Teacher Cohort**
  - Led by KnowledgeWorks and OPI Professional Learning Manager, Aimee Konzen
  - Initiated October 28 with room for 75 educators, only 35 applied and only 14 chose to participate in the cohort once initiated.

- **Purpose**: To strengthen the connection between standards, instruction, and assessment as one coherent cycle of teaching and learning. Over a series of connected sessions, participants will build relationships with colleagues across the state, explore mindsets that support strategic curriculum design, and apply new ideas through ongoing learning cycles. Along the way, they will examine challenges and misconceptions from MAST score reports and use that evidence to make purposeful decisions about what they teach, how they teach it, and how they respond to student learning.



Link: [MAST Training Schedule.pdf]

Mastery Growth Index (MGI) for MAST

- Spring 2027 - MGI Report Launch
- Student Ability Change + Mastery of Testlet Content
    - Combines how much the student has advanced on the summative scale since the start of the year (Proficiency Change) with the content the student has mastered on testlets this year (Content Mastery).
- Draft Sample Report Graphic:



Ongoing resources

- MAST Portal
- MAST for Educators Slides and Quick Page
- Focused support videos: User Management, Rostering, Student PNPs, Administration, Monitoring Completion, and Sharing Results with Families
- Assessment Unit YouTube channel and MontCAS webpage
- Monthly Assessment Bulletin with timely tasks and support
- MAST Memo: teacher-centered emails that connect assessment, instruction, and data use

MAST Science Expanded Pilot

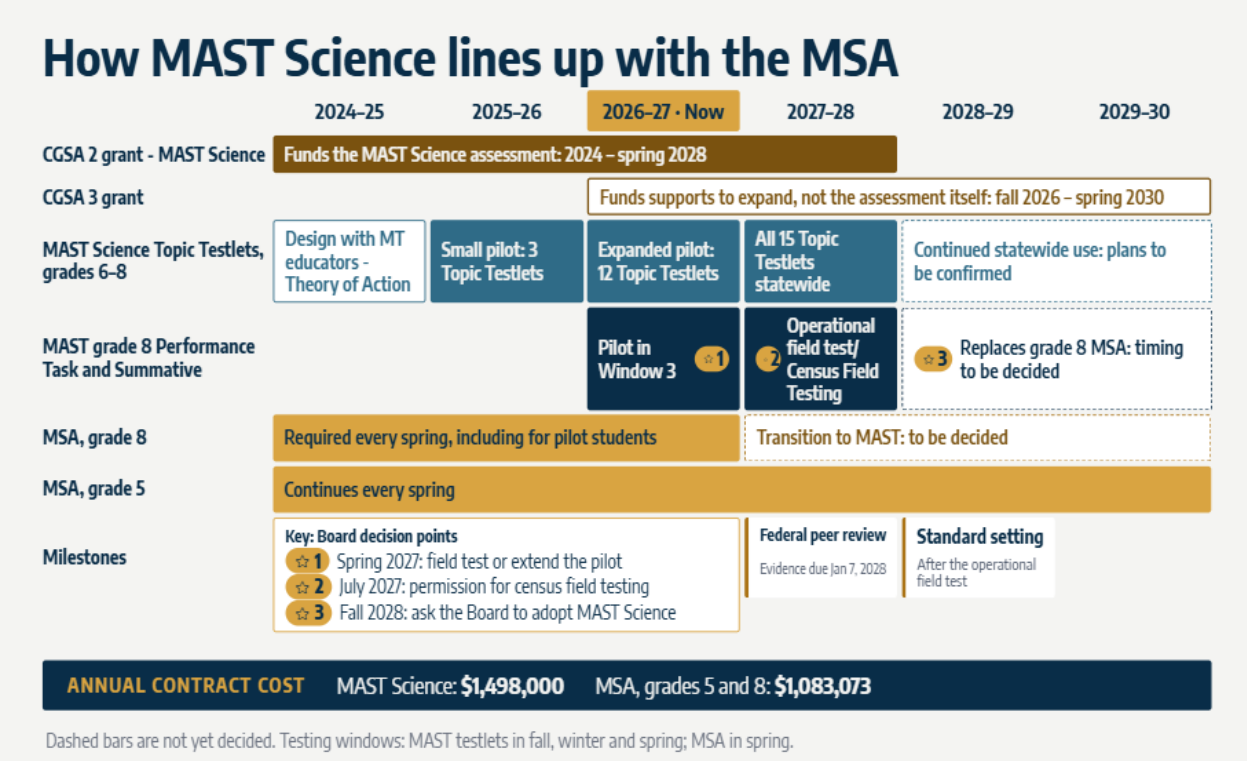
The grades 6–8 MAST Science pilot is now running statewide alongside MAST Math and ELA, with 6 topic testlets available in Window 1.

- **Full-year pilot, grades 6–8.** Schools administer *optional* science topic testlets across all three MAST windows, on the same schedule as MAST Math and ELA, so students and educators engage with the full range of 6–8 banded Montana Science Standards over the year.
- **One platform.** All topic testlets and the summative test are delivered through Kite, giving students the same experience across content areas.
- **Built for instruction.** Topic testlets give educators standards-aligned information during the year, and schools choose the order in which they teach the banded 6–8 standards.
- **Grade 8 summative pilot** will be administered in Window 3.
- **Montana Science Assessment continues.** Grade 5 and 8 students still take the current MSA in spring 2027 (March 1–May 21).
- **Educator input.** OPI introduced the pilot at a Lunch and Learn session at the Summer Institute, where educators gave feedback on its design. Montana educators review each new set of items before release. New Meridian hosted focus groups to look at drafted reports for Topic Testlets and gain feedback for what would be beneficial for these reports

Topic testlet release schedule (grades 6–8)

Window	Topic testlets available
Window 1 (Oct 19–Dec 11, open now)	6
Window 2 (Jan 11–Mar 5)	9
Window 3 (Mar 29–May 21)	12
Fall 2027–28	All 15

Implementation timeline. The pilot is year three of a four-year plan funded by the CGSA grant awarded in September 2024. The 2027–28 statewide assessment will align testlets to district scope and sequence, include a statewide field test, and hold standard setting after the summative administration.



Contact

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Susie Hedalen, Superintendent
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Helena, MT 59620-2501

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In-State Toll-free: 1.888.231.9393
opi.mt.gov

November 2026 BPE
Content Standards Update

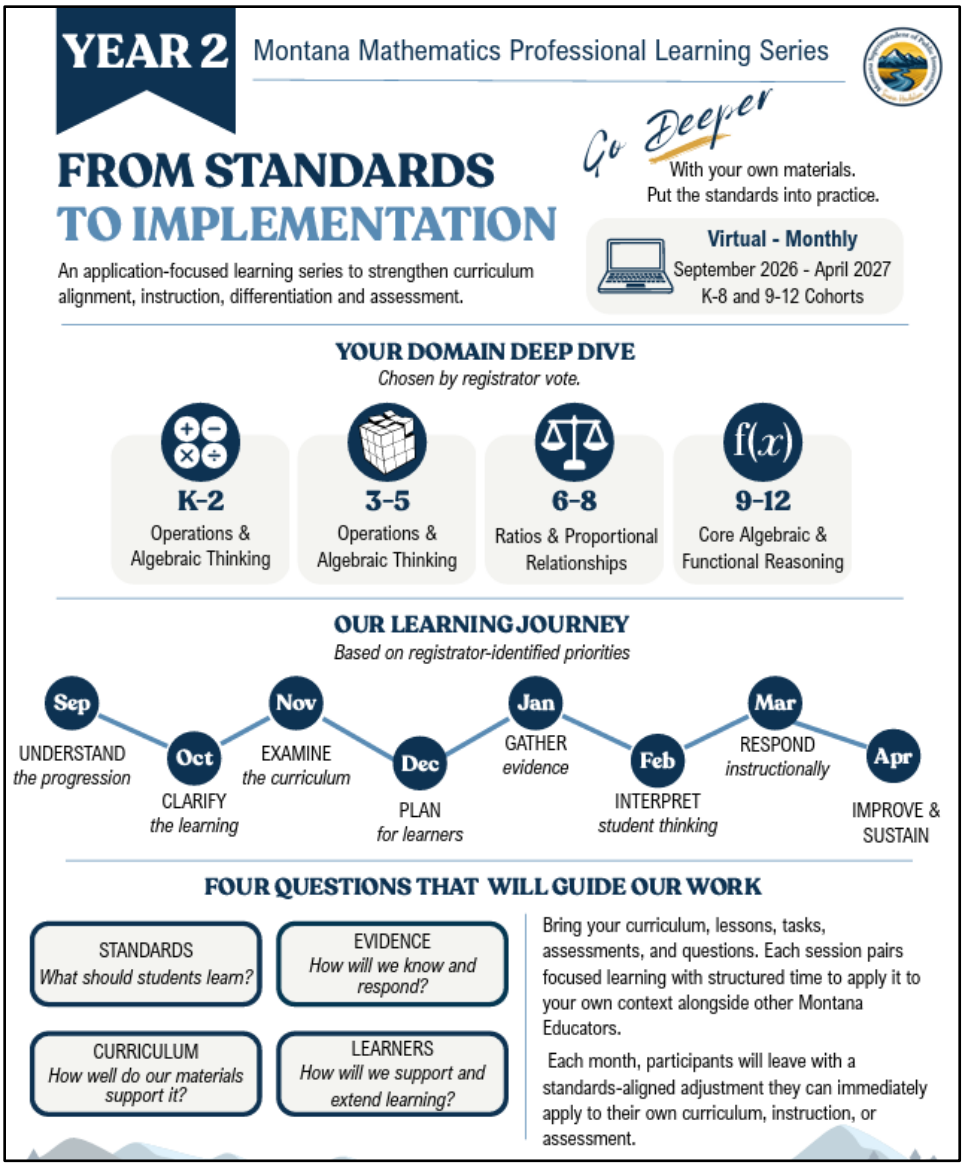
Implementation for the two newest sets of content standards:

- **Mathematics (2026)** is in its second year of implementation support. Year 1 focused on building understanding of what changed and why. Year 2 shifts to application: educators bring their own curriculum, lessons, and assessments and leave each session with an adjustment they can use right away.
- **English Language Arts & Literacy (2027)** is in its first year of educator preparation, ahead of July 1, 2027 effective date. The 2026–27 webinar series mirrors the math model that educators responded to in Year 1.

By the time standards take full effect, every Montana educator will have access to clear guidance, practical tools, and a community of colleagues working on the same shifts.

Mathematics: From Understanding to Implementation

- The math professional learning series has moved from explaining the standards to helping educators put them into practice.
- In 2025–26, nine monthly sessions walked educators through why the standards changed, how the document is organized, the Mathematical Practices, and what the shifts mean for curriculum, assessment, and differentiation. All nine sessions are recorded and remain available.
- The 2026–27 Year 2 series, *From Standards to Implementation*, is built around application. Participants bring their own materials and work in K–8 and 9–12 cohorts. Each grade band goes deep in one domain chosen by registrant vote:
    - K–2 and 3–5: Operations & Algebraic Thinking
    - 6–8: Ratios & Proportional Relationships
    - 9–12: Core Algebraic & Functional Reasoning
- Each month, participants leave with one standards-aligned change they can make immediately to their curriculum, instruction, or assessment. OPI has also launched the first two self-paced Mathematical Practices courses on the Teacher Learning Hub, with five more planned.



Math Standards Resources for Educators (available on the OPI's website)

- Montana PK-12 Mathematics Content Standards
- Montana Kindergarten Mathematics Standards (April 2026 version)
- Montana Grade 1 Mathematics Standards (April 2026 version)
- Grades 3rd-8th Grade Expanded Guidance via Math Skills Map
- Satchel - Content Standards Housing Platform
- Recommended High School Math Pathways (visual version)
- High School Math Course Recommendations (visual version
- HS Conceptual Shifts Overview
- Math Family and Community Engagement Toolkit
- Updated MAST Assessment Specifications Guide

Math Standards Resources in Development:

- 2nd Grade Expanded Guidance - *In Accessibility Review*
- HS Expanded Guidance
- A new high school concepts clarification tool outlining required, new, and elective concepts

Statewide Standards Rollout Professional Learning Modules

- OPI launched the first two Math Practices courses on the Teacher Learning Hub.
    - Mathematical Practice #1: Problem-Solve and Persevere
    - Mathematical Practice #2: Abstract and Generalize

Math Standards Implementation Professional Learning Series - 2025-2026

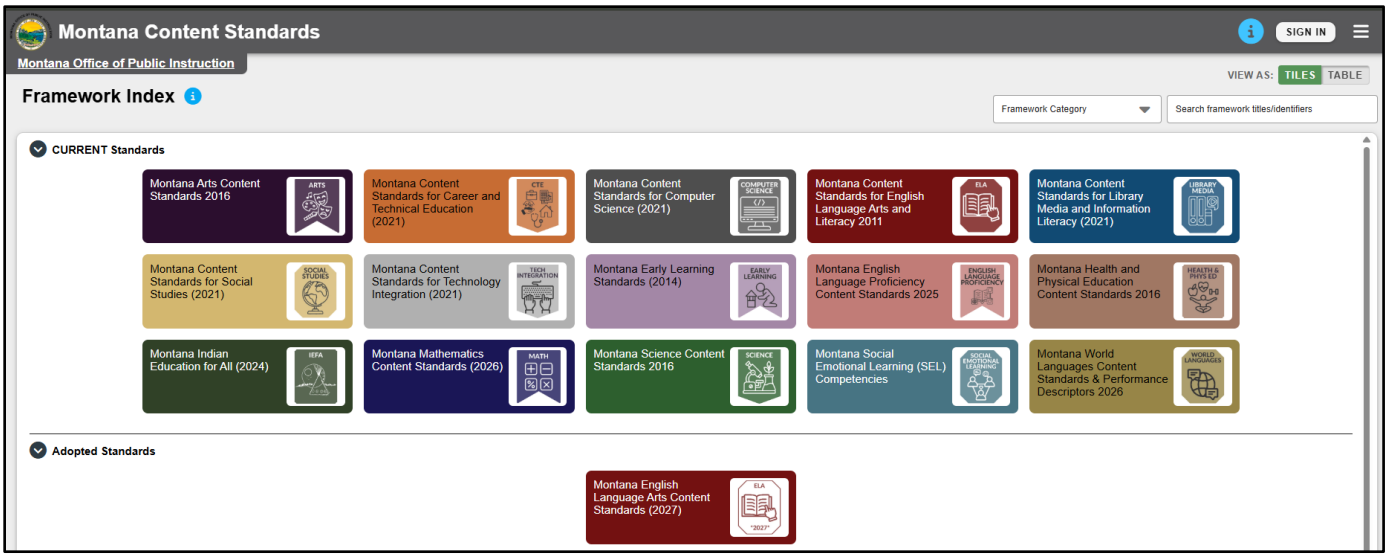
- August: *Why the Change? Understanding the New Math Standards*
- September: *Exploring the Changes and Structure: Navigating the Standards Document*
- October: *Mathematical Practices: What They Are & Why They Matter*
- November: *From Fluency to Flexibility: Understanding Mathematical Proficiency*
- December: Aligning Your Curriculum: Where Do We Stand?
- January: Assessment & Standards: What Needs to Change?
- February: Differentiation & Access: Supporting All Learners
- March: IEFA & Cultural Relevance: Making Math Meaningful for Montana Students
- April: Next Steps: Identifying District/School Needs for Implementation

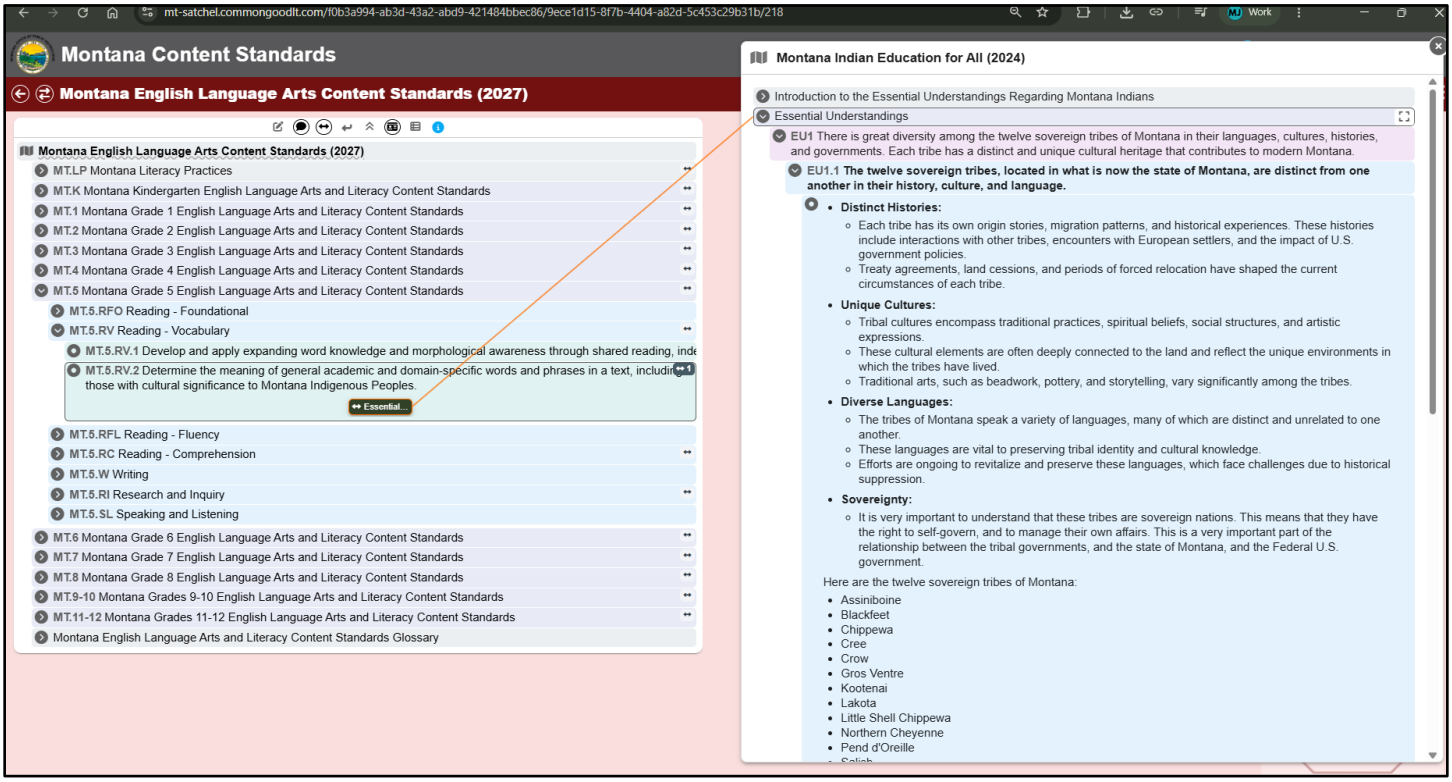
Math Standards Implementation Planned Professional Learning Events - 2026-2027

- Register Here
    - K–8 Webinars: 2nd Wednesday, 4:00 to 5:00 PM
    - 9–12 Webinars: 3rd Wednesday, 4:00 to 5:00 PM

Satchel: Connecting Standards Across Content Areas

- Teachers can see how standards in one subject connect to standards in another, directly in Satchel. OPI content specialists have built cross-curricular associations linking Math, Science, Social Studies, Indian Education for All, and ELA & Literacy.
- For example, a Grade 5 teacher viewing ELA standard 5.RV.2 (2027), which asks students to determine word meanings including words with cultural significance to Montana Indigenous Peoples, can click through to the related IEFA Essential Understanding about the distinct cultures and languages of Montana's twelve sovereign tribes.
- Instead of cross-referencing separate documents, they can find natural connections in one place and plan lessons that address multiple standards together.





Montana ELA & Literacy Content Standards Revisions

ELA & Literacy: Grounded in the Science of Reading

The 2027 ELA & Literacy standards strengthen Montana's foundation for early reading. The revisions align with the research on how students learn to read, and they reinforce the expectations in the 2025 BPE Resolution on evidence-based literacy instruction.

The 2026–27 webinar series gives this foundation focused attention. Two sessions, in October and November, are dedicated to the foundational standards, one for elementary and one for secondary educators. The secondary session recognizes that some older students still need support with foundational skills.

OPI has published a companion resource, *Montana Content Standards Revision – Alignment with the Science of Reading*, so districts can see exactly how the standards connect to evidence-based reading instruction.

Montana ELA & Literacy Content Standards Revisions

Resources for Educators

- 2027 ELA Standards on Satchel
- Montana ELA K-12 English Language Arts and Literacy Content Standards
- MT ELA Standards and Coding
- PK-12 Standards Basic Guidance
- Summary of ELA & Literacy Content Standards Revisions
- Montana Content Standards Revision – Alignment with the Science of Reading



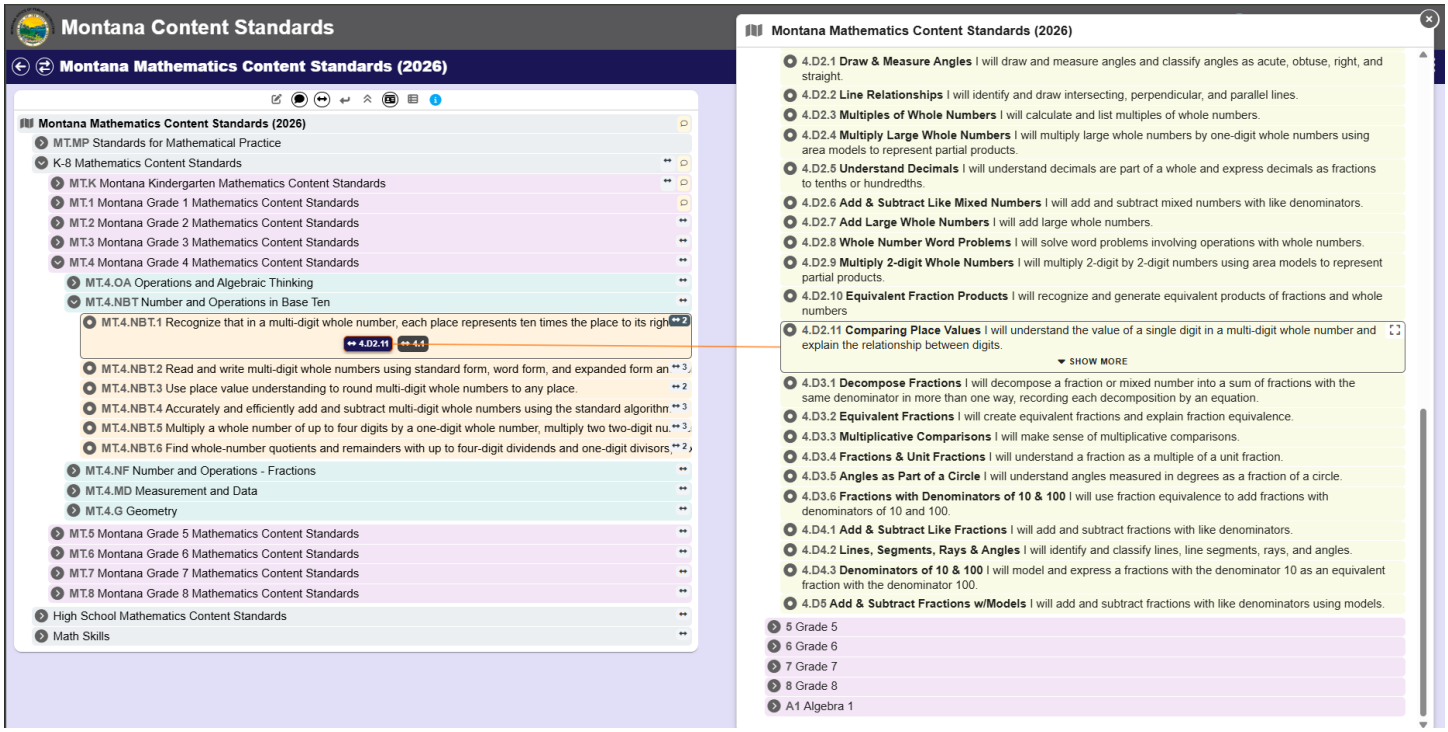
ELA Standards Implementation Professional Learning Series - 2026-2027

- Calendar and Topics
- Registration
  - August 26, 2026: Why the Change? Understanding the ELA Standards
  - September 23, 2026: Literacy Practices: What They Are and Why They Matter
  - October 21, 2026: Expanding on the Foundational Standards: Elementary
  - November 18, 2026: Expanding on the Foundational Standards: Secondary
  - December 16, 2026: Aligning Your Curriculum: Where Do You Stand?
  - January 20, 2027: Assessment and Standards: What Needs to Change?
  - February 17, 2027: Differentiation and Access: Supporting All Learners
  - March 17, 2027: IEFA and Cultural Relevance: Making Meaning for Montana Students
  - April 21, 2027: Next Steps: Identifying District and School Needs for Implementation

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Montana Math Skills Map: Turning Standards into Teachable Skills

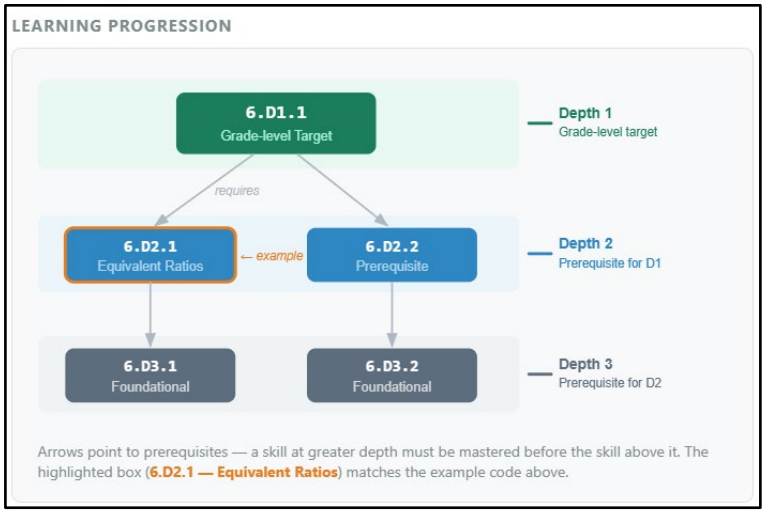
The Montana Math Skills Map breaks each 2026 math standard into the specific skills students need to master, written in clear, student-friendly language. It is now available in Satchel alongside the standards themselves.



Standards describe what students should know by the end of a grade, but a single standard often contains several distinct skills. The Skills Map names each one as an "I will" statement. For example, Grade 4 standard MT.4.NBT.1, on place value in multi-digit numbers, links to the skill *4.D2.11 Comparing Place Values: I will understand the value of a single digit in a multi-digit whole number and explain the relationship between digits.*

Skills are organized by grade from Kindergarten through Algebra 1 and grouped into Depths

- Depth 1 - Grade-level target
- Depth 2 - Prerequisite for Depth 1
- Depth 3 - Prerequisite for Depth 2

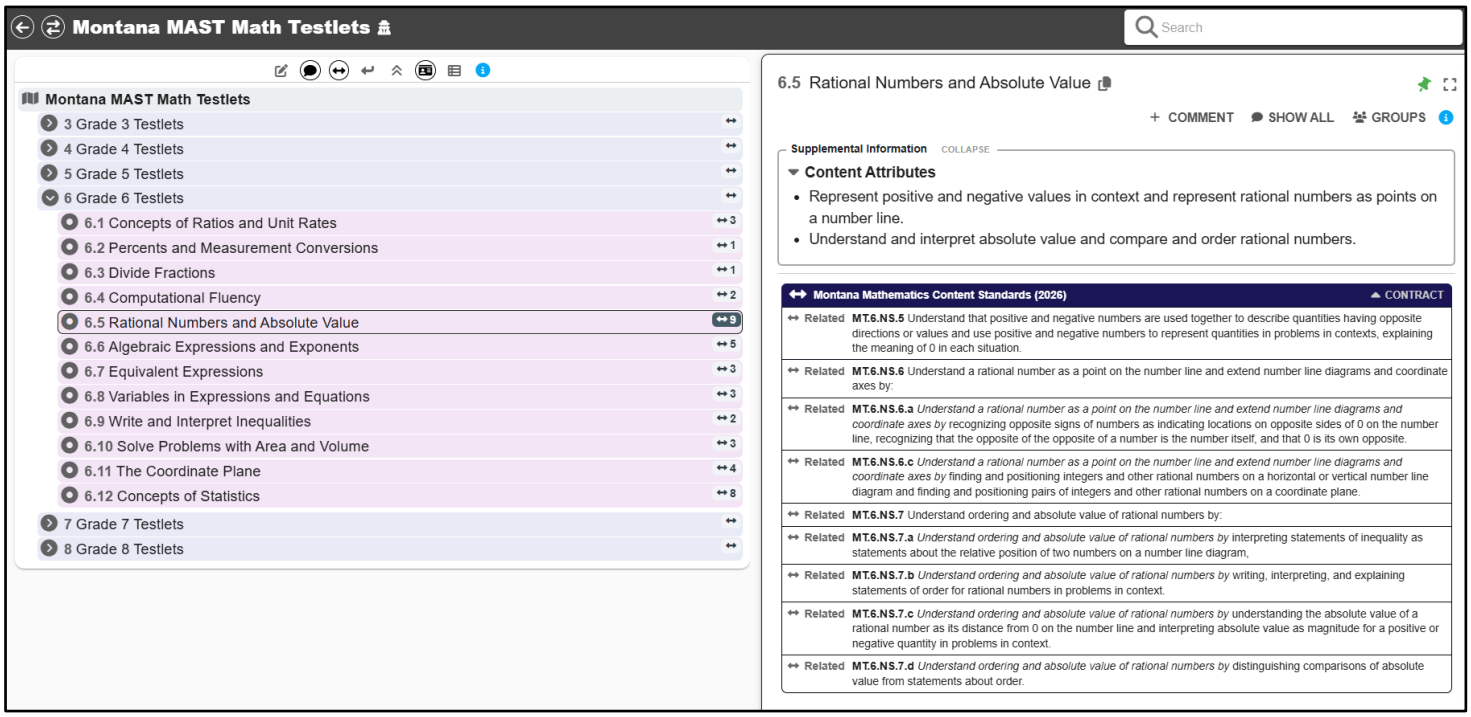


Because every skill is linked to its standard in Satchel, a teacher can move from a standard to its skills, or from a skill back to its standard, in one click.

The Skills Map supports educators in several practical ways:

- **Planning instruction.** Teachers can sequence lessons skill by skill and see exactly what each standard requires.

- **Setting learning targets.** The "I will" statements can be posted or shared with students as daily learning goals.
- **Finding gaps.** When a student struggles with a standard, teachers can pinpoint which underlying skill needs reteaching, which supports intervention and tutoring.
- **Communicating with families.** Plain-language skill statements help parents understand what their child is learning.
- **Connecting to assessment.** A new framework on Satchel is in development to align 3rd-8th grade standards and the MAST Testlets with the Math Skills Map



Content Standards Team:

Katrina Engeldrum, Math Instructional Coordinator

Claire Mikeson, ELA and Literacy Instructional Coordinator

Cody Olson, Science Instructional Coordinator

Aimee Konzen, Professional Learning Manager

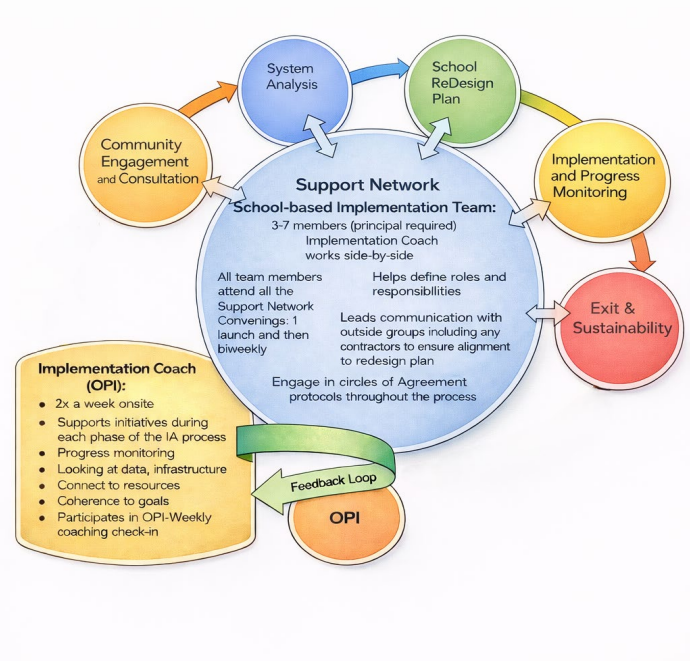
Marie Judisch, Senior Manager of Academic Outcomes & Instruction

Intensive Assistance update

Intensive Assistance centered on school redesign is a form of school turnaround that is an intensive three-year intervention directed by the BPE and administered by the OPI with the goal of dramatically improving the way a school operates.

Schools Identified for Intensive Assistance to Start in 2026-2027
Heart Butte Elementary
Heart Butte 6-8
Heart Butte High School
Lame Deer School
Lame Deer 7-8

Graphic Representation of the Intensive Assistance Process



Tasks Completed:

- Intensive Assistance Implementation Administrators contracted through SAM are actively coaching:
    - Tobin Novasio, Lame Deer
    - Chuck Gameon, Heart Butte
- Support team has been providing in-person technical assistance:

    - Lead-Brooke Gondara
    - TSAR specialists: Crystal Hickman, Michele Henson, Jen Murphy, and Matt Bell
    - Administrative Support: Julie Murgel, Christy Mock-Stutz, Marie Judisch, Tyler Capece, and Craig Barringer
    - EDNW: Mandy Smoker Broaddus and RunningHorse Livingston
    - Additional Support: Rob Watson (SAM) and McCall Flynn (BPE)
- Conducting bi-weekly planning sessions to design agendas and materials for the bi-weekly support network meetings.
    - October network sessions centered on Community Engagement, whereas November sessions are centered on System Analysis.
- RFI scored and posted for 3rd party entities that schools may contract for specified services aligned to the process.
- MOU's updated with actionable deliverables and signed by the schools.

Next Step: School presents system analysis results to stakeholders, local board of trustees, and BPE at January 2027 meeting.

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Superintendent's Report
Assessment Taskforce Update – November 2026

On June 22, 2026, OPI and the BPE announced the creation of a MAST Taskforce to provide the State Superintendent with recommendations on the following:

- Make instructional usefulness of MAST a primary measure of success, aiming to improve classroom instruction and student outcomes.
- Boost the efficacy of score reports and the reporting process.
- Limit testing burdens and enhance structured feedback routines.
- Expand opportunities for professional development focused on instructional use and coherence.
- Build educator trust in the data.

The Taskforce was scheduled to meet five times, virtually, from September to November 2026. Meetings started the week of September 21st. Education First, a national education policy and strategy consultancy, is facilitating the MAST Taskforce. The sessions have been designed to generate insight and stakeholder input, on the five points outlined above, and provide time for taskforce members to deepen and prioritize their considerations and recommendations. Education First will analyze, synthesize and draft the taskforce recommendations for the State Superintendent, who will then review and share with the BPE.

The MAST Task Force has completed four of its scheduled sessions, focusing on establishing foundational goals, evaluating score reporting, and deepening recommendations for instructional usefulness.

The iterative process relies on participant surveys after each meeting to shape subsequent sessions and feed directly into the final deliverable. Per the project timeline, drafting outlines and preliminary recommendations will take place through November, culminating in a first draft of recommendations and strategic plans in December and a final report provided to BPE in January 2027.

Session Overview:
Session 1 (Week of September 21): **Instructional Usefulness**: **From Assessment to Classroom Practice.** Members established operating norms, reviewed the MAST through-year assessment design, and explored how recurring assessment data can directly inform classroom instruction, reteaching, and student groupings.

Session 2 (Week of October 5): Score Reports and Reporting Process.
The session included a parent/caregiver panel to examine report transparency, accessibility, and the practical challenges educators and families face when interpreting portal data and scores.

Session 3 (Week of October 19): Going Deeper into Reporting and Instructional Usefulness. Utilizing a journey-mapping protocol in role-based breakout groups,

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members examined testlet scheduling flexibility, barriers to implementation, and ways to make reporting more actionable and user-friendly.

Session 4 (Week of November 2): Reducing Testing Burden, Strengthening Structured Student Feedback Routines, and Enhancing Family Engagement. Turning prior experiences and resource reviews into specific, actionable recommendations across three core areas, the taskforce examined ways to streamline assessment windows, manage make-ups, and align testlets more closely with pacing; provided improvements on how assessment insights are delivered and understood by students and educators; and discussed communication and reporting transparency for parents and caregivers. Prior to the session, members reviewed 9 draft recommendations and completed a feedback survey.

Session 5 (Week of November 16): Professional Development and Building Educator Trust.

Recommendation Report Review: Education First will consolidate all task force suggestions into a comprehensive draft report. Group members can subsequently offer written feedback or participate in one-on-one interviews to share their insights.

Taskforce Members

Representative Name	Role	Location
Connie Michael	5th Grade Teacher	Crow Agency
Stephanie Peterson	5th Grade Teacher	Glasgow
Kim Stout	4th Grade Teacher	Helena
Abby Stitt	4th/5th Grade Teacher	Potomac
Stephanie Olson	3rd Grade Teacher	Great Falls
Katie Miller	8th Grade ELA Teacher	Dillon
Dr. Laurie Barron	Superintendent, Evergreen School District	Evergreen
Drea O'Donnell	Superintendent, Shepherd School District	Shepherd
Erin Hunt	Assessment Coordinator, Helena School District	Helena
Rhiannon Beery	K-12 Principal, Bainville School District	Bainville
Ben Lambert	Elementary Principal, Huntley Schools	Huntley
Melissa Han	Elementary Principal, Box Elder School	Box Elder

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	District	

OPI Staff Representatives

Name	Role
Dr. Julie Murgel	Chief Program Officer
Tyler Capece	Assistant Deputy Superintendent
Marie Judisch	Senior Manager, Academic Outcomes & Instruction
Ryan Schrenk	Assessment Director
Christy Mock-Stutz	Assistant Chief Program Officer
McCall Flynn	Executive Director, Board of Public Education

Ex-Officio Members

Name	Role
Craig Barringer	Deputy Superintendent, Office of Public Instruction
Dr. Rob Watson	Executive Director, School Administrators of Montana
Kim Popham	Director of Public Policy and Research, Montana Federation of Public Employees

Future Ready Overview and Updates

1. **Future Ready Payment** -- Purpose -- Calculation -- Definitions
   20-9-381. Future ready payment -- purpose -- calculation -- definitions.
   (1) Beginning in fiscal year 2028, the state shall provide a future ready payment to school districts. The payment is composed of incentive amounts as described in **20-9-306** and this section. The purpose of the payment is to:
   (a) expand personalized career and technical education opportunities for middle school and high school pupils;
   (b) reduce out-of-pocket costs for pupils and families in support of a pupil's postsecondary success;
   (c) empower pupils to actively engage in forming their postsecondary success path; and
   (d) provide expanded flexibility to districts to support the alignment of each pupil's postsecondary success path with each pupil's individual interests, passions, strengths, needs, and culture.

   (2) The incentive amount of the future ready payment is based on three goal levels:
   (a) goal level 1, high school graduates who while in high school earned 15 or more postsecondary or CTE equivalent credits;
   (b) goal level 2, high school graduates who while in high school earned 30 or more postsecondary or CTE equivalent credits; and
   (c) goal level 3, high school graduates who while in high school earned an associate-level degree.

2. **Future Ready Technical Support**:
   The Career, Technical, and Adult Education Unit held six regional meetings around Montana in the month of September.
   - The primary focus was to help districts look at their CTE Pathways for middle and high school students.
   - Looking specifically at their pathways connections to industry, dual credit course offerings, work-based learning supports, industry-recognized

credentials, and how to support access to all students for these opportunities.

- These events were co-hosted with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and representatives from the Department of Labor and Industry, Department of Public Health and Human Services and the Montana Economic Development Association were also invited to present.
- Time was provided for districts to work and plan on their next steps around their goals.
- There were 106 school districts and colleges present along with state agencies and partners like Montana Digital Academy.
- Over 235 people attended and we were on six college campuses: Miles City Community College, Flathead Valley Community College, Missoula College- Bitterroot Community College, City College- Billings, Helena College, and Montana State University.

3. **Future Ready First Data Collection:**
   The first data collection for Future Ready data (Dual Credit, IRC's, AP/IB) just concluded on November 6. The Infinite Campus Team worked diligently to support schools in this collection. The reports will be generated in MAEFAIRS in the next few weeks.

4. **Future Ready Next Steps:**
   - There will be a Future Ready Data staff member joining the OPI on November 16. They will be working under Nicole Thuotte and coordinating with DLI, OCHE, the CTE and School Finance units at OPI to coordinate reports, support ongoing updates and future data collections.
   - The CTE Unit will continue to work with schools in ensuring that their WBL is meeting the threshold for Future Ready Incentive payment as defined in the DLI rules.
   - The CTE Unit has resumed technical assistance hours to provide support and is looking at other outreach through school counselors, teachers and administrators' conferences as the year progresses.
   - Quarterly meetings have been set up with DLI- Career Development Specialists and the OPI Career and Technical Education Specialists to maintain continued support for schools and a united approach to assistance. The next meeting will be held in January.
   - Communication between OPI, DLI and OCHE is continued and consistent as we navigate the work for Future Ready for our Montana Schools.

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Superintendent's Report
Accreditation Update

K-12 Accreditation

- **In-Person Work Sessions (Glendive, Great Falls, Bozeman, and Havre)**
    - 42 administrators, clerks, support staff attended
    - Request to schedule a virtual version of the work session, looking at mid-November

- **Upcoming Dates**
    - Every Wednesday through January 13th- Accreditation Team available via Teams for support
    - December 18th- **ALL** districts need to complete Standards I, II, A, B, C, and D (middle/high school only) for certification to align with the Infinite Campus reporting deadlines. Standards A, B, C, and D are related to Infinite Campus reporting and opened on November 2nd for certification.
    - January 19th- February 19th- Virtual Work Sessions
    - February 26th- In- Cycle Requirements due for Cycle 1 schools

- **Virtual Tour**
    - AccredMT

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Federal Update- as of November 3, 2026

Dear Colleague Letters

In September, the US Department of Education sent a Dear Colleague Letter to SEAs regarding November 7, 2026, which marks the 10th U.S. National Day for the Victims of Communism, observed alongside Anti-Communism Week (November 2–8) to honor the more than 100 million individuals who suffered under authoritarian regimes. The letter emphasizes that socialism and communism, defined by state control of property and centralized economic planning, are fundamentally at odds with Western democratic values and the individual liberties protected by the American Constitution. The letter stresses the necessity of thorough civic education and concludes that teaching students the historical realities and economic impacts of these ideologies is essential for preserving democratic principles and preventing the resurgence of totalitarian ideas.

In September the US Department of Education sent a Dear Colleague Letter encouraging all schools to provide students with the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. While the letter does not establish new requirements for LEAs it does recommend a review and renewed commitment to state statute that highlights the importance of the pledge of allegiance being recited every day. In Montana this is outlined in MCA 20-7-133.

"Get Active" Challenge

On October 1, the Department announced its participation in the "Get Active" campaign, a nationwide effort to encourage physical fitness and support student success. Building on President Trump's restoration of the Presidential Fitness Test, the campaign will bring Administration officials and Council members to schools across the country. These visits will encourage students to embrace physical activity and highlight its role in supporting health, focus, and classroom engagement.

The initiative also underscores the connection between physical activity and academic achievement. Secretary McMahon emphasized that active students are better prepared to engage in learning, while the Department highlighted CDC findings associating higher grades with regular physical activity and participation in team sports. Through the campaign, the Department and its partners aim to help students build habits that support success both inside and outside the classroom.

2026 US Presidential Scholars Finalists

In late October the US Department of Education released the names of the finalists for the 2026 US Presidential Scholars. For more than 60 years, this unique federal program has honored over 8,000 U.S. Presidential Scholars, who have demonstrated leadership, scholarship, and contribution to school and community. For 2026 Montana honors the following students for their achievement and excellence:

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- Caden J McCullough, Helena - Capital High School
- Avé Frances Norby, Sidney - Sidney High School

The nominations for the 2027 US Presidential Scholars will be opening soon. Each Chief State School Officer can nominate up to 10 males and 10 females for the General component, up to 5 students for the Arts component and up to 5 students for the Career and Technical Education component.

Mountains at 250: Partnership with The Story of America

As our nation marks its 250th anniversary, the Montana Office of Public Instruction is pleased to announce that Montana is a partner state in Mountains at 250, a three-year federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Through the American History and Civics National Activities Grant (84.422B), Fireside and The Story of America are available to Montana districts serving middle and high school students at no cost to districts.

Fireside lets students question America's founders and the people who shaped our nation, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Frederick Douglass, and Sacagawea. Every answer comes only from primary sources reviewed by historians, and students then write a short, evidence-based response to an essential question.

Fireside is part of The Story of America, a complete U.S. History curriculum with 31 units, dedicated Constitution units for both middle and high school, and more than 250 primary sources, available in English and Spanish.

❖ MSDB LIAISON – (Item 7)

Lisa Schmidt

ITEM 7

MSDB REPORT

Action Items:

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

Superintendent Paul Furthmyre

Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind
Board of Public Education Report
November 2026

Agenda Action Items:

1. Personnel Action Plan
   3 Hire
   2 Resignations
   4 Retirements
   1 Probationary Layoff

2. Out of State Travel
   Academic Bowl Regional Competition - Denver CO or North Carolina
   Close Up - Washington DC
   Flying Hooves Theater Festival - Riverside California

3. MSDB OPI Discretionary Grant Application

4. Approval of Final Policies as Presented

Attached Documents:

- MSDB Committee Bi-Monthly Meeting Agenda
- MSDB Committee Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes
- MSDB Policy Notes
- MSDB Policies for 1st Reading
- MSDBF October Agenda
- MSDBF October Budget
- MSDBF 2026 Accountant Review Report
- PPE 10-16-26 Financial Report
- PPE 10-16-26 Wages & Benefits Report
- PPE 10-16-26 Expenses Report
- PPE 10-16-26 Payroll Forecast
- Current Enrollment 11.4.2026
- Inquiry/Referrals 11.4.2026
- JOL reporting

MSDB Personnel Action for BPE Meeting
November Meeting 2026

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

Hire
Chris Johnson - Workplace and Lifeskills Teacher
Chad Edinger - Residential Advisor
Kylee Thomas - Para Educator

Resignation
Adam Brickel - Paraprofessional
Sonja Van Hee - Educational Interpreter

Retirement
Len Warren - RN (December 31, 2026)
Sue Stewart - Paraprofessional (June 30, 2027)
Brenda Warren - Teacher of the Deaf Hard/Hearing (June 25, 2027)
Dorothy Nutter - (June 30, 2027)

Probationary Layoff
Lynda Kohut - Payroll Technician

Nonrenewal of Nontenure Teacher

Positions currently advertised
1 - Teacher of the Visually Impaired
1 - Teacher of the Deaf Hard / Hearing
1 - Paraprofessional
1 - Residential Advisor
2 - Registered Nurses
2 - Teacher of the Visually Impaired Consultant

Positions to be advertised
2 - Teacher of the Visually Impaired Consultant
2 - Teacher of the Deaf Outreach Consultant
2 - Teacher of the Deaf Hard/Hearing
1 - Paraprofessional
1 - Residential Advisor
1 - Educational Interpreter

STATE OF MONTANA

REQUEST AND JUSTIFICATION FOR OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

1) Agency Number/Name	2) Division
MSDB	

3) Org Number	4) Name of Person(s) Traveling/Employee ID#
	Tearra Donovan 039635, Jennifer Wasson 007805

5) Justification

Funds for the Academic Bowl team to travel to the Gallaudet West Regional Academic Bowl competition in Denver, CO March 4-8, 2027

6) Itinerary

Destination: Denver, CO

Travel Dates: March 4-8, 2027

7) Estimated Costs

Transportation $ 3000 Meals $ 1400 Lodging $ 600 Other $ 1600

Total estimated cost $ 6600

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

Flights for 6 with tax: $3000, Meals/gratuity for 6: $1400, Hotel (3 rooms/1 night): $600 , Rental Car: $600, Entertainment/Incidentals: $1000

8) Submitted By	Title	Date
Jennifer Wasson	Academic Bowl Head Coach, Teacher	10/26/26

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

STATE OF MONTANA

REQUEST AND JUSTIFICATION FOR OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

1) Agency Number/Name	2) Division
Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind	

3) Org Number	4) Name of Person(s) Traveling/Employee ID#
	Mikhael Rosenberg #088307, Denise Rutledge, and 5 Students

5) Justification

Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) respectfully requests approval for eligible students to attend the Close Up Foundation program in Washington, D.C.

The program provides direct, experiential instruction in U.S. government, civics, public policy, and civic engagement. Participation supports MSDB's academic and transition goals by developing students' leadership, communication, critical-thinking, self-advocacy, and independent-living skills.

This opportunity is particularly valuable for MSDB students because it provides meaningful access to national civic institutions and reinforces their ability to participate as informed, engaged citizens.

6) Itinerary

Destination: Washington D.C.

Travel Dates: May 2nd through May 8th

7) Estimated Costs

Transportation $ 1000.00 Meals $ 1000.00 Lodging $ Other $ 17,610

Total estimated cost $ 19,610.00

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

Other costs include the Program cost for participants and advisors to attend the Close Up Civic Education Program in Washington, DC. Program includes transportation, lodging, and 3 meals a day for 4 days.
Transportation and Meals cost are associated with the opportunity to stay an extra day to visit Gallaudet University. These cost are not associated with the overall Close Up Program costs.

8) Submitted By	Title	Date
Mikhael Rosenberg	Teacher of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing	10/23/2026

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

STATE OF MONTANA

REQUEST AND JUSTIFICATION FOR OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

1) Agency Number/Name	2) Division

3) Org Number	4) Name of Person(s) Traveling/Employee ID#

5) Justification

Attending the 6th annual National Deaf High School Theater Festival in Riverside California. This is an opportunity for the students to interact with and learn from professional Deaf actors as well as other Deaf high school students who are interested in theater and acting.

6) Itinerary

Destination: Riverside School for the Deaf, Riverside California

Travel Dates: 2/24/27 to 2/28/27

7) Estimated Costs

Transportation $ 3000 Meals $ 500 Lodging $ 0 Other $ 500

Total estimated cost $ 4000

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

Transportation: 7 flights to Riverside California, Meals: Breakfast/Lunch for 2 travel days, Other: tickets to a possible fun activity in Riverside, possible Uber expenses from airport to CSD/to fun activity

8) Submitted By	Title	Date
Jessteene Clifford	Teacher of the Deaf	9/24/26

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 (Name) | 3911 Central Ave. Great Falls, MT (Address) | Outreach Director (Position) | mbriggs@msdb.k12.mt.us (E-mail)

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

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

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

Project Number: 84027-9258-27
Approved Amount $ 80,000

3. PROJECT DURATION from (a) Month Day Year: 06-01-2026 to (b) Month Day Year: 10 / 30 2027 /

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 _____

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 2026-27
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 are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, low vision or deaf blind 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 Weekend **Date** June 2027 **Cost** $6000

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 and Braille training and material **Date** Aug 2026-July 2027 **Cost** 22,000

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** October 9-10 2026, April 9-10 2026 **Cost** $6,000

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.)

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 American Printing House for the Blind Annual Meeting **Date** October 2026 **Cost** $6,000

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.)

The Ex Officio Trustee (EOT) for Montana and the Superintendent will attend the mandatory annual meeting with the American House for the Blind. The requirement for a state EOT to participate in the governance and administrative functions of the APH is rooted in the federal act to promote the education of the blind of 1879 and codified at 20 U.S.C. § 101 et seq.

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 s kills, orientation and mobility, recreation and leisure, self-determination, sensory efficiency, social interaction skills and career education f or their child with a vision impairment.

Improvement Activity(s):

Title Family Advisors **Date** August 2026-July 2027 **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.)

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 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.)

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.)

THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT
PART B – ANNUAL PROJECT BUDGET
2026-2027

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	$40,000			
2. Operating Expenses	$12,000			
3. Professional Development	$28,000			
4. Transfer to other districts 6200-930				
5. TOTAL BUDGET	80,000			
OPI USE ONLY: APPROVED BY / DATE				

Policy	Policy Name
1700	Uniform Complaint Procedure
2100	School Calendar and Day
2132	Student and Family Privacy Rights
2150	Suicide Awareness and Prevention
2161	Special Education
2162-P(2)	Section 504
2335-NF(1)	Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - Annual Notice
2335-NF(2)	Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - Special Notice
2335-NF(3)	Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - 5 to 14 Day Notice
2450	Indian Education for All
2600	Work Based Learning
3110-P(3)	Entrance and Placement and Transfer - Full Education Opportunity Goal
3125	Education of Homeless Children
3224	Student Dress
3235	Video Surveillance
3310	Student Discipline
3310-P(2)	Student Discipline - Academic Honesty and Responsible Use of Resources
3310-P(3)	Student Discipline - IDEA Discipline
3310-P(5)	Student Discipline - Student Use of Motor Vehicles on Campus
3410	Student Health
3416-F(1)	Administering Medicines to Students - Designation and Acceptance to Administer Glucagon
3416-F(2)	Administering Medicines to Students - Montana Authorization to Possess or Self-Administer Asthma Severe Allergy or Anaphylaxis Medication
3416-NF(1)	Administering Medicines to Students - Consent Form
3431	Emergency Treatment
3510	School-Sponsored Activities
3650	Montana Pupil Online Personal Information Protection Act
4330-P(1)	Community Use of School Facilities - Rules and Regulations of Building Facility Equipment Use
5120	Hiring Process and Criteria
5120-P(1)	Hiring Process and Criteria - Federal Background Check Fingerprints and Information Handling Procedure
5122	Fingerprints and Criminal Background Investigations
5314	Substitutes
7110	Budget and Program Planning
8121	School-Owned Vehicles
8205	Meal Charge
8410	Operation and Maintenance of Facilities

Policy 1700: Uniform Complaint Procedure

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 07/19/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 07/19/2024

The Board establishes this Uniform Complaint Procedure as a means to address complaints arising within the School. This Uniform Complaint Procedure is intended to be used for all complaints except those governed by a specific process in state or federal law that supersedes this process or collective bargaining agreement. Matters covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be reviewed in accordance with the terms of the applicable agreement.

This uniform complaint procedure shall be made available on the District's website at a location which shall be included in all handbooks issued by the District.

The School will endeavor to respond to and resolve complaints without resorting to this formal complaint procedure and, when a complaint is filed, to address the complaint promptly and equitably. The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed hereunder will not be impaired by a person's pursuit of other remedies. Use of this complaint procedure is not a prerequisite to pursuing other remedies and use of this complaint procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to pursuit of other remedies.

A complaint is appropriate under this policy when an individual believes the District, its Board, or an employee of the District, has violated the individual's rights or the rights of their child under state or federal law or Board policy. A complaint is not appropriate and therefore subject to dismissal when the basis for the complaint is disagreement with an action or omission of the District under circumstances where there has been no violation of the individual's rights or the rights of their child. Complaints against a building administrator shall be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent shall be filed with the Board. Attempts to bypass this Uniform Complaint Procedure at any of its Levels shall be redirected by School officials at the appropriate Level. ~~The School requests all individuals to use this complaint procedure, when the individual believes the Board or its employees or agents have violated the individual's rights under state or federal law or Board policy.~~

Deadlines requiring School action in this procedure may be extended for reasons related but not limited to the School's retention of legal counsel and School investigatory procedures.

Level 1: Informal

An individual with a complaint is first encouraged to discuss it with the appropriate employee or building administrator with the objective of resolving the matter promptly and informally in accordance with Policy 2158. If such resolution is not possible, the individual may choose to file a formal written complaint in accordance with specifications at Level 2. If, however, the complaint involves allegations of sexual harassment, informal resolution with the alleged harasser is not encouraged, and a sexual harassment complaint should instead by submitted to the District's Title IX Coordinator in accordance with District Policy 3225 or 5012.
~~An exception is that a complaint of sexual harassment should be discussed directly with an administrator not involved in the alleged harassment.~~

Level 2: Building Administrator
When a complaint has not been or cannot be resolved at Level 1, an individual may file a signed and dated written complaint stating: (1) the nature of the complaint; (2) a description of the event or incident giving rise to the complaint, including any school personnel involved; and (3) the remedy or resolution requested. The written complaint must be filed within thirty (30) calendar days of the event or incident or from the date an individual could reasonably become aware of such event or incident. The applicability of the deadline is subject to review by the Superintendent to ensure the intent of this uniform complaint procedure is honored.

When a complaint alleges violation of Board policy or procedure, the building administrator will investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint. The administrator will respond in writing to the complaint, within thirty (30) calendar days of the administrator's receipt of the complaint.

If the complainant has reason to believe the administrator's decision was made in error, the complainant may request,

in writing, that the Superintendent review the administrator's decision. (See Level 3.) This request must be submitted to the Superintendent within fifteen (15) calendar days of the administrator's decision.

When a complaint alleges sexual harassment or a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (the Civil Rights Act), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Administrator shall turn the complaint over to the applicable Schol nondiscrimination coordinator. The coordinator shall ensure an investigation is completed in accordance with the applicable procedure. In the case of a sexual harassment or Title IX complaint the applicable investigation and appeal procedure is Policy 3225P or 5012P. In the case of a disability complaint, the coordinator shall complete an investigation and file a report and recommendation with the Administrator for decision. Appeal of a decision in a disability complaint will be handled in accordance with this policy.

Level 3: Superintendent
If the complainant appeals the administrator's decision provided for in Level 2, the Superintendent will review the complaint and the administrator's decision. The Superintendent will respond in writing to the appeal, within thirty (30) calendar days of the Superintendent's receipt of the written appeal. In responding to the appeal, the Superintendent may: (1) meet with the parties involved in the complaint; (2) conduct a separate or supplementary investigation; (3) engage an outside investigator or other School employees to assist with the appeal; and/or (4) take other steps appropriate or helpful in resolving the complaint.

If the complainant has reason to believe the Superintendent's decision was made in error, the complainant may request, in writing, that the Board consider an appeal of the Superintendent's decision. (See Level 4.) This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, within fifteen (15) calendar days of the Superintendent's written response to the complaint, for transmission to the Board.

Level 4: The Board
Upon written appeal of a complaint alleging a violation of the individual's rights under state or federal law or Board policy upon which the Board has authority to remedy, the Board may consider the Superintendent's decision. ~~in Level 2 or 3.~~ It is the role of the Board to review the decision of the Superintendent for compliance with applicable District policies. It is not the role of the Board to reinvestigate the matter, and the Board is entitled to rely upon the facts determined during an investigation conducted at Level 2 or 3.

Upon receipt of written request for appeal, the Chair will either: (1) place the appeal on the agenda of a regular or special Board meeting, (2) appoint an appeals panel of not less than three Board members to hear the appeal and make a recommendation to the Board, or (3) respond to the complaint with an explanation of why the appeal will not be heard by the Board in accordance with this policy.

If the Chair appoints a panel to consider the appeal, the panel will meet to consider the appeal and then make written recommendation to the full Board. The Board will report its decision on the appeal, in writing, to all parties, within thirty (30) calendar days of the Board meeting at which the Board considered the appeal or the recommendation of the panel. If the matter is heard by the Board or by an appeals panel, the Board shall have the authority to uphold the decision of the Superintendent; to reverse the decision of the Superintendent; to remand the case back to the Superintendent for further investigation or other action deemed necessary by the Board; or any combination of the above. A decision of the Board is final, unless it is appealed pursuant to Montana law within the period provided by

law.

Policy 2100: School Calendar and Day

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 10/14/1992 | **Last Revised Date:** 11/15/2023 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 07/14/2024

School Calendar
Subject to state law any applicable collective bargaining agreement covering the employment of affected employees, the School shall set the number of hours in a school term, the length of the school day, and the number of school days in a school week. When proposing to adopt changes to a previously adopted school term, school week, or school day, the School shall: (a) negotiate the changes with the recognized collective bargaining unit representing the employees affected by the changes; (b) solicit input from the employees affected by the changes but not represented by a collective bargaining agreement; (c) and from the parents and students affected by the change.

Commemorative Holidays
The Superintendent or his or her designee shall develop for Board approval appropriate exercises and observances, the purpose of which shall be to educate students regarding the commemorated person or occasion on the following designated commemorative days:
(a) Lincoln's Birthday (February 12);
(b) Washington's Birthday (February 22);
(c) Arbor Day (last Friday in April);
(d) Flag Day (June 14);
(e) Citizenship Day (September 17);
(f) American Indian Heritage Day (fourth Friday in September);
(g) Columbus Day (October 12);
(h) Pioneer Day (November 1);
(i) Freedom Week (last full week of September), to educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of the United States and the values on which the United States was founded;
(j) other days designated by the legislature or governor as legal holidays.

Saturday School
In emergencies, including during reasonable efforts of the trustees to make up aggregate hours of instruction lost during a declaration of emergency by the Board under Section 20-9-806, MCA, pupil instruction may be conducted on a Saturday when it is approved by the Board.

Pupil instruction may be held on a Saturday at the discretion of a school district for the purpose of providing additional pupil instruction beyond the minimum aggregate hours of instruction required in Section 20-1-301, MCA, provided student attendance is voluntary.

School Calendar Considerations
1. Yearly calendar may be adjusted to coincide with the school calendar adopted by Great Falls School District #1.
2. Require that all children residing in the school cottages go to their respective homes or to other destinations specified by their parents or guardians for all residential closings during the year.

School Fiscal Year
At least the minimum number of aggregate hours must be conducted during each school fiscal year. The minimum aggregate hours required by grade are:

(a) 720 hours for grades kindergarten through 3;
(b) 1,080 hours for grades 4 through 11; and
(c) 1,050 hours may be sufficient for graduating seniors.

The minimum aggregate hours, described above, are not required for any pupil demonstrating proficiency pursuant to 20-9-311(4) (d), MCA.

In addition, five (5) pupil instruction-related days may be scheduled for the following purposes:

1. Pre-school staff orientation for the purpose of organization of the school year;
2. Staff professional development programs (minimum of three (3) days);
3. Parent/teacher conferences; and
4. Post-school record and report (not to exceed one (1) day, or one-half (½) day at the end of each semester or quarter).

The School has established an advisory committee to develop, recommend, and evaluate the School's yearly professional development plan.

Policy 2132: Student and Family Privacy Rights

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Student and Family Privacy Rights
All fundamental parental rights are exclusively reserved to the parent of a child without obstruction or interference by a government entity as consistently recognized in state and federal courts and as required by state and federal law and School policy.

Surveys - General
All surveys requesting personal information from students, as well as any other instrument used to collect personal information from students, must advance or relate to the School's educational objectives as identified in policy. This applies to all surveys, regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified and regardless of who created the survey. ~~A parent or guardian shall have the right to opt the child out of any survey or data collection by a school that would capture data for inclusion in the statewide data system so long as the survey does not request or require disclosure of personal information. Surveys requesting or requiring disclosure of personal information shall require parental consent as described in this policy. A parent may not opt out of data collection that is necessary and essential for establishing a student's education record.~~

Parental Rights Regarding Surveys

Except for information that is necessary and essential for establishing a student's education record or for a demographic survey to validate an achievement test used to gain admission to a post-secondary institution, parents shall have the right to:

a. opt their child out of any personal analysis, evaluation, survey, or data collection by the District that does not require personally identifiable information; and
b. opt their child in to any personal analysis, evaluation, survey, or data collection by a school district that requires personally identifiable information.

Surveys Created by a Third Party

Before the School administers or distributes a survey created by a third party to a student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may inspect the survey upon request and within a reasonable time of their request.

This section applies to every survey: (1) that is created by a person or entity other than a School official, staff member, or student, (2) regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified, and (3) regardless of the subject matter of the questions.

Surveys Requesting Personal Information
School officials and staff members shall not request, nor disclose, the identity of any student who completes ANY survey containing one (1) or more of the following items:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. Behavior or attitudes about sex;
4. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian;
8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may:

1. Inspect the survey within a reasonable time of the request; and/or
2. Refuse to allow their child to participate in any survey requesting personal information. The school shall not penalize any student whose parent(s)/guardian(s) exercise this option.

No student in the School shall be required, as part of any applicable program, to submit to any survey, analysis, or evaluation that requests or requires the disclosure of the above-noted personal information in this section without the prior consent of the student (if the student is an adult or emancipated minor), or in the case of an unemancipated minor, without the prior written consent of the parent. This provision specifically documents the arrangements taken to protect student privacy in accordance with 20 USC § 1232h(c)(1)(a)(b).

Instructional Material

A student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may, within a reasonable time of the request, inspect any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum.

The term "instructional material," for purposes of this policy, means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of its format, printed or representational materials, audio-visual materials, and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as materials accessible through the Internet). The term does not include academic tests or academic assessments.

Collection of Personal Information From Students for Marketing Prohibited

The term "personal information," for purposes of this section only, means individually identifiable information including: (1) a student's or parent's first and last name, (2) a home or other physical address (including street name and the name of the city or town), (3) telephone number, or (4) a Social Security identification number.

The School will not collect, disclose, or use student personal information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose.

The School, however, is not prohibited from collecting, disclosing, or using personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions such as the following:

1. College or other post-secondary education recruitment or military recruitment;
2. Book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products;
3. Curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools;
4. Tests and assessments to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students (or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments) and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments;
5. The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities;
6. Student recognition programs.

Notification of Rights and Procedures

This policy shall be posted on the School's website and provided in a manner specified in accordance with law and policy. The Superintendent or designee shall notify students' parents/guardians of:

1. This policy as well as its availability from the administration office upon request;
2. How to opt their child out of participation in activities as provided in this policy;
3. The approximate dates during the school year when a survey requesting personal information, as described above, is scheduled or expected to be scheduled;
4. How to request access to any survey or other material described in this policy.

This notification shall be given parents/guardians at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable period after any substantive change in this policy.

The rights provided to parents/guardians in this policy transfer to the student, when the student turns eighteen (18) years of age or is an emancipated minor.



Policy 2150: Suicide Awareness and Prevention

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Professional Development

The School will provide on an annual basis professional development on youth suicide awareness and prevention to each employee of the School who work directly with any students enrolled in the School. At a minimum, each employee of the district who works directly with students must recieve 1 hour of youth suicide awareness and prevention training every 3 years.

The training materials will be approved by the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), meet the standards for professional development in the state, and be periodically reviewed by a qualified person or committeee for consistency with generally accepted principles of youth suicide awareness and prevention training.

The School will provide, at a minimum, two (2) hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training every five (5) years. All new employees who work directly with any student enrolled in the School will be provided two (2) hours of training the first year of employment.

Youth suicide and prevention training may include:

A. In-person attendance at a live training;

B. Videoconference;

C. An individual program of study of designated materials;

D. Self-review modules available online; and

E. Any other method chosen by the local school board that is consistent with professional development standards.

Prevention and Response

The Board authorizes the Administration and appropriate School staff to develop procedures to address matters related to suicide prevention and response that:

A. Promote collaboration with families and with community providers in all aspects of suicide prevention and response;

B. Include high quality intervention services for students;

C. Promote interagency cooperation that enables school personnel to identify and access appropriate community resources for use in times of crisis;

D. Include reintegration of youth into a school following a crisis, hospitalization, or residential treatment;

E. Provide for leadership, planning, and support for students and school personnel to ensure appropriate responses to attempted or completed suicides.

No cause of action may be brought for any loss or damage caused by any act or admission resulting from the implementation of the provisions of this policy or resulting from any training, or lack of training, related to this policy. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to impose a specific duty of care.

This policy will be reviewed by the Board on a regular basis.

Policy 2161: Special Education

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

The School will provide a free appropriate public education and necessary related services to all children with disabilities residing within the School, as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), provisions of *Montana law, and the Americans with Disabilities Act*.

For students eligible for services under IDEA, the School will follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement, and delivery of service to children with disabilities, as provided in the current Montana State Plan under Part B of IDEA.

~~The School may maintain membership in one or more cooperative associations which may assist in fulfilling the School's obligations to its disabled students.~~

Procedure 2162-P(2): Section 504 - Procedure **Status:** DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

Procedure For Education of Students With Disabilities Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

1. **Free Appropriate Public Education**: The School will provide a free appropriate public education to school-age children with disabilities in the School's jurisdiction regardless of the nature or severity of the person's disability.

2. **Child Find**: The School will annually undertake to identify and locate every qualified disabled students residing in the School's jurisdiction who is not receiving a public education and take appropriate steps to notify disabled children and their parents or guardians of the School's responsibilities under Section 504.

3. **Equal Educational Opportunity**: The School will provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the educational services it provides to non-disabled students. The teachers of disabled students will meet comparable standards for certification that teachers of non-disabled students meet. Facilities will be of comparable quality and appropriate materials and equipment will be available.

4. **Confidentiality of Information**: The confidentiality of student records will be maintained throughout the period of time when such records are collected, stored, disclosed or destroyed by the School.

5. **Parent Involvement**:

(a) Initial Evaluation. The School will obtain the consent of parents or guardians before conducting an initial evaluation of a student. The School will notify parents or guardians of the evaluation results.

(b) Initial Placement. The School will notify parents or guardians before initially placing a disabled student or any decision to not place a student and the reasons for the decision.

(c) Significant Change in Placement. The School will notify parents or guardians before implementing a significant change in the student's placement.

(d) Right to Challenge. The School will notify parents or guardians of their right to review and challenge the School's program and placement decisions if they disagree with them.

(e) Meetings. ~~Section 504 does not give parents or guardians the right to participate in a meeting during which their child's program is designed and placement is determined, as does the IDEA. However, this practice is recommended.~~ Parents shall be provided the opportunity to participate in Section 504 Team meetings during which their child's program is designed and placement is determined.

6. **Participation in the Least Restrictive Environment**:

(a) Academic setting. To the maximum extent appropriate, the School will educate disabled students with non-disabled students. In order to remove a child from the regular educational environment, the School must demonstrate that education of the student in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily for the disabled student. Whenever the School places a student in a setting other than the regular education environment, it will take into account the proximity of the alternate setting to the student's home.

(b) Non-academic setting. In providing or arranging for the provision of non-academic and extra-curricular services and activities, including meals, recess periods and the services and activities, the School will ensure that disabled students participate with non-disabled students in such activities and services to the maximum extent appropriate.

7. **Referral and Screening**:

(a) **Referral:** If a parent or guardian, teacher, counselor or administrator believe they are observing in a student substantially limited performance in one or more major life activities that is believed to be caused by a physical or mental impairment, the concerned individual should complete a referral form from the counselor or request assistance from Section 504 Coordinator to serve the student.

(b) **Screening:** A designated building team will review referrals to determine if an evaluation is appropriate. If an evaluation appears to be necessary because of the student's needs or is believed to need special education or related services, the School will obtain written consent from parents or guardians to perform an evaluation and/or gather additional information and will provide parents with a written statement of their rights under Section 504. If the building team determines that an evaluation is not necessary, it will provide written notice to parents/guardians, and forward the results of the screening to the source of the referral.

8. **Evaluations:**

(a) **Significant Change in Placement:** If a student is believed to be disabled and needs, or is believed to need, special education or related services, the School shall evaluate the student prior to placement and before any subsequent "significant change in that placement." An evaluation need not include formal or written assessments but may involve, in appropriate circumstances, a review and consideration of existing information. Examples of significant changes in placement include:

i. Expulsion;
ii. Suspensions which exceed ten consecutive days in a school year;
iii. Cumulative short-term suspensions which create a pattern of exclusion;
iv. Transferring a student to home instruction; and/or
v. Graduation from high school.

(b) **Tests and Evaluation Materials:** The School will establish procedures for evaluation and placement which assure that tests and other evaluation materials:

i. Have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel in the specific areas of educational need'
ii. Are tailored to assess educational need and are not merely used to measure IQ and
iii. Reflect aptitude or achievement or whatever else the tests purport to measure and do not reflect the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills (unless the test is designed to measure these particular deficits).

9. **Mitigating Measures:** The determination of whether a student is substantially limited in one or more major life activities will be made without regard to any ameliorative effects of mitigating measures which include, but are not limited to: medication, medical supplies, equipment, appliances, low-vision devices, prosthetics, hearing aids and cochlear implants or other implantable hearing devices, mobility devices, oxygen therapy equipment and supplies, assistive technology, reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids or services; or learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications. However, ameliorative effects of mitigating measures may be relevant as to whether a student needs any specific accommodation or a 504 accommodation plan.

Low vision devices do not include ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses. The ameliorative effects of ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses shall be considered in determining whether the impairment substantially limits a major life activity.

10. **Temporary Impairments:** A student with a temporary impairment falls within the scope of Section 504 if the temporary impairment substantially limits one or more of the student's major life activities. A temporary impairment is one with an actual or expected duration of six months or less.

11. **Placement Procedures:** The Section 504 team will convene to review all evaluation results, determine eligibility as a student with a disability under Section 504 and document the meeting in writing. The team composition may vary according to the needs of the student.

In interpreting evaluation data and in making placement decisions, the School will:

(a) draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social or cultural background and adaptive behavior;

(b) establish procedures to ensure that information obtained from all such sources is documented and carefully considered;

(c) ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placements options; and

(d) ensure that the student is educated with the student's non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate.

Parents and guardians of students who have a plan developed under Section 504 will be provided a copy of the School policy *(see Policy 3305)* on the use of seclusion and restraint at the time that the plan is created.

If the School affords a free appropriate education to a student but the parent chooses to place the child elsewhere, the School is not responsible to pay for the out-of-School placement.

12. **Reevaluations:** The School will provide for periodic reevaluation of disabled students. A reevaluation is also required before any "significant change of placement," as defined above in Part 8.

13. **Programming to Meet Individual Needs:** The School recognizes that to be appropriate, educational programs for students with disabilities must be designed to meet their individual needs to the same extent that the needs of non-disabled students are met. A documented procedure, such as the development of an individualized accommodation plan by a knowledgeable team of educational professionals, may be appropriate.

14. **Non-Academic Services:** The School will provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in such a manner as is necessary to afford disabled students an equal opportunity for participation in such services and activities. Nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities may include counseling services, physical recreation athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, interest groups or clubs sponsored by the School, referrals to agencies which provide assistance to disabled persons and employment of students, including both employment by the School and assistance in making available outside employment. The School will observe reasonable health and safety standards for all students.

(a) **Counseling Services**: In providing personal, academic or vocational counseling, guidance or placement services to its students, the School will provide these services without discrimination on the basis of disability. The School will ensure that qualified students with disabilities are not counseled toward more restrictive career objectives than are non disabled students with similar interests and abilities.

(b) **Physical Education and Athletics**: In providing physical education courses and athletics and similar programs and activities to any of its students, the School will not discriminate on the basis of disability. If the School offers physical education courses and operates or supports interscholastic, club or intramural athletics, it will provide an equal opportunity for qualified students with disabilities to participate in these activities.

15. **Preschool and Adult Education Programs:** In the operation of preschool education, or day care program or activity, or an adult education program or activity, the School will not, on the basis of disability, exclude qualified students with disabilities from the program or activity and will take into account the needs of such persons in determining the aid, benefits or services to be provided under the program or activity.

16. **Disciplinary Exclusion:**

(a) **Exclusions:** Students with disabilities are protected from being improperly excluded from school for disciplinary reasons. Certain disciplinary exclusions of disabled students from school constitute a significant change in the student's educational placement. A disciplinary change in the student's educational placement occurs if the student has been suspended for more than ten consecutive days or if the disciplinary exclusions constitute a "pattern of exclusion" (defined below). Such disciplinary exclusions, which are change of placement, cannot be implemented unless the School first determines that the student's misconduct which led to the disciplinary exclusion was not a manifestation of the student's disability.

(b) **Manifestation Determinations:** If a disciplinary exclusion (suspension or expulsion) which constitutes a change in placement is implemented, the school principal or educational staff person responsible for the imposition of discipline must ensure that a group of qualified professionals (the student's Section 504 team) determine whether or not the misconduct is a manifestation of the student's disability.

The misconduct is considered a manifestation of the disability if the conduct was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability. This manifestation determination will take into account the student's current evaluation and individualized accommodation plan under Section 504.

Under Section 504, there is no obligation to provide educational services during periods of long-term suspension or expulsion when the student's misconduct has been properly determined not to

be disability-related. However, state law requires the School to provide educational services to all students during a period of suspension or expulsion (See Policy/Procedure 3241).

If a student's misconduct is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, procedures in to address the disability be instituted in lieu of either long-term suspension or expulsion.

(c) **Conduct That Is a Manifestation of a Disability.** When a student has engaged in misconduct which is a manifestation of to his or her disability, expulsion and/or long term suspension should not be imposed if it would result in a change in educational placement (a disciplinary exclusion from school of over ten consecutive days or exclusions which constitutes a pattern of exclusion). Days will be measured cumulatively over the period of the entire school year, with any short-term suspensions as counting toward the cumulative total.

When a student's misconduct is related to a disability, additional evaluations and/or a change of placement should be considered. In this circumstance, the Section 504 team will meet to determine if there is a need for further evaluation or a change of program. If further evaluation is recommended, it will be conducted as soon as reasonably possible.

(d) **Pattern of Exclusion.** Suspension or emergency expulsion of a disabled student may occur, without the need to determine if there is a causal connection with the disability, if the suspension or emergency expulsion is ten consecutive days or less, or if more than ten cumulative days is not a pattern of exclusion. A pattern of exclusion occurs if:

i. The removal is for more than ten school days in a year; and
ii. The student's behavior is substantially similar to the behavior that he/she was previously removed for.

Additional factors to consider are the length of each removal (the total amount of time the student has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another), and the school must determine on a case-by-case basis whether a pattern of removals is significant enough to constitute a change in placement.

(e) **Right to Challenge.** Students and their parent/guardian will be notified of the results of the manifestation decision and of their right under the law to challenge this decision.

(f) **Drugs or Alcohol.** Students who are considered disabled under Section 504 are subject to the same disciplinary processes and results as non-disabled students for misconduct regarding the use, sale or possession of drugs or alcohol at school.

17. **Restraint or Isolation.** Restraint or seclusion of students who have a Section 504 plan will be authorized only under the limited circumstances specified in Policy 3305 and each incident will require reporting and parent/guardian notification as specified in that policy and procedure.

18. **Transportation:** If the School places a student in a program not operated by the School, the School will assure that adequate transportation to and from the program is provided at no cost to the parent.

Because the School provides transportation to all its students within a certain geographic area, it will not discriminate in its provision of transportation to students with disabilities.

If the School proposes to terminate a qualified disabled student's bus transportation for inappropriate bus behavior, the School will first determine the relationship between the student's behavior and his or her disabling condition. The parent or guardian will be provided with notice of the results of such determinations and of their right to challenge such determinations.

19. **Procedural Requirements:** The School will ensure compliance with the requirements of Section 504 by doing the following:

(a) **Assurance.** Provide written assurance of non-discrimination whenever the School receives federal money;

(b) **Designation of Employee.** Designate an employee to coordinate the School's Section 504 compliance activities.

(c) **Grievance Procedures.** Provide grievance procedures to resolve complaints of discrimination. Students, parents or employees are entitled to file grievances. The grievance procedures for the School are set out in Policy 1700;

(d) **Notice.** Provide notice to students, parents/guardians, employees, unions and professional organizations of the School's nondiscrimination policy in admission and access to programs and activities, and in treatment and employment. Notice will also specify the Section 504 coordinator for the School;

(e) **Locate.** Annually undertake to identify and locate all Section 504 qualified disabled children in the School's jurisdiction who are not receiving a public education;

(f) **Annual Notification.** Annually take appropriate steps to notify disabled persons and their parents/guardians of the School's responsibilities under Section 504; and

(g) **Procedural Safeguards.** Establish and implement procedural safeguards to be provided to parents/guardians with respect to actions regarding the identification, evaluation or educational placement of persons who, because of disability, need, or are believed to need, special instruction or related services. Procedural safeguards will include:

i. Notice of rights;
ii. An opportunity for parents/guardians to examine relevant records;
iii. An impartial hearing, initiated by either the parents/guardian or the School, with opportunity for participation by the student's parents/guardians and representation by legal counsel; and
iv. A review procedure.

20. **Appropriate Funding:** The School recognizes that the 504 process is an unfunded mandate, yet the regular

education funding of the School could be the funding source for serving students who are qualified as disabled under Section 504 only. However, if students are dual identified as Section 504 and IDEA eligible, state and federal special education funds can be used. The School will not use money appropriated by the IDEA to serve students found disabled under Section 504 but not the IDEA. The School may use the IDEA money to evaluate a student if the School believes that the student may also be eligible under the IDEA.

21. **Special Considerations for ADD/ ADHD Students:** Section 504 obligations apply to all students with disabilities, including students with attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Under federal guidance, there are three different types of ADHD, which are categorized depending upon which symptoms are the strongest: (1) predominately inattentive type; (2) predominately hyperactive-impulsive type; and (3) combined type (where symptoms of the first two types are equally present).

22. **Due Process Hearing or Mediation Requests**

(a) Impartial Due Process Hearing. If the parent or legal guardian of a student who qualifies under Section 504 for special instruction or related services disagrees with a decision of the School with respect to: (1) the identification of the child as qualifying for Section 504; (2) the School's evaluation of the child; and/or (3) the educational placement of the child, the parents of the student are entitled to certain procedural safeguards. The student shall remain in the student's current placement until the matter has been resolved through the process set forth herein.

i. The School shall provide written notice to the parent or legal guardian of a Section 504 student, prior to initiating an evaluation of the child and/or determining the appropriate educational placement of the child, including special instruction and/or related services;

ii. Upon request, the parent or legal guardian of the student shall be allowed to examine all relevant records relating to the child's education and the School's identification, evaluation, and/or placement decision;

iii. The parent or legal guardian of the student may make a request in writing for an impartial due process hearing. The written request for an impartial due process hearing shall identify with specificity the areas in which the parent or legal guardian is in disagreement with the School;

iv. Upon receipt of a written request for an impartial due process hearing, a copy of the written request shall be forwarded to all interested parties within three (3) business days;

v. Within ten (10) days of receipt of a written request for an impartial due process hearing, the School shall select and appoint an impartial hearing officer who has no professional or personal interest in the matter. In that regard, the School may select a hearing officer from the list of special education hearing examiners available at the Office of Public Instruction, the county superintendent or any other person who would conduct the hearing in an impartial and fair manner;

vi. Once the School has selected an impartial hearing officer, the School shall provide the parent or legal guardian and all other interested parties with notice of the person selected;

vii. Within five (5) days of the School's selection of a hearing officer, a pre-hearing conference shall be scheduled to set a date and time for a hearing, identify the issues to be heard, and stipulate to undisputed facts to narrow the contested factual issues.

viii. The hearing officer shall, in writing, notify all parties of the date, time, and location of the due process hearing;

ix. to mediation. A mediator may be selected from the Office of Public Instruction's list of trained mediators;

x. At the hearing, the School and the parent or legal guardian may be represented by counsel;

xi. The hearing shall be conducted in an informal but orderly manner. Either party may request that the hearing be recorded. Should either party request that the hearing be recorded, it shall be recorded using either appropriate equipment or a court reporter. The School shall be allowed to present its case first. Thereafter the parent or legal guardian shall be allowed to present its case. Witnesses may be called to testify, and documentary evidence may be admitted; however, witnesses will not be subject to cross-examination, and the Montana Rules of Evidence will not apply. The hearing officer shall make all decisions relating to the relevancy of all evidence intended to be presented by the parties. Once all evidence has been received, the hearing officer shall close the hearing. The hearing officer may request that both parties submit proposed findings of fact, conclusions, and decision;

xii. Within twenty (20) days of the hearing, the hearing examiner should issue a written report of the student's decision to the parties;

xiii. Appeals may be taken as provided by law.

23. **Uniform Complaint Procedure**. If a parent or legal guardian of the student alleges that the School and/or any employee of the School has engaged in discrimination or harassment of the student, the parent or legal guardian will be required to proceed through the School's Uniform Complaint Procedure.

Notice Form 2335-NF(1): Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - Annual Notice

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Policy 2335F1 - Human Sexuality Instruction and Identity Instruction Annual Notice

Dear Parent or Guardian:

In accordance with § 20-7-120, MCA, the District hereby provides notice of human sexuality instruction and/or identity instruction included in the District's curriculum for the 20__ - 20__school year as follows:

~~The School is providing a notice that is required under the provisions of Senate Bill 99, which the 2021 Legislature passed, and Governor Gianforte signed into law. The operative section of law governing this notice is Section 20-7-120, MCA , which provides as follows:~~

~~**20-7-120. Excused absences from curriculum requirements -- notice -- prohibited activities.**~~

1. ~~A parent, guardian, or other person who is responsible for the care of a child may refuse to allow the child to attend or withdraw the child from a course of instruction, a class period, an assembly, an organized school function, or instruction provided by the School through its staff or guests invited at the request of the School regarding human sexuality instruction. The withdrawal or refusal to attend is an excused absence pursuant to 20-5-103.~~
2. ~~Any school implementing or maintaining a curriculum, providing materials, or holding an event or assembly at which a school provides human sexuality instruction, whether introduced by school educators, administrators, or officials or by guests invited at the request of the school, shall adopt a policy ensuring parental or guardian notification no less than 48 hours prior to holding an event or assembly or introducing materials for instructional use.~~
3. ~~A school shall annually notify the parent or guardian of each student scheduled to be enrolled in human sexuality instruction in the school in advance of the instruction of:~~
    a. ~~the basic content of the school's human sexuality instruction intended to be taught to the student; and~~
    b. ~~the parent's or guardian's right to withdraw the student from the school's human sexuality instruction.~~
4. ~~A school shall make all curriculum materials used in the school's human sexuality instruction available for public inspection prior to the use of the materials in actual instruction.~~
5. ~~A school or its personnel or agents may not permit a person, entity, or any affiliate or agent of the person or entity to offer, sponsor, or furnish in any manner any course materials or instruction relating to human sexuality or sexually transmitted diseases to its students or personnel if the person, entity, or any affiliate or agent of the person or entity is a provider of abortion services.~~
6. ~~For purposes of this section, "human sexuality instruction" means teaching or otherwise providing information about human sexuality, including intimate relationships, human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, sexual orientation, gender identity, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities.~~

~~This notice is being provided comprehensively and in advance of the school year, also well in advance of the minimum notice of 48 hours prior to instruction to ensure full transparency and to provide a parent/guardian the right to opt their child out of "human sexuality instruction" as defined in (6) of the law above.~~

Courses and Related Activities Where the Topic of Human Sexuality Instruction Could Arise:

The school has ~~four~~ three categories of activities that involve human sexuality instruction as defined in the law.

1. **Health Enhancement Curriculum:** The first category consists of designated courses involving human sexuality instruction that are part of our health curriculum. Although none of these courses are exclusively devoted to human sexuality instruction, the topic of human sexuality does arise in the typical course delivery at various times.

a. Course 1, [including length and course name].
b. Course 2, [ ]
c. Course 3, [ ]

2. **Other Courses:** The second category consists of other courses where topics related to or involving human sexuality instruction arise incidentally through addressing topics germane to the course and consistent with accreditation standards. These courses include but are not limited to science and literature.
    a. Course 1, [including length and course name].
    b. Course 2, [ ]
    c. Course 3, [ ]
3. **Other Services Provided by Designated Staff:** The third category consists of student-initiated inquiries of school staff that, in order to address, may involve human sexuality as defined in law. Typical staff involved in these interactions include but are not limited to librarians, counselors, and school nurses. Inquiries will be addressed on an age-appropriate basis using the professional judgment of licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized school personnel.
4. **3. Special Events and Student Assemblies:** The fourth category consists of special events and student assemblies periodically scheduled that touch on topics of student health and which may involve incidental mention of topics related to human sexuality instruction as defined in the law. The following are dates and times when such assemblies are scheduled during the upcoming school year:
    a. Date 1, [including event or assembly name].
    b. Date 2, [ ]
    c. Date 3, [ ]

The term "human sexuality instruction" does not include a teacher's response to an unexpected student-initiated inquiry related to human sexuality instruction to the extent necessary to resolve the inquiry or to maintain civility and decorum in the classroom. However, teachers and other District personnel will address such inquiries on an age-appropriate basis using their professional judgment to the extent necessary to resolve the inquiry or to maintain civility and decorum in the classroom.

Courses and Related Activities Where the Topic of Identity Instruction Could Arise:

1. **Health Enhancement Curriculum:** The first category consists of designated courses involving identity instruction that are part of our health curriculum. Although none of these courses are exclusively devoted to identity instruction, the topics of gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation may arise in the typical course delivery at various times.
    a. Course 1, [including length and course name].
    b. Course 2, [ ]
    c. Course 3, [ ]
2. **Other Courses:** The second category consists of other courses where topics related to or involving identity instruction arise incidentally through addressing topics germane to the course and consistent with accreditation standards. These courses include but are not limited to science and literature.
    a. Course 1, [including length and course name].
    b. Course 2, [ ]
    c. Course 3, [ ]
3. **Special Events and Student Assemblies:** The third category consists of special events and student assemblies periodically scheduled that touch on topics of student health and which may involve incidental mention of topics related to identity instruction as defined in the law. The following are dates and times when such assemblies are scheduled during the upcoming school year:
    a. Date 2, [ ]
    b. Date 3, [ ]

The term "identity instruction" does not include a teacher's response to an unexpected student-initiated inquiry related to identity instruction to the extent necessary to resolve the inquiry or to maintain civility and decorum in the classroom. However, teachers and other District personnel will address such inquiries on an age-appropriate basis using their professional judgment to the extent necessary to resolve the inquiry or to maintain civility and decorum in

the classroom.

Notice of Your Rights:
As a parent/guardian of a student, you have the right to refuse to allow your child to attend or withdraw your child from a course of instruction, a class period, an assembly, an organized school function, or instruction provided by the school through its staff or guests invited at the request of the school regarding human sexuality instruction. The withdrawal or refusal to attend is an excused absence pursuant to § 20-5-103, MCA. ~~You can opt your child out of human sexuality instruction by providing the school written notice by completing, signing, and submitting the attached form.~~ If you would like your child to be excused from human sexuality instruction please complete, sign, and submit the attached form.

Additionally, the District may not allow a student to attend identity instruction unless the student's parent or guardian agrees in writing to allow the student to attend. A student is excused from participating in identity instruction unless the student fails to attend after the parent or guardian has agreed in writing to allow the student's attendance. If you would like your child to participate in identity instruction, please complete, sign, and submit the attached form. You have the right to revoke your permission for participation in identity instruction at any time by informing the District in writing of the revocation.

Links to Materials:

The following link will provide you access to the following:

1. The basic content of the school's human sexuality instruction and/or identity instruction; and
2. All curriculum materials used in the school's human sexuality instruction and/or identity instruction.

Human Sexuality Instruction Opt-Out Form
For _____ School Year

A parent who does not want their student to receive human sexuality instruction at school may request to opt out of such instruction by completing this form.

I, _____, Parent or Guardian of, _____ a student enrolled at The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind, hereby request my student not receive human sexuality instruction for the duration of the _____ school year in a manner consistent with the excused absence methods identified by the School as specified in Section 20-5-103, MCA.

I understand my student will not attend any courses, special events, student assemblies where human sexuality instruction occurs. ~~I also understand my student will not receive any services from school staff regarding human sexuality instruction that may include but are not limited to individual services from teachers, librarians, nurses, or counselors that may related to human sexuality. A student seeking such services will be redirected to the parent in accordance with the decision noted on this form.~~ I also understand that I may withdraw my request at any time by informing the District in writing of withdrawal of this request.

I acknowledge I have received notification of my rights in this area under Section 20-7-120, MCA, and have been provided an opportunity to review related information and materials on this topic.

~~I may withdraw this opt out in writing at anytime.~~

_____ _____
Parent Date

Received by:

_____ _____
School Official Date

Identity Instruction Opt-in Form
For _____ School Year

A parent who wants their student to receive identity instruction at school must confirm their permission to do so by completing this form.

I, _____, Parent or Guardian of, _____ a student enrolled at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blilnd, hereby grant permission for my child to receive identity instruction for the duration of the school year. I understand that if my permission is not granted, my student will not be allowed to participate in identity instruction. I also understand that my permission may be revoked at any time by informing the District of the revocation in writing.

I acknowledge I have received notification of my rights in this area under § 20-7-120, MCA, and have been provided an opportunity to review related information and materials on this topic.

_____ _____
Parent Date

Received by:

_____ _____
School Official Date

Notice Form 2335-NF(2): Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - Special Notice

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

~~Policy 2335F2 - Human Sexuality 48 Hour Notice~~
~~For Unanticipated Introduction of Human Sexuality Instruction Not Addressed in Annual Notice~~

~~Dear Parent/Guardian,~~

~~The School is providing a notice that is required under the provisions of Senate Bill 99, which the 2021 Legislature passed, and Governor Gianforte signed into law. The operative section of law governing this notice is Section 20-7-120, MCA which provides as follows:~~

~~**20-7-120. Excused absences from curriculum requirements -- notice -- prohibited activities.**~~

1. ~~A parent, guardian, or other person who is responsible for the care of a child may refuse to allow the child to attend or withdraw the child from a course of instruction, a class period, an assembly, an organized school function, or instruction provided by the school through its staff or guests invited at the request of the school regarding human sexuality instruction. The withdrawal or refusal to attend is an excused absence pursuant to 20-5-103.~~
2. ~~Any school implementing or maintaining a curriculum, providing materials, or holding an event or assembly at which the school provides human sexuality instruction, whether introduced by school educators, administrators, or officials or by guests invited at the request of the school, shall adopt a policy ensuring parental or guardian notification no less than 48 hours prior to holding an event or assembly or introducing materials for instructional use.~~
3. ~~A school shall annually notify the parent or guardian of each student scheduled to be enrolled in human sexuality instruction in the school in advance of the instruction of:~~
    a. ~~the basic content of the school's human sexuality instruction intended to be taught to the student; and~~
    b. ~~the parent's or guardian's right to withdraw the student from the school's human sexuality instruction.~~
4. ~~A school shall make all curriculum materials used in the school's human sexuality instruction available for public inspection prior to the use of the materials in actual instruction.~~
5. ~~A school or its personnel or agents may not permit a person, entity, or any affiliate or agent of the person or entity to offer, sponsor, or furnish in any manner any course materials or instruction relating to human sexuality or sexually transmitted diseases to its students or personnel if the person, entity, or any affiliate or agent of the person or entity is a provider of abortion services.~~
6. ~~For purposes of this section, "human sexuality instruction" means teaching or otherwise providing information about human sexuality, including intimate relationships, human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, sexual orientation, gender identity, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities.~~

~~This notice is being provided to inform you of human sexuality instruction that was not specifically addressed in the annual notification you previously received. The law states if the school is implementing or maintaining a curriculum, providing materials, or holding an event or assembly at which the school provides human sexuality instruction, whether introduced by school educators, administrators, or officials or by guests invited at the request of the school, the school shall provide parental or guardian notification no less than 48 hours prior to holding an event or assembly or introducing materials for instructional use.~~

~~**Notice of Your Rights:**~~

~~This notice is intended to inform parents that the following course or event is going to provide instruction or information on human sexuality: _____.~~

~~The nature of the instruction or information is as follows: _____~~

As a parent/guardian of a student, you have the right to refuse to allow your child to attend or withdraw your child from the above-noted course of instruction, a class period, an assembly, an organized school function, or instruction provided by the school through its staff or guests invited at the request of the school regarding human sexuality instruction. The withdrawal or refusal to attend is an excused absence pursuant to Section 20-5-103, MCA.

You can opt your child out of human sexuality instruction by providing the school written notice by completing, signing, and submitting the attached form prior to the date identified in the above-notice.

Human Sexuality Instruction Opt-Out Form
48 Hours Advance Notice of Course or Event

A family who does not want their student to receive human sexuality instruction for a newly introduced curriculum, material, or event not previously addressed in the provided annual notice at school may request to opt out of such instruction by completing this form.

I, _____, Parent or Guardian of, _____ a student enrolled at _____School, request my student not receive human sexuality instruction during _____ a course or event to be held on_____. This request will be handled in a manner consistent with the excused absence methods identified by the School as specified in Section 20-5-103, MCA.

I understand my student will not attend any courses, special events, student assemblies where human sexuality instruction occurs. I also understand my student will not receive any services from school staff regarding human sexuality instruction that may include but are not limited to individual services from teachers, librarians, nurses, or counselors that may related to human sexuality. A student seeking such services will be redirected to the parent in accordance with the decision noted on this form.

I acknowledge I have received notification of my rights in this area under Section 20-7-120, MCA, and have been provided an opportunity to review related information and materials on this topic.

I may withdraw this opt out in writing at any time.

_____ _____
Parent Date

Received by:

_____ _____
School Official Date

Notice Form 2335-NF(3): Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - 5 to 14 Day Notice

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide notification of human sexuality instruction in accordance with § 20-7-120, MCA, and District Policy 2335. The term "human sexuality instruction" means "instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about any of the following human sexuality topics: intimate relationships, sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities."

Please take notice that human sexuality instruction will be provided in the following course or event:

[Identify the course or event; provide the date and time the course or event will take place; and describe in general the nature of the information that will be provided]

As the parent or guardian of a student, you have the right to refuse to allow your child to attend or participate in human sexuality instruction. If you do not want your child to receive human sexuality instruction by attending and participating in the above-described course or event, please complete and return the attached form.

Human Sexuality Instruction Opt-Out Form

A parent who does not want their student to receive human sexuality instruction at school may request to opt out of such instruction by completing this form.

I, _____, Parent or Guardian of, _____ a student enrolled at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind, hereby request that my student be excused from [INSERT NAME OF COURSE OR EVENT] on _____, 20__.

_____ _____
Parent Date

Received by:

_____ _____
School Official Date

Policy 2450: Indian Education for All

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 07/18/2003 | **Last Revised Date:** 07/19/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 07/19/2024

The School recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of Native Americans and is committed in the District's educational goals to the preservation of such heritage consistent with Article X, Section 1 (2) of the Montana Constitution.

In furtherance of the School's educational goals, the School is committed to:

- Working cooperatively with Montana Tribes in close proximity to the School, when developing courses of study, when providing instruction, when implementing educational goals or adopting rules relating to education of students in the School;
- Periodically reviewing its curriculum to ensure the inclusion of cultural heritage of Native Americans, which will include but not necessarily be limited to:
    - Considering methods by which to provide books and materials reflecting authentic historical and contemporary portrayals of Native Americans;
    - Taking into account individual and cultural diversity and differences among students;
- Providing necessary training for school personnel, with the objective of gaining an understanding and awareness of Native American culture, which will assist the School's staff in its relations with Native American students and parents.

The Board may require certified staff to satisfy the requirements for instruction in American Indian studies, set forth in § 20-1-503, MCA, if an Indian Education for All payment is issued to the District under Section 20-9-329, MCA.

Recognition of Distinct Cultures

Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) recognizes the contributions other distinct cultures, in our traditional and contemporary art, literature, social structure, values, heritage, history and perspectives. In addition, MSDB recognizes how the world has gained from people, who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and deafblind as well as their cultural contributions. The curriculum adopted or used by MSDB incorporates knowledge of these cultures into the school's educational goals. The school's content and performance standards reflect the connections among these diverse groups.

Policy 2600: Work Based Learning

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Work Based Learning Program

The Board recognizes that education should be making classroom experiences a meaningful process of learning about all practical aspects of life. The Board believes that the inclusion of career education in the basic curriculum will provide students with information about the many career opportunities available and will establish a relationship between what is taught in the classroom and the world of work.

Work-based learning must provide all participating students with on-the-job experience and training along with career and complimentary vocational/technical classroom instruction to contribute to each student's employability. The students' classroom activities and on-the-job experiences must be planned and supervised by the school and the employer to ensure that both activities contribute to the student's employability. Students enrolled in a work-based learning program must receive credit for related classroom instruction and on-the-job training. In the absence of a proficiency model, the time requirement for students in work-based learning must be converted and is equivalent to the time requirement for credit to be earned.

Students may submit a proposal for a tailored Work Based Learning program that divides their time between instruction in school and specific learning at a job. Each proposed program will be planned by Work Based Learning coordinators and the employer (or employer groups) and shall be in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations governing employment of students under age 18. The Work Based Learning coordinators will communicate with employers on a monthly basis and will visit work sites to determine if the placement is appropriate for student employment.

The particular program designed for each student shall be set forth in a written protocol approved by the student, his or her parents or guardians, the work-experience coordinator and the employer. This shall stipulate the terms of employment and the provision for academic credit, the student's work-based experience goals, prioritizing the student's academic commitments, assessment of the work-based learning experience goals..

The Work Based Learning coordinator shall make such arrangements as necessary with employers for evaluating the student's on-the-job performance and for keeping records of job attendance.

The employer or supervisor shall complete School volunteer agreement form and satisfy a ~~name-based and~~ fingerprint criminal background check ~~in accordance with Policies 5120 and 5122~~. Any individual who will never have unsupervised contact with students is not required to undergo a fingerprint-based national criminal history background check. The employee and School shall also complete workers compensation insurance and general liability insurance requirements in accordance with the attached procedure in a manner consistent with the Work Based Learning opportunity provided to student.

Credit for Employment at Congregate Care Facilities, Child Care Facilities, and School-Age Programs

A student of the District who is 16 years of age or older and who is employed on a paid or voluntary basis at a congregate-care facility, child-care facility, or school-age program may earn one unit of credit for graduation for every 8,100 minutes worked at the congregate-care facility, childcare facility, or school-age program.

The Superintendent or his or her designee shall develop conditions and requirements on the type of work the student is performing that the student shall satisfy to earn credit toward graduation and a process for verification of the number of minutes the student works at the congregate-care facility, child-care facility, or school-age program.

To be eligible to receive credit towards graduation, an application must be received by the District on an annual basis prior to [DATE]. Applications will be accepted at a later date in the event the student begins employment with a facility during the school year. Credits will be granted for work performed after the application is received and approved by the District.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

a. "Child-care facility" means a day-care center, group day-care home, or family day-care home licensed or registered under the provisions of Title 52, chapter 2, part 7.
b. "Congregate-care facility" has the same meaning as:
    1. "community residential facility" as defined in 76-2-411;
    2. "developmental disabilities facility" as defined in 53-20-202;
    3. "long-term care facility" as defined in 50-5-101; and
    4. "residential care facility" as defined in 50-5-101.
c. "School-age program" means a program serving children 5 years of age or older during the school year or summer.
d. All definitions set forth in Policy 3665 also apply to this policy.

Procedure 3110-P(3): Entrance, Placement, and Transfer - Full Education Opportunity Goal

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 07/12/2001 | **Last Revised Date:** 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Full Education Opportunity Goal

1. The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind serves students either on or off campus from the ages of 0 – 21 years.
2. This agency serves all enrolled students between the ages of 0-21 or until completion of their high school educational curriculum. Each student's program is directed by an IEP.
3. Beginning at age 14 and older, all students are referred to the Department of Health and Human Services, Vocational ~~Social~~ Rehabilitation Services for services, and a statement is developed to address their transition needs.

Policy 3125: Education of Homeless Children

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 11/16/2003 | **Last Revised Date:** 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Every child of a homeless individual and every homeless child are entitled to equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to children with permanent housing. The School must assign and admit a child who is homeless to a School school regardless of residence and irrespective of whether the homeless child is able to produce records normally required for enrollment. The School may not require an out-of-District attendance agreement and tuition for a homeless child.

Should a child become homeless over the course of the school year, the child must be able to remain at the school of origin, or be eligible to attend another school in the district.

The Superintendent will review and revise as necessary rules or procedures that may be barriers to enrollment of homeless children and youths. In reviewing and revising such procedures, the Superintendent will consider issues of transportation, immunization, residence, birth certificates, school records, and other documentation.

Homeless students will have access to services comparable those offered to other students, including but not limited to:

1. Transportation services;
2. Educational services for which a student meets eligibility criteria (e.g., Title I);
3. Educational programs for children with disabilities and limited English proficiency;
4. Programs in vocational and technical education;
5. Programs for gifted and talented students; and
6. School nutrition program.

The Superintendent will give special attention to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths not currently attending school. The Superintendent will appoint a liaison for homeless children. A "homeless individual" is defined as provided in the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

Anyone having a concern or complaint regarding placement or education of a homeless child will first present it orally and informally to the School homeless liaison. To further ensure that the District is removing barriers to the educational access and success of children and youths who are homeless, and to ensure that Title 1 funding is expended in an appropriate manner, the District has adopted the dispute resolution form at 3125-NF(1).

Policy 3224: Student Dress

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 01/10/2003 | **Last Revised Date:** 01/10/2023 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Appropriate dress and grooming for the school setting are expected of students. A student and his/her parent or legal guardian determine a student's pattern of personal appearance. Personal appearance includes dress, grooming and personal hygiene. Personal appearance of a student shall be respected provided it does not interfere with the health or safety of the student, or of others, and does not materially disrupt the education process as determined by the principal, dean of students or his/her designee.

Directors of extracurricular and co-curricular activities may establish standards of personal appearance, including dress and grooming requirements for such activities. Students wishing to participate in those extracurricular and co-curricular activities shall abide by those standards.

Examples of clothing not suitable to wear anywhere on campus or during school activities, functions or trips include, but are not limited to: clothing with language or graphics that offend community standards, mesh garments, see-through clothing, Johnson shirts, clothing or jewelry with alcohol, marijuana, or tobacco logos or advertising.

~~Hats are not to be worn in school buildings, Mustang Center or classrooms and may be confiscated if they are.~~
Halters, midriff shirts, and muscle shirts are not suitable for wear at school or at any school sponsored activities. There must be a minimum of three inches of strap on the shoulder for shirts and five inches inseam for shorts.

No student on school property or at any school-sponsored activity shall wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge symbol, sign, or other items which are evidence of membership in or affiliation with any gang and/or is representative of any gang.

Policy 3235: Video Surveillance

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Video Surveillance

The Superintendent authorizes the use of video cameras on School property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to School property and to safeguard School buildings, grounds, buses, and equipment. The Superintendent will approve appropriate locations for video cameras.

The Superintendent will notify staff and students, through staff and student handbooks or by other means, that video surveillance may occur on School property. A notice will also be posted at the main entrance of all School buildings, and on all buses, indicating the use of video surveillance.

The School may choose to make video recordings a part of a student's educational record or of a staff member's personnel record. The School will comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention. The Superintendent and designee will have access to the system for monitoring, maintenance, and necessary retention.

All surveillance capabilities shall be implemented in accordance with the Montana Pupil Online Personal Information Privacy Act as required by Policy 3650.

~~Video recordings will include audio. The Superintendent will notify staff and students through staff and student handbooks or by other means that video surveillance, with audio, may occur on School property. A notice will also be posted at the main entrance of all School buildings, and on all buses, in which video/audio surveillance may occur.~~

Policy 3310: Student Discipline

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 01/10/2003 | **Last Revised Date:** 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Student Discipline - Code of Student Behavior

The key to student success is motivated learning and positive student behavior. Good management of the classroom and cottage environments and quality relationships between the staff and students go a long way toward promoting and maintaining good behavior. At MSDB each teacher and cottage life attendant, as well as each of the administrative staff is responsible for maintaining order and discipline among students by applying the following Code of Student Behavior and implementing procedures established in the MSDB Progressive Discipline Plan.

It is the administration's responsibility to take reasonable measures to protect students and school personnel from reasonably foreseeable dangerous or socially detrimental student behavior. Actions taken to control and correct undesirable student behavior should take individual circumstances into account. Concern for the safety and educational welfare of all students must be the major priority. Students who receive or who have been identified as qualifying for special education and/or 504 services, shall be disciplined in accordance with the provisions of Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 W.S.C. Sections 1400-1485 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped Act, 29 U.S.C. Section 706.

1. When a student commits any act defined below as a Major Infraction or Habitual Behavior, it may result in discipline up to and including suspension of the student from school or recommended for expulsion, in accordance with MSDB Student Policies 3311, § 20-5-202, MCA Suspension and Expulsion.
2. Discipline may be imposed for conduct that occurs:
    A. At any time in school buildings or on school grounds, whether or not school is in session.
    B. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, event, or on the way to and from school or a school activity, function, or event or within sufficient proximity to school property that the conduct may have a direct impact upon the health, welfare, and safety of students or school employees.
    C. At a location unrelated to the school or school activities if the conduct engaged in demonstrates that the student may continue to pose an ongoing threat to the health and safety of others.
3. Major infraction are those behaviors which are a gross manifestation of disobedience or misconduct, are disruptive to the mission, process and function of the school and/or pose an imminent threat to the health and safety of other students, school staff, other individuals who are on school property or to the offending student himself or herself.

Major infractions include, but are not limited to:

Fighting: A student shall not willfully have physical contact with another student in anger and/or with the intent to injure.

Physical Abuse: A student shall not use physical force or have physical contact with another student for the purpose of coercion or intimidation, or to inflict pain or injury.

Verbal Abuse: A student shall not direct harassing, vulgar, or derogatory remarks toward any person.

Hazing: A student shall not act in a way that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of another student for the purpose of initiation or as a condition or precondition of attaining membership in or affiliation with any school-sponsored activity or grade-level attainment, including, but not limited to, forced consumption of any drink, alcoholic beverage, drug, or controlled substance, forced exposure to the elements, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, sleep deprivation, or any other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or requires, encourages, authorizes, or permits another to be subject to wearing or carrying any obscene or physically burdensome article, assignment of pranks to be performed, or other such activities intended to degrade or humiliate.

Harassment: A student shall not act in a willful way that would cause a reasonable individual or group to feel harassed based on unwanted or unwelcome, and persistent abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written, or physical nature.

on the basis of age, race, religion, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, disability, or marital status or that contributes to or creates a hostile or offensive environment in the school or cottages.

Bullying: Regardless of the underlying reason, a student shall not act in a way that is unwanted, aggressive, repeated, and involves a real or perceived imbalance of power that substantially interferes with another student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance.

Bullying is any behavior that has the effect of:

1. physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
2. knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property; or
3. creating a hostile educational environment.

Bullying or intimidation will not be tolerated on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school/cottage sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or at any official school bus stop or anywhere conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an interference with school purposes or an educational or cottage function.

Intimidation: Regardless of the underlying reason, a student shall not act in a way that but is intended to threaten, tamper with, substantially damage, or interfere with another student or his or her property, cause substantial inconvenience, subject another student to offensive physical contact, or inflict serious physical injury.

Cyberbullying: A student shall not use of the Internet or any form of electronic communication to harm other people, in a deliberate, repeated, and hostile manner. Cyberbullying includes but is not limited to the following misuses of technology: Harassing, bullying, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, social media sites, or web-site postings (including blogs).

Theft, Loss or Destruction of Property: A student shall not deliberately take another's property without permission or deliberately take, damage or destroy school property, or another's of School personal property.

Arson: A student shall not intentionally set fire, or attempt to set fire, or intentionally engage in conduct which may reasonably be foreseen to set fire to school property or the personal property of another, nor shall a student participate in or encourage another person to participate in such conduct.

Weapons: A student shall not carry, use, possess, conceal or transmit, on school property, any weapon. A weapon is defined as, "Any item brought on to school property or into any school building or vehicle which can be used to harm or cause bodily injury or death to oneself or others." This includes any normally non-dangerous items such as a stone, utensil, board, stick, or baseball bat that are carried, possessed, or used to, in any manner, harm, bully, intimidate or threaten anyone.

Items specifically defined as weapons include, but are not limited:

1. firearms, whether loaded or unloaded including, but not limited to, pistols, rifles, zip guns;
2. shot guns, BB or pellet guns, explosives, explosive propellant, matches, any explosive or flammable materials, fireworks or firecrackers;
   resemblance to any item defined as a weapon.
3. destructive devices or ammunition;
4. knives, including but not limited to, switch blades, pen, pocket or hunting knives;
5. razor blades, ice picks, dirks or other sharp instruments;
6. nunchakus, brass knuckles, pipes, Chinese stars, or bill clubs.

Students found in possession of a weapon shall be immediately subject to discipline under the Federal 'Gun Free Schools Act,' and MSDB Student Policy 3315, MSDB Policy on Gun Free Schools.

Simulated Weapons: No student may carry, use, possess, conceal or transmit, on school property, a simulated weapon. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to any "toy" or nonfunctional implement which bears a substantial visual

Drugs or Alcohol: A student shall not use, possess, sell or cause or encourage any other person to use or possess prescription or narcotic drugs or narcotic/drug paraphernalia, any alcoholic beverages or any form of alcohol, or any substances represented to be a drug or alcohol.

Tobacco: A student shall not use or possess or cause others to use or possess tobacco products of any kind on school property.

Gambling: A student shall not participate in or encourage or cause others to participate in games of chance for stakes or to possess gambling devices such as video games or other items that are used to promote a game of chance. Students shall not participate or encourage others to engage in Internet gambling.

Robbery or Extortion: A student shall not take or obtain property of another person by means of reason of violence, force, threat of force, coercion, intimidation, fear passive resistance, or any other conduct intended to cause another to give property to the student or another against his/her will.

Gang Activity: A student shall not participate in individual or group activities, wear any clothing or use language, symbols or signs that denote membership in or an affiliation with a criminal gang. A criminal gang is defined as a combination of persons organized formally or informally, which; (a) has a common or identifying symbol; (b) has particular conduct, status and customs indicative of it; and (c) has as any one of its common activities the intent to engage in criminal activity.

Disruption Of School or Cottage Life: A student shall not by use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, gambling, or any other conduct intentionally cause the substantial or material disruption or obstruction of any mission, process or function of the school. Neither shall a student engage in, or urge another student to engage in activities or behavior with the purpose of disrupting or obstructing the mission, process or function of the school.

Truancy: A student shall not willfully be absent from class or school without proper authority.

Defiance: A student shall not willfully refuse to obey a direct request or order given by the adult in charge.

Intimate/Sexual Behavior: A student shall not engage in intimate sexual behavior, including but not limited to intimate fondling, petting, or sexual intercourse on school property or while at a school activity, function, event or on the way to or from a school activity, function or event.

Violation of the Law: A student who violates any state or federal law in a school building or on school property, at a school sponsored activity, function or event, or on the way to or from school or a school activity, function or event, will be reported to the proper law enforcement agency. The student will be subject to the Level 2 of the Progressive Discipline Plan procedures whether or not a criminal citation, arrest, prosecution or conviction results from the violation.

4. Habitual Behavior. A student shall not willfully repeat a violation of established classroom/cottage rules or behavior management programs. If, in dealing with repeat violations, a teacher or cottage life attendant has exhausted consequences or management strategies, the student will be considered a habitual offender and a Student Incident Report will be completed by the teacher/cottage life attendant and forwarded to the principal or dean of students.
5. All violation of the Code of Student Behavior will be addressed through the procedure outlined in Student Policy 3300, Progressive Discipline Plan. All recommendations for disciplinary action will come from the administration and all action taken will be approved by the MSDB administration.
    A. When it is determined by the administration that the physical actions or behavior of a student poses a clear and present danger to him/herself or other persons or property, the student may be removed from

the school immediately, subject to the following conditions:

i. The student's parents or guardian will be contacted as soon as reasonably possible and will be notified of the reason for the removal.
ii. The student will be given an explanation of the reason for his/her removal.
iii. The student will be afforded an opportunity to explain his/her conduct.
iv. A recommendation for suspension or expulsion of the student will be initiated immediately.
v. A hearing will be conducted as soon as practicable thereafter. In no case may a student be suspended from school for more than 10 days during a given school year without the school's compliance with MSDB Student Policy 3311, Student Suspension and Expulsion.

Exceptions: A student may not be subject to a disciplinary action for declining to: (a) identify the student's pronouns; or (b) address a person by using a name other than the person's legal name or a derivative of the person's legal name or by using a pronoun or a title that is inconsistent with the person's sex.

Procedure 3310-P(2): Student Discipline - Academic Honesty and Responsible Use of Resources

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

The School believes that academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student's education and character development. The School expects that students will not engage in acts of academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is defined as a breach of standards of academic integrity may include but is not limited to plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any other act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student. Such a breach of standards may also include any attempt to deceive or mislead a teacher in arriving at an honest evaluation of learning. This includes aiding other students in acts of academic dishonesty and using programmable calculations, artificial intelligence or other technology in a manner not specified or authorized by the teacher. The act of knowingly and intentionally presenting materials, work, or concepts taken from sources of another person, publication, or program as one's own work product without appropriate documentation, teacher authorization, or citation is also considered to be academic dishonesty.

Students, parents/guardians, staff, and administrators shall be responsible for creating and maintaining a positive school climate that encourages honesty. It is the intent of the School that academic dishonesty be dealt with consistently and effectively in a manner aimed at addressing the specific incident, as well as changing the student's future behavior.

Engaging in any type of academic dishonesty will result in consequences consistent with District Policy 3300, 3310, and the Student Handbook.

This policy does not prohibit use of technology, artificial intelligence, sources, or techniques authorized by the classroom teacher as part of training or educational coursework in responsible and appropriate manner consistent the curriculum or lesson plan. Violation of classroom teacher directive or exceeding the scope of the classroom teacher's permission to utilize technology, sources, or techniques may be considered a violation of the policy. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate responsible use of technology into coursework consistent with the School's acceptable use protocols ~~at Policy 3540~~ and explain appropriate use for specific assignments in a consistent manner.

Procedure 3310-P(3): Student Discipline - IDEA Discipline

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 01/10/2003 | **Last Revised Date:** 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Student Suspension & Expulsion

A student with a disability (one of the disabilities defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)) is subject to suspension or expulsion (removal from his or her current educational placement and the cessation of educational services by MSDB) from school for 10 school days or less per school year on the same basis as a student without a disability.

If a student with a disability is endangering him/herself and/or others, to include teaching and cottage staff, the school shall take emergency action to protect the student and/or others from harm. This may, in extreme cases, involve calling the police.

The school may not suspend a student with disabilities for more than 10 school days during a school year--keeping in mind that the Gun-Free Schools Act does not amend or create any exception to federal civil rights laws. Students with disabilities are still protected under 504 and IDEA and may be suspended for no more than 10 school days unless;

1. the parent consents to an interim change in placement with educational services to be provided in an alternative placement; or
2. a temporary restraining order is issued by a court of competent jurisdiction; or
   meeting and placement team meeting to determine causal relationship between the student's misconduct and the student's disability and appropriateness of the student's current educational program placement.
3. a Child Study Team (CST) determines that the misconduct is not a direct manifestation of the student's disability and the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determines that the current placement is appropriate and the school continues to provide educational services; or
4. an IEP team determines that cumulative suspensions beyond 10 school days in one school year does not constitute a change in placement.

If the court denies the TRO and the parent refuses to consent to a change in placement, the student shall be returned to his/her placement and appropriate services provided immediately after the 10th day of suspension unless the misconduct involves violation of the Gun Free Schools Act. Changes in program or placement must be made by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team in accordance with IDEA procedures.

The following procedure shall be followed if an incident occurs which may require suspension of the student with disabilities for more than ten (10) school days in one school year.

1. On the day of the incident the school shall suspend the student with disabilities in the same manner as students without disabilities and immediately advise the parents or guardians of the suspension, reason for the suspension and provide a copy of MSDB policy procedures for suspension and due process.
2. After completion of the above, the Crisis ~~Prevention~~ Management Team will review records of the student with disabilities to determine if the suspension will result in a change in placement.
3. On the day after the incident the school shall notify the parents that the school will hold a meeting to determine if the misconduct of the student is directly related to the student's disability and review the student's educational records including special education assessments and disciplinary referrals to determine if evaluation information is current and whether additional assessment of the student's abilities is warranted at this time.
4. Before the tenth day the school shall convene the evaluation team meeting and placement team meeting to determine causal relationship between the student's misconduct and the student's disability and appropriateness of the student's current educational program placement.
5. On the eleventh day of suspension the school must review the process to ensure that the student with disabilities is receiving a free appropriate public education in accordance with proper procedures and determinations.

The Crisis Management Team shall have drawn up a prescriptive behavior management plan which will be thoroughly explained to the parents/guardians and child which will constitute the basis for the child's re-admittance to school and

may become part of the child's IEP. If this is not successful, MSDB will pursue judicial relief to have the student removed permanently (expelled) from residential and school placement.

Procedure 3310-P(5): Student Discipline - Student Use of Motor Vehicles on Campus

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 01/10/2003 | **Last Revised Date:** 09/12/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Student Use of Motor Vehicles on Campus

Residential and day students must have annual approval from the school and their parent or guardian to have a vehicle on campus. A parent/guardian must complete a signed "Vehicle Use Request" form, and submit it to the superintendent for approval. Permission to have a motor vehicle on campus is good for one school year only and must be requested each year by completing form. Once approval is granted, the following rules will apply:

1. Only students with a valid operator driver's license are permitted to have motor vehicles on campus. Proof of liability insurance and current vehicle registration are required for each vehicle before a student is allowed to have a vehicle on campus.
2. The motor vehicles of residential students will be treated as transportation from home to school and for the expressed purposes as indicated by the parental/guardian stated on form ~~3710F2~~ 3310-F(3), "~~Student Use of Motor Vehicles on Campus – Rules,~~" "Student Discipline - Student Vehicle Use Rule Form," and per approval of the dean of students or a designee. The motor vehicles of day students may be used only for transportation to and from school, special school-related activities and to visit residential students during after school hours. Additional uses must be authorized by the parent/guardian on form ~~3710F2.~~ 3310-F(3).
3. Only students whose parent/guardian have provided authorization on form, "Student Use of Motor Vehicles on Campus – Permission," are permitted to ride in other students' vehicles. This permission must state the specific date(s) of travel. Unless authorized by the dean of students or a designee, facsimiles, e-mail or phone permissions in lieu of form will not be accepted.
4. Upon arrival on campus with a vehicle, residential students will park and lock the motor vehicle in the Central Avenue parking lot. The residential student must immediately give all copies of the vehicle keys to the dean of students or a designee.
5. Motor vehicle keys will be reissued to a student immediately before the student leaves campus for reasons authorized by the parent/guardian. Day students with motor vehicles are to depart the school grounds immediately after the school day ends, or after their authorized purpose for driving to school has ended.
6. Driving during or immediately after inclement weather is not permitted.
7. No vehicle maintenance may be performed on campus.
8. MSDB assumes no responsibility for any theft, damage or vandalism to any motor vehicle either on or off campus. Any negligence arising out of the student's use of the vehicle shall be attributed to the student as comparative negligence within the meaning of Section 27-1-702, MCA.
9. Any student driving on campus in a reckless and disorderly manner will have his/her motor vehicle privileges revoked. They may only be renewed on the recommendation of the administration of MSDB.
10. Because of our concern for their safety, students are to follow all state and local motor vehicle rules or their motor vehicle privileges may be revoked. Once revoked, they may only be renewed on the recommendation of the administration of MSDB.

Policy 3410: Student Health

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 11/16/2003 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations

The Board of Public Education may arrange each year for health services to be provided to all students. Such services may include, but not be limited to:

1. The development of procedures for the isolation and temporary care of students who become ill during the school day.
2. Consulting services of a qualified specialist for staff, students and parents.
3. Vision and hearing screening.
4. Dental screening.
5. Scoliosis screening.
6. Immunization as provided by the Department of Health and Human Services.
7. Any physical or mental health services, examination, or screening.

Parent/guardians will receive a written notice of any screening result which indicates a condition that might interfere or tend to interfere with a student's progress. The notification will include notification to the parent of their right to opt their student out of such screenings.

Parents will be notified in writing prior to any group mental health screening applicable to all students or a specific group of students. The notification will include notification to the parent of their right to opt their student out of such screenings.

Parents will be notified in writing prior to any scheduled immunization of students. The notification will inform the parent that their child will not be immunized without the prior written consent of the parent.

~~Other than examination of students who are injured or become ill during the school day or who live in the residential program, the School Health Services will not conduct physical examinations of a student without parental consent to do so or by court order, unless the health or safety of the student or others is in question.~~

Further, parents will be notified of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening administered by the School is conducted which is:

1. Required as a condition of attendance.
2. Administered by the School and scheduled by the School in advance.
3. Not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student or other students.

Parents or eligible students will be given the opportunity to consent to the above-described non- emergency, invasive physical examination or screening. As used in this policy, the term "invasive physical examination" means any medical examination involving the exposure of private body parts or any act during such examination that includes incision, insertion, or injection into the body, but this does not include a hearing, vision or scoliosis screening.

Under circumstances where the health or safety of a student or others is in question during an emergency situation, District personnel may conduct a physical or mental evaluation of the student or otherwise provide health services necessary to protect the health and welfare of the student or others consistent with Policy 3431. The parent(s) of the student receiving a physical or mental evaluation or other health services will be informed of the details of the emergency and the services provided as circumstances permit.

Students who wish to participate in certain extracurricular activities may be required to submit to a physical examination to verify their ability to participate in the activity. Students participating in activities governed by the

Montana High School Association will be required to follow the rules of that organization, as well as other applicable School policies, rules and regulations.

All parents will be notified of the requirements of the School's policy on physical examinations and screening of students, at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in the policy.

Form 3416-F(1): Administering Medicines to Students - Designation and Acceptance to Administer Glucagon

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

See PDF on the next page.

Agenda Only

DESIGNATION AND ACCEPTANCE TO ADMINISTER GLUCAGON

As a parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative medical authorization affidavit, or a guardian of a diabetic student, I have designated _____ to administer glucagon to _____ only in emergency situations. I understand the designee must be an adult.

_____ _____
Signature Date

As the parent-designated adult, I agree to administer glucagon only in emergency situations to _____. I understand the glucagon must be provided by the parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative medical authorization affidavit, or the guardian of the student. I confirm that I have been trained in recognizing hypoglycemia and the proper method of administering glucagon. I have been trained by _____ on the _____ day of _____, 20___.

_____ _____
Signature of parent-designated adult Date

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Form 3416-F(2): Administering Medicines to Students - Montana Authorization to Possess or Self-Administer Asthma, Severe Allergy, or Anaphylaxis Medication

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

See PDF on the next page.

Montana Authorization to Possess or Self-Administer Asthma, Severe Allergy, or Anaphylaxis Medication

For this student to possess or self-administer asthma, severe allergy, or anaphylaxis medication while in school, while at a school sponsored activity, while under the supervision of school personnel, before or after normal school activities (such as while in before-school or after-school care on school-operated property), or while in transit to or from school or school-sponsored activities, this form must be fully completed by: 1) the prescribing physician/ physician assistant/advanced practice registered nurse, and 2) an authorizing parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational or medical authorization affidavit, or legal guardian.

Student's Name:_____ School: _____
Sex: (Please circle) Female/Male City/Town: _____
Birth Date: ____/____/____ School Year: _____(Must be renewed annually)

Physician's Authorization:
The above named student has my authorization to carry and self administer the following medication:
Medication: (1) _____ Dosage: (1) _____
(2) _____ (2) _____
Reason for prescription(s): _____
Medication(s) to be used under the following conditions (times or special circumstances): _____
_____

I confirm that this student has been instructed in the proper use of this medication and is able to self-administer this medication without school personnel supervision. I have formulated and provided to the parent/guardian or caretaker relative a written treatment plan for managing asthma, severe allergies, or anaphylaxis episodes and for medication use by this student during school hours and school activities.

_____ _____ _____
Signature of Physician/PA/APRN Phone Number Date

Authorization by Parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational or medical authorization affidavit, or Guardian

As the parent, individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational or medical authorization affidavit, or guardian of the above named student, I confirm that this student has been instructed by his/her health care provider on the proper use of this/these medication(s). He/she has demonstrated to me that he/she understands the proper use of this medication. He/she is physically, mentally, and behaviorally capable to assume this responsibility. He/she has my permission to self-medicate as listed above, if needed. If he/she has used epinephrine during school hours, he/she understands the need to alert the school nurse or other adult at the school who will provide follow-up care, including making a 9-1-1 emergency call.

I acknowledge that the school district or nonpublic school and its employees and agents are not liable as a result of any injury arising from the self-administration of medication by the student, and I indemnify and hold them harmless for such injury, unless the claim is based on an act or omission that is the result of gross negligence, willful and wanton conduct, or an intentional tort.

I agree to work with the school in establishing a plan for use and storage of backup medication. This will include a predetermined location to keep backup medication to which my child has access in the event of an asthma, severe allergy, or anaphylaxis emergency. I have provided the following backup medication: _____
_____.

I understand that in the event the medication dosage is altered, a new "self-administration form" must be completed, or the health care provider may rewrite the order on his/her prescription pad, and I, the parent/caretaker relative/guardian, will sign the new form and assure the new order is attached.

I understand it is my responsibility to pick up any unused medication at the end of the school year, and the medication that is not picked up will be disposed of.

I authorize the school administration to release this information to appropriate school personnel and classroom teachers.

Parent/Guardian, Caretaker Relative Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Original signed authorization to the school; a copy of the signed authorization to the parent/guardian and health care provider) See, generally, Mont. Code Ann. § 20-5-420.

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Notice Form 3416-NF(1): Administering Medicines to Students - Consent Form **Status:** DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

DESIGNATION AND ACCEPTANCE TO ADMINISTER MEDICATION

As a parent of a student _____ currently taking prescribed mediation, I _____ have designated and authorized _____ to assist the student administering the medication in accordance with District Policy 3416. This designation and authorization include possessing the medication, providing it to the student at the appointed times, and confirming the student has ingested the medication.

I agree to accept responsibility for my student's receiving assistance from _____. This designation is strictly voluntary. Any negligence arising out of my designation shall be attributed to me as comparative negligence within the meaning of Section 27-1-702, MCA. I agree that my student will abide by any directives issued by _____ and failure to honor these directives may result in acceptance of this designation and authorization to be withdrawn and my being contacted to administer medication my student.

This designation is in effect for the period of _____.

_____ _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

_____ _____
Signature of Health Care Provider Date

As the parent-designated adult, I agree to assist the student in administering the identified medication at the appointed times. I agree to possess the medication until it is needed. I understand the medication must be provided by the parent of the student. I confirm that I understand the method of possessing, ingesting, and timing as documented on this form. If a student refuses to comply with my directive as specified on this form, I will contact the parent or emergency contact immediately.

_____ _____
Signature of Employee Date

Medication: _____
Method of Possession: _____
Dosage Provided to Student: _____
Time and Frequency Provided to Student: _____
Method of Ingestion: _____
Additional Instructions: _____

In case of emergency, contact, and take following steps: _____

Policy 3431: Emergency Treatment

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 10/14/1992 | **Last Revised Date:** 10/16/2003 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Emergency Treatment and Accidents

In the event of injury or illness, the Board of Public Education recognizes that MSDB is responsible for providing first aid or emergency treatment, notifying the parent or guardian and in serious instances, summoning a doctor and/or arranging for hospitalization. In the case of day students, aid, care and communication with parents and monitoring of health care services will be provided by the staff of the health services program.

All accidents that occur on school property or during school activities should be reported to the principal and/or dean of student's office.

The Director of Health Services will develop uniform procedures for giving first aid and delegate necessary authority for arranging for medical attention and/or hospitalization, notifying parents, and officially reporting accidents. These procedures will be posted in the School and the staff will be informed of them.

The Board encourages its faculty and staff to become trained in first aid. The treatment of minor injuries or administering of medicine will only be performed by licensed health services staff and only when permission has been granted by the parent or guardian.

In the event a child is injured in school, first aid will be administered by the education or cottage staff until licensed health services staff reach the scene. If a child becomes acutely ill or is seriously injured, the school will inform the parents/guardian, who will make the decision whether to pick up the child at the School or meet the child at a health care facility when it is feasible for the parent to be in attendance. If the School is unable to reach the parents or if they choose to meet the child at the health care facility, the child may be transported by School personnel or by ambulance at the discretion of the Director of Health Services. If the School is unable to reach the parents, an attempt will be made to contact the child's personal physician as designated on the student's record.

Procedure for Reporting Accidents/Injuries

In all cases where an accident has occurred and an injury of any type is incurred, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. Report the accident to health services and secure medical assistance if necessary.
2. Written "Accident/Injury Report", ~~3415F~~ Policy 3431-F(1), should be completed by the following:
    A. The staff member(s) that witnessed the accident or were the first on the scene.
    B. Other witnesses.
    C. The Director of Health Services or other nurse on duty to whom the accident was reported.
3. The written report must be submitted immediately or as soon as reasonably possible to the program supervisor where the illness or accident occurred:
    A. Principal
    B. Dean of Students

When an accident occurs and one or more of these individuals are not on duty, the report should be left in their mailbox for immediate attention the next day.

4. The dean of students and the principal are to be informed of all serious injuries regardless of the time of day or night.
5. The dean of students and the principal are to be contacted whenever a child is hospitalized regardless of the time of day or night.

Policy 3510: School-Sponsored Activities

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 11/20/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 11/20/2024

School Sponsored Activities

This policy shall be made available to all interested individuals upon request and posted on the School's website. Parents and families shall be provided information about the nature and purpose of student clubs and groups meeting at the school and methods to consent to participation or opt out of participation consistent with parent/family rights.

1. Student Organizations:
    a. All curricular student clubs or organizations must be approved by the administration. Secret or clandestine organizations or groups will not be permitted.
    b. Bylaws and rules of curricular student clubs or organizations must not be contrary to policy or to administrative rules and regulations.
    c. Procedures in curricular student clubs or organizations must follow generally accepted democratic practices in the acceptance of members and nomination and election of officers.
    d. Student-led and initiated non-curricular student groups may meet at school in accordance with Policy without the sponsorship of the School District.
2. Social Events
    a. Social events must have prior approval of the administration.
    b. Social events must be held in school facilities unless approved by the Superintendent.
    c. Social events must be chaperoned at all times.
    d. Attendance at high school social events and dances shall be limited to high school students, and middle school social events shall be limited to middle school students, unless prior permission is received from the principal.
3. Extracurricular Activities
    a. Academic and behavior eligibility rules are established by MHSA rules and School policy.
    b. High school activities are for students consistent with MHSA rules.
    c. The Board authorizes the administration to consider requests to approve participation in high school activities by 8th grade students in consultation with parents at the request of the advisor or coach, consistent with this policy and MHSA rules. Additional coaches or chaperons may be required at the discretion of the administration if middle school and high school students are participating together.
    d. Any student convicted of a criminal offense may, at the discretion of school officials, become ineligible for such a period of time as the school officials may decide.
    e. In establishing an interscholastic program, the Board directs the administration to:
        i. Open all sports to all students enrolled with an equal opportunity for participation.
        ii. Open all sports to residents of the school district and who is at least 5 years of age and not more than 19 on or before September 10 of the year in which participation in extracurricular activities is sought by such child in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
        iii. Recommend sports activities based on interest inventories completed by the students.
4. Designation of Athletic Team

In accordance with Sec. 20-7-1306, MCA, the District shall designate all District-sponsored athletic teams or sports as one of the following based on biological sex:

1. coed or mixed.
2. females, women, or girls; or
3. males, men, or boys;

~~Unless otherwise prohibited by Policy 3210 or federal law, school-sponsored athletic teams or sports designated for females, women, or girls may not be open to students who are biologically of the male sex. School-sponsored athletic teams or events may be designated as one of the following based on biological sex in accordance with applicable MHSA rules, this Policy, federal law, Policy 3210, or the provisions of Section 6 of Chapter 405 (2021). This section of this Policy is void 21 days after the date the United States Secretary of Education files a written report with the proper committees of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate as required by 34~~

~~CFR 100.8(c) due to the enforcement of Chapter 405 (2021).~~

Policy 3650: Montana Pupil Online Personal Information Protection Act

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 11/20/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 11/20/2024

Compliance
The School will comply with the Montana Pupil Online Personal Information Protection Act. The school shall execute written agreements with operators who provide online applications for students and employees in the school district. The School will execute written agreements with third parties who provide digital educational software or services, including cloud-based services, for the digital storage, management, and retrieval of pupil records. The written agreements will require operators and third parties to the School for K-12 purposes or the delivery of student or educational services to comply with Montana and federal law regarding protected student information. All pupil records accessed by the operator or third party during the term of the agreement or delivery of service to the application will continue to be the property of and under the control of the school district.

Operators of Online Applications
Operators providing online applications to the School shall not target advertising to students, sell student information, or otherwise misuse student information. Operators shall not use information to amass a profile about a pupil, except in furtherance of K-12 school purposes. Operators shall not sell a pupil's information, including protected information, unless authorized by law. Operators shall not disclose protected information unless the disclosure is made in accordance with school policy, state or federal law, or with parent consent. Operators shall implement and maintain reasonable security procedures and practices appropriate to the nature of the protected information and safeguard that information from unauthorized access, destruction, use, modification, or disclosure. Operators shall delete a pupil's protected information if the school or district requests the deletion of data under the control of the school or district.

Definitions

"K-12 school purposes" means activities that customarily take place at the direction of a school, teacher, or school district or aid in the administration of school activities, including but not limited to instruction in the classroom or at home, administrative activities, and collaboration between pupils, school personnel, or parents, or that are for the use and benefit of a school. The term does not include courses that are provided for the purpose of postsecondary credit or work-based learning courses provided by a work-based learning partner pursuant to 20-7-1510.

Third Parties Providing Software and Services
Third parties providing digital education software and services to the School shall certify that pupil records will not be retained or available to the third party upon completion of the terms of the agreement. Furthermore, third parties shall not use any information in pupil records for any purpose other than those required or specifically permitted by the agreement with the operator. Third parties shall not use personally identifiable information in pupil records to engage in targeted advertising.

Third parties providing digital education software and services to the School shall provide a description of the means by which pupils may retain possession and control of their own pupil-generated content. Third parties shall provide a description of the procedures by which a parent, legal guardian, or eligible pupil may review personally identifiable information in the pupil's records and correct erroneous information. Third parties shall provide a description of the actions the third party will take, including the designation and training of responsible individuals, to ensure the security and confidentiality of pupil records. Third parties shall provide a description of the procedures for notifying the affected parent, legal guardian, or pupil if 18 years of age or older, in the event of an unauthorized disclosure of the pupil's records;

Failure to Comply and Legal Review
An operator's or third party's failure to honor the law, agreement or school policy will result in termination of services. The school will report any operator who fails to honor the law to the appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution.

All contracts and agreements executed under this agreement will be reviewed by the School's legal counsel.

Procedure 4330-P(1): Community Use of School Facilities - Rules and Regulations for Building/Facility/Equipment Use

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 07/16/2004 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 07/19/2024

1. Applications requesting use of the School facility must be presented to the Superintendent's Office at least ten (10) days in advance of the time desired and must be signed by a qualified representative of the organization desiring to use the building.
2. Rental fees schedules are outlined in Form 4330-F(1) "Application and Permit for Use of MSDB Facilities."
3. Fees may be waived for private nonprofit groups that do not charge admission fees and provide a benefit to the students served by the School. All other profit or nonprofit groups or organizations will be charged rental fees as listed above.
4. The use of the School premises will be denied when, in the opinion of the Superintendent, such use may be construed to be solely for commercial purposes, there is a probability of damage or injury to School property, or the activity is deemed to be improper to hold in School buildings or on School property.
5. In case of loss or damage to School property, the organization and/or individual signing the request shall be fully responsible and liable.
6. A certificate of liability insurance, as outlined in the "Application and Permit for Use of MSDB Facilities," will be required from the renting agency. This requirement maybe waived by the Superintendent when the risk of injury or property damage by certain activities for some groups or organizations is not present.
7. No furniture or apparatus shall be moved or displaced without permission.
8. No access to other rooms in the building shall be permitted unless designated by agreement.
9. There shall be no smoking within the School buildings. There shall be no narcotics, drugs, stimulants, or alcohol used or sold in or about School buildings and premises, nor shall profane language, quarreling, fighting, or gambling be permitted. Violations of this rule by any organization during occupancy shall be sufficient cause for denying further use of School premises to the organization.
10. Wax, or other preparations ordinarily used on dance floors, is not to be used on gymnasium floors.
11. The Superintendent may require a School employee to be present during use of the building by the non-school organization. In such case, the requesting organization will pay for the employee expense (i.e., custodians, overtime).
12. When the School official finds it necessary that police or other security personnel be retained for crowd control, such requirement may be added as a condition of the rental as outlined on Form 4330-F(1). ~~"Application and Permit for Use of MSDB Facilities."~~
13. There may be additional rules or conditions for the use of specific buildings on campus.

Policy 5120: Hiring Process and Criteria

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 10/14/1992 | **Last Revised Date:** 11/20/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 11/20/2024

Hiring Process and Criteria

The Superintendent is responsible for recruiting personnel, in compliance with Board policy, and for making hiring recommendations to the Board. The principal and dean of students will initially screen applicants for Education and Student Services program positions. The School will hire highly qualified personnel consistent with budget and staffing requirements and will comply with Board policy and state law on equal employment opportunities and veterans' preference. All applicants must complete a school application form to be considered for employment.

Every applicant must provide the school with written authorization for a criminal background investigation. The Superintendent will keep any conviction record confidential as required by law and school policy. Every newly hired employee must complete an Immigration and Naturalization Service form, as required by federal law. ~~Every newly hired employee must provide the school documentation of the results of a tuberculin skin test done within the year prior to initial employment, along with the name of the tester and the date and type of test administered, unless the person provides written medical documentation that he/she is a known tuberculin reactor.~~

Certification

The school requires its contracted certified staff to hold valid Montana teacher or specialist certificates endorsed for the roles and responsibilities for which they are employed. Failure to meet this requirement shall be just cause for termination of employment. Every teacher and administrator under contract must bring their current, valid certificate to the personnel office at the time of initial employment, as well as at the time of each renewal of certification.

The personnel office will register all certificates, noting class and endorsement of certificates, and will update permanent records as necessary. The personnel office also will retain a copy of each valid certificate of a contracted certified employee in that employee's personnel file.

Reference Checks

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee is authorized to inquire of past employers about an applicant's employment on topics including, but not limited to: title, role, reason for leaving, work ethic, punctuality, demeanor, collegiality, putting the interests of students first, and suitability for the position at the School. Responses to these inquiries should be documented and considered as part of the screening and hiring process.

Professional Staff Appointments and Salaries

The Board of Public Education authorizes the Superintendent of the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind to appoint professional staff subject to Board confirmation and consistent with professional practices and standards within the specialized fields. At the April Board meeting each year, the Superintendent will submit to the Board for approval a listing of all professional personnel by name, position, contract days, employment base, if other than Great Falls, and salary. The Superintendent shall submit a staffing pattern and job description for each administrative staff member with the April quarterly report each year.

Procedure 5120-P(1): Hiring Process and Criteria - Federal Background Check, Fingerprints, and Information Handling Procedure

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

1. Who needs to be fingerprinted: All individuals 18 years of age or older to be volunteers or recommended for hire by the School who will have unsupervised access to students need to be fingerprinted under the National Child Protection Act and Volunteers for Children's Act (NCPA/VCA) and § 20-3-323, MCA.
2. The School will obtain a signed waiver from all applicants and provide written communication of Applicant Rights and Consent to Fingerprint Form at 5122F. Applicants shall also be provided the Applicant Privacy statement at 5120F. The Applicant Rights and Consent to Fingerprint Form will be kept on file for 5 years or for the length of employment, which ever is longer. The form will be filed in the employees Personnel File.

Basis to Collect and Submit Fingerprints for Purposes of Federal Background Check
Fingerprints are obtained via local law enforcement agencies.

A spreadsheet of those fingerprinted is kept by the School District to identify the individual, position being hired for, date of fingerprint, date print received and date print billed.

The School District staff that have received training by CRISS will process the fingerprints and send them to the DOJ.

LASO
Human Resource Generalist has been appointed as the Local Agency Security Officer and acts as the primary point of contact between the School District and CRISS. HR Generalist is responsible for ensuring CJIS Policy compliance by all authorized recipients within the School LASO is also responsible of any Privacy and Security Agreements with those who do not use CHRI on a regular basis. Any change in appointment of the LASO or other authorized personnel will be reported to CRISS immediately.

Access of CHRI
All background results are received by employed HR Generalist through the State File Transfer Service. Results are printed and stored in a locked filing cabinet in the human resource office until a determination for employment is made. Only authorized personnel that have undergone Privacy and Security Information have access to printed criminal history record information. Authorized recipients of CHRI include:

Superintendent, Business Manager, Executive Secretary, and HR Generalist.

Printed background checks are reviewed by the HR Generalist and a determination form is completed. If any adverse results are present on the background check, it is given to the Superintendent for final determination of eligibility. MSDB utilizes a determination form but the CHRI is retained in accordance with this procedure.

Determination Procedures
Personnel staff that have been trained by CRISS and granted access to criminal history record information will receive the background results through their Montana State File Transfer account.

a. Results are reviewed for determination of eligibility to hire.
b. Any adverse reports are presented to the superintendent for final approval.
c. Determination is noted on a determination form and kept in a locked file cabinet.

Retention and Storage Procedure
All criminal history record information is stored in a locked filing cabinet within the human resource office. Only authorized personnel, Superintendent, HR Generalist, Executive Secreatary, and the Business Manager as noted in this policy have access to this information. Only authorized personnel are present during the determination process when the criminal record is being reviewed. Criminal history record information must be maintained for a period of at least two years following creation of the record or the date of the hiring decision, which is later.

Dissemination Logs are maintained for a period of 3 years from the date of dissemination or between audits, and the Applicant Rights and Consent to Fingerprint form is maintained for at least five years or the length of employment, whichever is longer.

Dissemination Procedure
Applicants wishing to obtain a copy of their background report may make a request to the LASO. A current government photo identification must be presented at the time of the request. A copy of the background report is made and marked as a "copy" and provided to the applicant. The dissemination is then logged. Dissemination logs include, what record was shared, the date it was shared, the method of sharing, and the agency personnel that shared the record. The dissemination log is stored in a locked filing cabinet for at least 3 years or between audits, whichever is longer.

Destruction Procedure
At the end of the retention and storage period outlined in this document, all CHRI and related information is shredded in house by HR Generalist.

Applicant procedures for challenging or correcting their record:
All applicants are given the opportunity to challenge or complete their record before a final determination is made.

Applicants wishing to challenge their record are given a copy of the background report.

The applicant is then given 10 days to contact the state or agency in which the record was created to make corrections. After the allotted time, the applicant must then provide the School District with a copy of the corrected background report provided by and notarized by the State Identification Bureau. The fee associated for a copy of the state record provided by the State Identification Bureau will be the responsibility of the applicant.

Policy and procedures for misuse of CHRI
The School does not allow dissemination of CHRI to persons or agencies that are not directly involved in the hiring and determination process. If CHRI is disseminated outside of the authorized receiving department, MSDB LASO will report this to CRISS immediately and provide CRISS with an incident response form. The incident response form will include the nature of the incident, any internal reprimands that may have resulted from the incident, as well as our agencies plan to ensure that this incident does not get repeated.

Training Procedure

- Local Agency Security Officer (LASO)
    - Signed user agreement between district and CRISS
- Privacy and Security Training
    - CRISS training on CHRI required to receive background reports

Policy 5122: Fingerprints and Criminal Background Investigations

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 07/18/2003 | **Last Revised Date:** 11/20/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 11/20/2024

Fingerprints and Criminal Background Investigations

It is the policy of the Board of Public Education that any finalist recommendation for hire or appointment to a paid or volunteer position with the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind, that involves regular unsupervised access to students in the school or cottages, as determined by the Superintendent, shall submit to a fingerprint-based national criminal history background check conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation prior to consideration of the recommendation for employment. The purpose of this background check is to determine if the applicant has been convicted of certain criminal or drug offenses. The results of the fingerprint-based check shall be presented to the Superintendent concurrent with the recommendation, from the program administrator, for employment or appointment. Any offer of employment or appointment shall be contingent upon results of the fingerprint criminal background check, which must be acceptable to the Superintendent, at his or her sole discretion.

Applicants to MSDB, as a condition of employment to the following positions, must authorize in writing and submit to a fingerprint criminal background investigation:

- All employees in all program areas at the Great Falls campus of the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind;
- All employees of the MSDB Education Program's Outreach Services Division;
- All substitute teachers*, teacher assistants, interpreters and cottage life attendants;
- Any volunteer assigned within the education or residential program who has regular, unsupervised access to students; including chaperons, volunteer coaches, club advisers.

Additionally, employees of contracted service providers or MSDB Foundation employees in the following positions, as a condition for approved access to the MSDB campus and facilities, must authorize in writing and submit to a fingerprint criminal background investigation:

- Any employee of the MSDB Foundation, Inc., who is assigned to MSDB and has regular, unsupervised access to students;
- Any employee of a person or firm holding a contract with MSDB, if the employee is assigned to the school and has regular, unsupervised access to students.

Each applicant or employee who has been asked to submit to a fingerprint-based background check is entitled to:

- Obtain a copy of any background check report;
- Challenge the accuracy and completeness of any information contained in any such report;
- And, obtain a prompt determination as to the validity of such challenge before a final determination is made by the Superintendent.

If an applicant has any prior record of arrest or conviction by any local, state, or federal law enforcement agency, including conviction following a plea of nolo contendere, a conviction in which the sentence is suspended or deferred, or any other adjudication treated by the court as a conviction, for an offense other than a minor traffic violation, the record must be reviewed by the Superintendent, who shall decide whether the applicant shall be declared eligible for employment or appointment. Arrests resolved without conviction shall not be considered in the hiring process unless the charges are pending.

The requirement that an applicant submit to a fingerprint background check shall be consistent with and in compliance with the National Child Protection Act of 1993 and the Volunteers for Children Act of 1998 and applicable federal regulations. The definitions set forth in Policy 3665 are applicable to this policy. For rules and requirements specific to work-based learning, see Policy 2600.

Policy 5314: Substitutes

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 11/16/2003 | **Last Revised Date:** 11/20/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 11/20/2024

Substitutes

Any non-licensed substitute teacher must complete a minimum of three hours of training, as approved by the Board of Public Education. This training will consist of:

- 1 hour - Orientation to campus programs and safety policies and procedures
- 1 hour - Orientation to classroom procedures
- 1 hour - Orientation to lifting, positioning and feeding of multi-handicapped students

A non-licensed substitute must have received a high school diploma or attained a passing score on the general education development assessment. A fingerprint background check must be conducted on each non-licensed substitute teacher and the teacher cannot be employed until state and federal authorities have reported the results of the background check ~~or until the school has conducted a reference check of the applicant~~.

Policy 7110: Budget and Program Planning

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 10/14/1992 | **Last Revised Date:** 07/16/2004 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/12/2024

Budget and Program Planning

The biennial budget is evidence of the Board's commitment to the objectives of the Education and Student Services Programs of the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind. The budget supports the immediate and long-range goals and established priorities within all areas, residential, instructional, non-instructional, and administrative programs.

The biennial budget, as developed through the Executive Planning Process (EPP) shall be communicated to the Board of Public Education for its consideration during even numbered years. The Superintendent and Business Manager shall present the following at the Board meeting prior to the submittal deadline set by the budget process:

~~March meeting~~ – new expenditure requests to be submitted to the Governor's Office of Budget and Program Planning (OBPP),

~~May meeting~~ – proposed requests for long range building to the Department of Administration; Architecture and Engineering Division,

~~November meeting~~ – the biennial budget as approved by the OBPP for legislative consideration and approval.

Program planning and budget development shall provide for staff and constituent participation and the sharing of information prior to submission to the Governor's Office.

Policy 8121: School-Owned Vehicles

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 11/16/2003 | **Last Revised Date:** 11/20/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 11/20/2024

School-Owned Vehicles
MSDB owns and maintains certain vehicles. Included among them are vans, sedans, pickups, and school buses. These are for use by properly authorized personnel of the school for school business purposes.

Accidents involving School-owned vehicles, regardless of citation or injury, will be reported to the Superintendent or designee immediately. Drivers shall make themselves readily available for questioning by the School or its designees, absent the need for immediate medical attention.

Any driver who receives a citation for a driving violation while operating a school vehicle shall personally pay all fines levied. All citations received while an employee of MSDB, operating a school vehicle, must be reported to the Superintendent and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Bus and Vehicle Maintenance
Buses used in the School's transportation program shall be in safe and legal operating condition. All buses shall be inspected by the Department of Justice, Montana Highway Patrol, before the beginning of each semester. The Business Manager shall establish a specific list of tasks that bus drivers shall perform on a regular basis. All other school vehicles shall be maintained following established programs as developed by the Business Manager.

Guidelines for Use of State-Owned Vehicles

Restrictions on Use of State-Owned Vehicles
State employees with a valid driver's license appropriate to the type of vehicle may drive a state vehicle as part of their work assignment for the purposes of traveling and conducting business on behalf of the state. Employees must always have the license in his/her possession while operating a state-owned vehicle. Employees may park a state vehicle overnight at his/her residence if the employee must begin travel the next day or if the employee is subject to emergency response, on-call or other off-shift duties associated with employment. Employees on authorized, work-related overnight travel away from home may drive to a cultural, recreational, leisure activity or to conduct personal business if the activity is within 30 miles of the employee's lodging.

Only authorized passengers are allowed in state vehicles. Authorized passengers include state employees conducting business on behalf of the state, students enrolled at the school and non-state employees who are: independent contractors conducting business on behalf of the state, rendering assistance to a disabled state employee, a guest or client of the state if conducting or providing service that is a benefit to the business of the state. This includes parents/guardians of students served by MSDB if the purpose of transportation is connected to the business of the school or outreach program. Any exceptions must have prior written approval of the Risk Management and Tort Defense Division (RMTD).

Employees must immediately report to their supervisor, any traffic citations for a moving violation for which he/she has been cited while operating a state vehicle. Executive Order No. 9-70 requires the following action for speeding violations while driving a state vehicle:

- First offense-notification to agency
- Second Offense-official written reprimand with a copy placed in the personnel file
- Third Offense- dismissal from state employment

A state employee required to drive as part of his/her duties must report any single driving infraction of 5 or more conviction points according to the schedule in 61-11-203, MCA, accumulated while driving a state vehicle or a personal vehicle for state business.

A non-probationary employee who has accumulated 12 or more conviction points while driving a state vehicle or a personal vehicle for state business over the most recent 36 months may not drive a state or personal vehicle for state

business until having successfully completed a certified safe driver course approved by the RMDT and have received authorization to drive from the Superintendent and RMTD. State employees who have accumulated 15 or more conviction points may not drive a state vehicle or personal vehicle for state vehicle business until the accumulated points total is less than 12 within the past 36 months.

A non-probationary employee who has accumulated 18 or more conviction points while driving a state vehicle or a personal vehicle for state business over the most recent 36 months may not drive a state or personal vehicle for state business until 2 years have passed, during which time they have not accumulated any conviction points and have successfully completed a certified safe driver course approved by the RMDT and have received authorization to drive from the Superintendent and RMTD.

Authorized drivers are responsible for promptly paying all penalties following the court procedures established for contesting citations. The Superintendent has the authority to restrict employees otherwise authorized as drivers from using state vehicles when it knows they are unsafe drivers from means other than the accumulation of conviction points.

Rules of Operation

- Employees must operate state vehicles in compliance with all applicable state and local traffic regulations, Administrative Rules of Montana, Executive Orders and Agency policies. State employees shall drive in a careful and prudent manner so as not to unduly or unreasonably endanger the life, limb, property or rights of another person or pedestrian.
- No person under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or who is impaired by the proper or improper use of prescription drugs may drive a vehicle for state business. No person may have an alcoholic beverage container in a state-owned vehicle.
- Employees operating state vehicles shall be responsible for ensuring that all occupants of the vehicle use seat belts at all times and that children under 6 years of age, 40 pounds are properly restrained in a child safety seat. Employees operating vehicles transporting students are responsible for ensuring that students are seated at all times. Students must be facing forward with arms, hands, legs and feet inside the vehicle at all times.
- Employees will ensure that vehicles are returned to campus with no less than ¼ tank of gas. If transporting students makes a gas stop unsafe or impractical, employees shall notify his/her supervisor. MSDB staff who are operating vehicles transporting students are responsible to see that that vehicle interiors are returned to campus free of trash and any spills are appropriately cleaned.
- All vehicles must be checked out in advance from the school or cottage office.
- Employees will park vehicles in safe and appropriate locations and ensure that vehicles are locked and the windows are rolled up when unattended.
  Employees may not affix bumper stickers or other items, or alter state-owned vehicles in any manner.

School-Owned Vehicle Emergencies
In the event of an accident or other emergency, the driver of any school-owned vehicle or bus shall follow the emergency procedures developed by the Superintendent. A copy of the "Emergency Procedures Manual" shall be located in each vehicle and bus. To ensure the success of such emergency procedures, each driver shall conduct an emergency evacuation drill within the first six (6) weeks of each school semester. MSDB shall conduct such other drills and procedures as may be necessary.

Use of Personal Cars for School Business
When travel related to work is necessary, all employees will use state-owned vehicles which can be signed out for use through the Administration or Cottage Offices. In specific limited cases, employees may use their personal vehicles related to their work assignment during the duty day. In order to use a personal vehicle for work purposes, the following conditions must be met:

1. Employees must have prior written approval from the program administrator before using their personal vehicle for work-related purposes.
2. Employees must also maintain registration and liability insurance within the limits of state law.

Students may never be transported in a personal car unless the previously listed conditions have been met.

1. The employee receives prior written approval to use his/her personal car for work-related business.
2. The employee must drive between two or more work assignments during the duty day.
3. There are no state vehicles available for use at the time that transportation is necessary.

Mileage reimbursement for use of personal cars will be provided at the "State" rate only if:

According to administrative rule, when a state vehicle is available and an employee is given approval to use his/her personal car, the mileage reimbursement rate will be at a reduced motor pool rate.

State of Montana Official Reference for Vehicle Use: ARM 2.6.201-2.6.210

Policy 8205: Meal Charge

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 11/14/2014 | **Last Revised Date:** 11/20/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 11/20/2024

Meal Charge Policy

Note: For the purpose of this policy, parent includes guardian, caretaker relative, and any adult responsible for the care of the child.

The goal of the school is to allow children to receive the nutrition they need to stay focused during the school day. The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

MSDB complies with Federal USDA policies on meal charging and debt collection. All meal charges must be paid directly to the school.

~~If a student is without meal money, the administration will take action deemed necessary to collect unpaid meal charges while ensuing the nutritional needs of the student are met in providing the student with a regular meal. If financial hardship exists, parents and families will be encouraged to apply for free or reduced-price lunches for their child(ren).~~

~~***Note: Below are examples that could be incorporated into the district meal charge policy.***~~

~~Meal Charges~~

~~**Option:** A student is allowed to charge no more than _____meals. After the _____ meal is charged, the parent must send money to pay the charges or send meals from home with your child. If there are financial problems, please contact the school and we will implement a payment program. [A la carte items may not be charged.]~~

~~**Option:** Students will pay for meals at the district's published standard rate [each day, weekly, monthly]. A student will be allowed to charge a maximum of ___ meals to their account after their balance reaches zero. Once a student has charged those ___ meals, he/she will not be allowed to charge a la carte items.~~

~~**Option:** Students/Parents pay for meals in advance via [enter website address if applicable] or with a check payable to _____. Further details are available on our webpage at [enter web address]. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for a particular student will be carried over to the next school year.~~

~~**Option:** If there are no available funds in the student's account, he/she will be given a breakfast or lunch on account. A notice and/or letter will be sent home with the child requesting payment. A regular meal will be served until the account is balanced or if the student has money in hand for the current meal.~~

~~Zero-Balance Prevention~~

~~**Option:** Parents are responsible for meal payment to the food service program. Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent to parents at regular intervals during the school year.~~

~~**Option:** Parents can track balances themselves online [insert web address], sign up for meal notification for free, and set up an auto payment low-balance threshold by following the links to the [insert web address].~~

~~**Option:** Every student may access their meal account at [insert web address].~~

~~**Option:** The student may check with the [cashiers, lunch supervisor] to see the balance of their account at any time.~~

~~Refunds for withdrawn or graduating students.~~

~~A written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted. An e-mail request is also acceptable. Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given the option to transfer to a sibling's account with a written request.~~

~~Unclaimed Funds must be requested within one school year. Unclaimed funds will become the property of the School District Food Service Program.~~

~~Uncollected meal debt may be collected per state and/or federal guidelines.~~

~~The language below is to be used by those school districts who are on the Community Eligibility Provisions (CEP) program.~~

The School~~/School District~~ has eliminated the risk of unpaid meal charges by participating in the Community Eligibility Provisions (CEP) program, which is a meal service option for schools and school districts operating school meal programs in high-poverty communities. CEP allows the school to provide breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled children without the need to collect applications or establish individual eligibility for a four-year period, thereby increasing access to school meals and eliminating unpaid meal charges.

Policy 8410: Operation and Maintenance of Facilities

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 07/16/2004 | **Last Revised Date:** 11/20/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 11/20/2024

Operation and Maintenance of School Facilities

The school seeks to maintain and operate facilities in a safe and healthful condition. ~~The business manager, in cooperation with the principal, dean of students, fire chief and county sanitarian, shall periodically inspect the plant and facilities. S/he shall provide for a program to maintain the school's physical plant by way of a continuous program of repair, maintenance and reconditioning. Budget recommendations shall be made each year to meet these needs and any such needs arising from an emergency.~~

~~The business manager shall formulate and implement energy conservation measures. Program managers and staff are encouraged to exercise other cost-saving procedures in order to conserve the resources of the school within their buildings.~~

The school recognizes the importance the physical plant plays in enhancing the instructional program. The Superintendent shall develop a program to maintain and/or upgrade the buildings and grounds of the school. Facilities represent a long-term investment in the school. The functional utility of such facilities can be increased with a regular maintenance program monitored by staff.

The Board further recognizes the importance of planning in order to provide the anticipated facility needs of the future. When the School considers major remodeling or building of a facility, it shall endeavor to seek facility expertise in all affected program areas, as well as comments from faculty, students, and community.

The operation of the school's facilities shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent ~~through the business manager in cooperation with the principal and dean of students~~. The superintendent ~~business manager~~ shall manage the operation of the facilities through the maintenance supervisor of the school's school facilities. An adequate staff of custodial personnel will be employed by the school to operate the school's facilities. This responsibility shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

1. Adequate and timely maintenance and operation of each facility's heating and/or cooling system.
2. Proper cleaning and maintenance of the School's physical properties, including walls, floors, roofs, ceilings, and equipment in those facilities.
3. Adequate care of and timely lamp replacement in each facility's lighting system.
4. Proper care of each facility's grounds including shrubs and trees, and playground areas and equipment.
5. Timely removal of snow and ice from sidewalks and parking lots.

Because of the nature of facility operations, this service shall be provided not only during the normal scheduled working day and working year, but shall also occur during those times when the building is occupied outside regular hours.

Inspections

The School shall permit representatives of DPHHS or local health authority to enter any school at any reasonable time for the purpose of making inspections to determine compliance with applicable regulations. DPHHS or local health authority may determine that special circumstances or local conditions warrant inspections with greater or less frequency. Upon receiving a complaint, the local health authority may determine if more inspections are necessary.

Inspections of school facilities shall be done using forms approved by the DPHHS. Inspection records shall be kept on file at the school for at least three years from the time of inspection. Following each inspection, representatives of the DPHHS or local health authority shall give the school administration a copy of an inspection report which notes any deficiencies and sets a time schedule for compliance. The report shall document deficiencies.

The School shall comply with the Building and Fire Safety Codes administered by the State Building Codes Division and the State Fire Marshal or by local building officials.

Laundry Facilities
Laundries operated in conjunction with or utilized by the School shall be provided with:

1. A mechanical washer and hot air tumble dryer. Manual washing and line drying of towels and other laundry items is prohibited. Dryers shall be properly vented to prevent maintenance problems and buildup of moisture.
2. A hot water supply system capable of supplying water at a temperature of 120°F to the washer during all periods of use.
3. Sufficient separation between the area used for sorting and storing soiled laundry and the area used for folding and storing clean laundry to prevent the possibility of cross-contamination.
4. Separate carts for transporting soiled and clean laundry.
5. Handwashing facilities including sink, soap, and disposable towels. A soak sink may double as a handwashing sink. Towels and other laundry items shall be machine washed at a minimum temperature of 120°F for a minimum time of ten minutes and dried to greater or equal to 130°F for ten minutes in a hot air tumble dryer.

Solid Waste and Recycling
In order to ensure that solid waste, including recycling material, is safely stored and disposed of, the School shall:

1. Store all solid waste between collections in containers which have lids, are corrosion-resistant, and are constructed to minimize pest attraction and harborage;
2. Clean all solid waste containers with sufficient frequency to maintain them in a condition which minimizes pest attraction;
3. For exterior containers other than dumpsters or compactors, utilize stands which prevent the containers from being tipped, protect them from deterioration, and allow easy cleaning below and around them. Further, dumpsters or compactors shall be located on or above a smooth surface of non-absorbent material, such as concrete or asphalt, that is maintained in clean and good condition;
4. Transport, or utilize a private or municipal hauler to transport, the solid waste at least weekly to a landfill site approved by the DEQ in a covered vehicle or covered containers. Physical Requirements

Physical Requirements
The school shall comply with the following physical requirements:

1. Floors, walls, and ceilings in toilet, locker, and shower rooms, laundries, janitorial closets, and similar rooms subject to large amounts of moisture shall be maintained in a smooth and non-absorbent condition. Non-absorbent, non- skid floor matting may be used where appropriate to prevent injury.
2. Adequate coat/jacket and book storage for each student shall be provided;
3. Livestock and poultry shall be located more than 50 feet from food service areas, offices, or classrooms except those offices and classrooms associated with animal husbandry activities or other demonstrations as approved by the school administration. In classrooms, offices, or food service areas where livestock and poultry are approved by the administrator, animals shall not have contact with eating or serving surfaces.

MSDB / BPE Bi-Monthly Meeting Agenda
3:15 PM - 4:30 PM

Date: 11/4/2026	Attendees:

Meeting Objectives: • Provide BPE Information about all MSDB Programs • Seek guidance from the BPE	Future Agenda Items:

Program	Agenda Items	Items Needing Follow-Up

Superintendent	• November 26 Personnel Action Report
	• Out of State Travel Requests
	  ○ Regional Academic Bowl, Denver CO
	  ○ Close Up, Washington DC
	  ○ DHH HS Theatre, Riverside CA
	• OPI Discretionary Grant Application
	• Final Reading on Policies as Presented
	• 1st Reading on Policies
	• OPI Accreditation Cycle
	• Foundation Update
	  ○ October Agenda
	  ○ October Budget
	  ○ 2026 Accountant Review Report
		• Action Items Needed
		  ○ Personnel Action
		  ○ Student OOS Travel Requests
		  ○ Discretionary Grant
		  ○ Final Reading Policies

Human Resources	• LinkedIn • Local Recruitment Plan	

Business Office	• PPE 10-16-26 Financial Report • PPE 10-16-26 Wages & Benefits Report • PPE 10-16-26 Expenses Report • PPE 10-16-26 Payroll Forecast	
Residential	• Cottage Refresh • New Travel Structure • Trainings	

Education: School	• Current Enrollment 11.4.2026
	• LEAP students
	• Inquiry/Referrals 11.4.2026
	• End of 1st Quarter
	• JOL reporting
	• Consultants/Training on campus or virtual
	  ○ Samantha Mullins (MTSS)
	  ○ Marie Alcock (Proficiency Based)
	  ○ Stephanie Lester (MT Reads)
	• MAFB Tank or Treat	

Education: Outreach	• Outreach Database
	• Outreach students- ~761
	• Outreach Walkthrough
	  ○ Consultant interactions with schools and families:
	  ■ Deaf Hard of Hearing - 776
	  ■ Visually Impaired - 805
	• Northern Rockies Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NRAER)
	• American Printing House (APH) annual meeting
	• Fall Campus Enrichment Days (CED)	

Public Relations	• Annual Report • Email Signature Standardization • Logo Refresh • Website	

Board of Public Ed Meeting

BOPE Meeting – Summary - November 4, 2026

Those in attendance - Paul Furthmyre, Tim Tharp, Lisa Schmidt, Julia Maxwell, Donna Schmidt, Belinda Neill, Jacquie Fogerty, Alissa Kline, Miranda Briggs, Julie-Dee Alt, Linnette Haman
Absent: McCall Flynn
Note Taker – Paula Mix

Approval of Agenda

Meeting Objectives:

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

- **Action Items Needed**
  - Personnel Action
  - Student OOS Travel Requests
  - Discretionary Grant
  - Final Reading Policies

Administration - Paul Furthmyre

- The November 26 Personnel Action Report highlighted several staffing changes, including three new hires, two resignations, three upcoming retirements extending into 2027, and one probationary layoff.
- For out-of-state travel, requests were submitted for the Regional Academic Bowl in Denver, Close Up in Washington DC, and DHH HS Theatre in Riverside.
- The OPI Discretionary Grant Application was submitted without major changes, continuing the policy that grant funds do not cover base staff salaries in alignment with state guidelines.
- Policy reviews included an initial presentation of 5–6 brand-new policies, while updated existing policies (such as removing obsolete mandatory employee TB testing requirements) were recommended for final approval.
- Additionally, the school is entering its OPI accreditation cycle alongside Cognia standards.
- Finally, quarterly financial updates for the Foundation were shared per the MOU with the Board of Public Education, including the October agenda, October budget, and the 2026 Accountant Review Report, which is now conducted regularly following a past audit to maintain updated financial records.

Human Resources - Jacquie Fogerty

- The new LinkedIn page is live, with efforts underway to refine branding for enhanced recruitment. HR is executing a local recruitment plan by partnering with the Great Falls Chamber of Commerce and the Great Falls Development Alliance, while also posting openings with Malmstrom AFB and MT Air National Guard Family Readiness departments.

- A brief inquiry confirmed that while Catholic school staff are generally retaining their roles, follow-ups will occur regarding potential applicants from local institutions. The department noted operational frustrations surrounding significant onboarding delays (up to 9 weeks) caused by state and DOJ fingerprint background processing, which risks candidate dropouts.

Business Office - Donna Schmidt

- The financial report through mid-October tracked four core programs (Administrative, General Services, Student Services Cottage, and Education) pulled directly from the SABHRS system. Two and a half months into the $11.5 million annual budget, spending remains on track with minor line-item shortages covered by unspent personal services funds from open vacancies. Auxiliary reports covering wages, benefits, expenses, and payroll forecasts reflect stable early-year figures, with a projected $841,000 year-end wage balance that will adjust as upcoming retirement payouts and vacant positions are finalized.
- Work on the FY 28-29 budget is wrapping up with the Legislative Fiscal Division, slated for legislative submission on November 15 following the governor's budget release.

Residential - Alissa Kline

- The Cottage refresh is progressing well, with upgraded bedding, accent chairs, bath linens, and fully replaced dining and living room furniture; shower curtains, dressers, and nightstands are expected soon, with activity room setups scheduled next.
- The new weekend travel structure has drawn strong positive feedback from families and served as a major driver for new enrollments.
- Comprehensive survey data on these changes will be presented to the board in January. Additionally, residential staff completed trauma-informed Love and Logic training alongside MSU Extension food safety training, with defensive driving instruction planned next.

Education: Julie-Dee Alt

- On-campus enrollment stands at 39 students with active referrals pending, alongside 5 students participating in the LEAP transition program who are engaging in state transition conferences, work programs, and industry webinars. Referral and inquiry volumes remain high, with 16 student referrals currently undergoing evaluation for vision and hearing services.
- End-of-quarter JOL reporting has implemented six core domains across grade levels evaluated on a 1–4 P-scale, with minor curriculum adjustments underway for high schoolers.
- Campus professional development continues regularly with external educational consultants. Community events included the annual Tank or Treat in the IMC with support from local military volunteers.
- The goalball team is scheduled to compete in an upcoming tournament in Colorado against regional opponents.

Education: Outreach - Miranda Briggs

- Outreach services have conducted over 1,500 combined service interactions for Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Visually Impaired students.
- To replace the non-functional EdHub database, the team is collaborating with OPI to test Infinite Campus add-ons and fillable PDF forms.
- Outreach staff maintain active professional involvement, including leadership roles in regional associations and participation in the American Printing House annual meeting. APH discussions highlighted SRS database security updates and new USPS requirements for shipping braille materials, prompting the setup of a local postal account.
- Recent Fall Campus Enrichment Days engaged 18 students in bird identification and observation activities with positive feedback. The outreach department is currently covering workload demands using four consultants while actively seeking to fill four open positions.

Public Relations - Linnette Haman

- The annual report created in Canva is undergoing final leadership review, though staff face challenges making the document ADA-compliant for web posting after investing 200–300 creation hours.
- Standardization of employee email signatures is planned, while the finalized logo refresh will be held until the full brand guide is complete.
- Main website compliance challenges stem from uploaded document accessibility rather than the site platform itself, bringing focus to an open Office for Civil Rights complaint regarding the student handbook. The department is evaluating Microsoft Word accessibility tools and consulting with state entities to establish compliant document attachment processes.

Bill #	Policy	Policy Name	Action	Reason	Status	Notes
HB567	1007FE	Multidistrict Agreements	Don't Adopt	MSDB does not have Multidistrict Agreements		
HB359	1009FE	Recruitment and Retention - Flexible Instructor Licensing	Consider	MSDB has spent two sessions working towards eligibility for many of the programs listed.	New	
	1310	District Policy and Procedures	Updated			
	1700	Uniform Complaint Procedure	Consider	Provides a better and clear picture of difference processes	Current	Needs to be on Website
				MSDB does most of the activities with personalized opportunities via Pre Ets		
SB278	1015FE	Personalized Learning Opportunities	Don't Adopt	MSDB has a Transition Coordinator and don't need the Opportunity Facilitator		

Bill #	Policy	Policy Name	Action	Reason	Status	Notes	
						Have other policy that addresses AIDS.	
HB471	2335	Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues	Consider	Update and Replace all of Current Policy	Current	Provides guidance on details of notices	
HB471	2335 NF 1	Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - Annual Notice	Consider	Update to mirror 2335	Current		
HB471	2335 NF 3	Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - 5 to 14 Day Notice	Consider	Completely Replace the NF 2	Current		
HB471	2335 NF 4	Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - Identity Instruction Opt In	Consider		New		
						Needs to be on the website	
HB599	2132	Student and Family Privacy Rights	Consider	Parental Rights Language	Current	Annual Notification	Special Parent Notifcation to bring to board
HB343	2334	Release Time for Religious Instruciton	Consider		New		
HB381	2600	Work Based Learning	Consider	Update Fingerprint Wording	Current	Add wording for employment and credit	
HB591	2100	School Calendar and Day	Consider	Includes Saturday School if Needed	Current	Also Lists Holidays to Observe	Should include White Cane Day and Gallaudent Day
SB181	2450	Indian Education for All	Consider	Complys with bill	Current		
SB369	2150	Suicide Awareness and Prevention	Consider	Need training for year	Current	Find training ASAP	
HB250	2050	Innovative Student Instruction	Monitor	Apply to MSDB?	Current		
HB338 / SB35	2158	Parent and Family Engagement and Educational Involvement	Monitor	Programs added to policy, MSDB does not participate in due to IDEA	Current	Needs to be on Website	
HB338 / SB35	2165	Early Targeted Intervention	Monitor	MSDB?	New		
HB338 / SB35	2165 NF	Early Targeted Intervention	Monitor	If we add 2165 then need Notification Form	New		
	2162 P1	Section 504 - Procedures	Consider	Renumber to P2 to match other policies and change language about meetings	Current		
	2161	Special Education	Consider	MSDB is not eligible to be in special education coop.	Current		
	2161P(1)	Special Education	Get Input	MSDB does not participate in Child Find	Current		
	2314-F(1)	Instructional and Library Materials Review Form	Consider	Coresponds with the Policy adoped	New		
	2320	Field Trips, Excursions, and Outdoor Education	Monitor	Lists one staff with valid first aide must be on all trips	Current	Parent Permission also needed	
	2410-P(1)	High School Graduation Requirements	Monitor	Student handbook requirements	Current		

Bill #	Policy	Policy Name	Action	Reason	Status	Notes
HB471	3410	Student Health	Consider	Update information of parent notification	Current	Has annual notice
SB350	3510	School-Sponsored Activities	Consider	Update state law for definition of sports	Current	MTSBA also has language about homeschool. Consider?
	3310-P(2)	Student Discipline - Academic Honesty and Responsibility Use of Resources	Consider	Update Policy Number in Policy to 3612	Current	Also, Delete Policy 3540 in last paragraph
HB631/SB297	3650	Montana Pupil Online Personal Information Protection Act	Consider	Add Definition language	Current	
HB250	3141	Nonresident Student Enrollment	Get Input	MSDB need?	New	Similar to 3510 Nonresident
MB745	3665	Student Safety	Get Input	We have amended all policies, neet?	New	
HB400	3310	Student Discipline	Consider	Add Exception Language	Current	
HB600, SB211, SB502	3416	Administering Medicines to Students	Consider		New	Have April Look over
HB338 and SB35	3121	Enrollment and Attendance	Get Input		New	
	3110-P3	Entrance, Placement, and Transfer - Full Education Opportunity	Consider	Name update for DPHHS	Current	
	3122	Attendance Policy	Info	Code of Student Behavior?	Current	What is it and where is it located? Also in Policy 3231
	3125 NF 1	Education of Homeless Children- Mckinney Vento Homeless	Consider	Form to attach to policy 3125	New	
	3125	Education of Homeless Children	Consider	Update Form Numbere in Policy	Current	
	3210	Equal Educational Opportunity, Nonidiscrimination and Sex Equitey	Info	Who are the coordinators and handbook	Current	
	3224	Student Drss	Consider	Elimating Hat Verbage	Current	
	3225	Sexual Harassment of Students	Info	Need to post documents and Title XI Coordinator	Current	Post on website
	3233	Student Use of Buildings	Info	Neds to be on Websited	Current	
	3235	Video Surveillance	Consider	Video Recordings don't have audio option	Current	
	3310-P3	Discipline Under IDEA	Consider	Eliminate Prevention and add Management	Current	Creates consistency with team name
	3310-P5	Student Use of Motor Vehicles on Campus	Consider	Update Policy Number and Name	Current	
	3410-P2	Student Health - Crisis Response	Get Input	Policy Looking out of date	Current	
	3415	Management of Sports Related Concusions	Info	Training and Paperwork Requirement	Current	
	3431	Emergency Treatment	Consider	Update Form number in policy	Current	Also procedures posted in school?
	3431-F	Emergency Treatment - Reporting Form	Get Input	Need update	Current	
	3550	Student Clubs	Info	Posted to website / student handbook	Current	
	3550-NF1	Student Clubs Application	Consider	Update first paragraph with location to be obtained	Current	
	3600-F1	Studen Directory Information Notification	Consider	Redo form with MSDB name on it	Current	
	3612-F1	Electronics Permission Form	Consider	Updating	Current	

Bill #	Policy	Policy Name	Action	Reason	Status	Notes
	4210	School-Support Organizationa, Boosters and Fundraising	Information		Current	Principal has to approve fundraising
						Will Conduct Title II Self-Evaluation during 2026-2027 School year
	4316	Accomodating Individuals with Disabilities	Information		Current	https://adaactionguide.org/resources#form1
	4330P	Community Use of School Facilities - Rules and Regulations for Building/Facility/Equipment Use	Consider	Updated where to find rental fees	Current	Still $1.5 Libability Insurance?
				Updating to PDF Fillable		
	4330F	Community Use of School Facilities - Rules and Regulations for Building/Facility/Equipment Use	Consider	Add section for Security?	Current	Don't currently use the form in board policy
	4332	Conduct on School Property	Consider	Policy states annual review by board	Current	Should do in July Meeting
				Need to Post to School website		
	4350	Website Accesibility and Nondiscrimination	Information	Statement on all pages	Current	Training for Linnette?
	4410	Relations with Law Enforcement and Child Protective Agencies	Information	Participate in Cascade County School Safety Team	Current	Contact Sherrifs department?

Bill #	Policy		Policy Name	Action	Reason	Status	Notes
HB226		5123	Employer Verification of Employee	Consider	Cooresponds with the states potential implementatin of everify	New	
HB602		5252	Notice of Nonrewal of Nontenured Teacher for Financial Reasons	Consider	Policy for future administrators?	New	Want to have boards opinion
HB745		5122	Fingerprints and Criminal Background Investigations	Consider	Includes volunteer finger printing clearly.	Current	How does this work with our Volunteer Form background?
	5122F		Fingerprints and Criminal Background Investigations - Form	Consider	Need to update	Current	Old Form
HB745	5130P		Fingerprints and Criminal Background Investigations - Procedure	Consider	Helps make a procedure for future	New	
HB745	5430NF		Volunteer Agreement Form	Consider	Need to update	Current	How does this compare to Raptor form?
HB400		5255	Disciplinary Action	Consider		New	Want to have boards opinion
							Will Conduct Title II Self-Evaluation during 2026-2027 School year
		5002	Accomodating Individuals with Disabilities	Information		Current	https://adaactionguide.org/resources#form1
		5010	Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination	Information	Title IX Coordinator, Section 504 Coordinator	Current	Identify individual(s) get trained
		5012	Sexual Harassment of Employees	Information	Title IX Training Materials on Website	Current	Need to train and post
		5120	Hiring Process and Criteria	Consider	TB ruling repealed for schools and day care in 2017	Current	
		5121	Applicability of Personnel Policies and Professional Developmeent	Information	Position Description needs to go with contract.	Current	Need to set up PD advisory committee?
		5221	Work Day	Information	Arrival Time Statement	Current	
		5223	Personal Conduct	Consider	Needs to be annually by school	Current	Bring to board as well? July Meeting with other required Policies
		5226	Drug Free Workplace	Information	Need to give employees a copy of policy	Current	Yearly? In Handbook?
		5230	Prevention of Disease Tranmisstion	Information	Contains a Waiver	Current	Emailed April/Jacquie on who has them filled out and who keeps
	5230 P1		Prevention of Disease Tranmisstion	Information	Does the Food Service Manager have a copy of the ARMs for food establishments?	Current	Sent email to Bobbi
		5314	Substitutes	Consider	Conduct a reference check?	Current	With fingerprint, consider taking this out.
		5328	Family Medical Leave	Information	Employer Notice Requirement	Current	Need Poster? In handbook given when hired.

Bill #	Policy	Policy Name	Action	Reason	Status	Notes

Bill #	Policy	Policy Name	Action	Reason	Status	Notes
	7110	Budget and Program Planning	Consider	Current Timeline does not fit new budgeting process by state	Current	

Bill #	Policy	Policy Name	Action	Reason	Status	Notes	
HB819	8560	Display of Flags and Banners on District Propert	Consider	Meet the definition of whats in the bill	New		
HB651	8301	School Safety	Don't Update	MSDB has most of the policy and currently not interested in the locked door requirements		Annual EOP and Safety Plan Review	Safety Information on Website
						Maintenance up to Business Manager?	
						Emergency Procedures Manual in Each Vehicle?	
	8121	School-Owned Vehicles	Consider	Makes clear the reference to ARMS within the policy itself	Current	Clean up Reference to ARM	
	8132	Activity Trips	Consider	Creating a Permission Form and at it to the Policy Manual	Current	Permission form to travel with parent?	
	8205	Meal Charge	Consider	Need to update as the current policy has options and not complete	Current	We are a CEP program	
	8410	Operation and Maintenance of Facilities	Consider	Taking out specific positions for responsibilities	Current		

Policy	Policy Name
1009FE	Recruitment and Retention - Flexible Instructor Licensing
2314-NF(1)	Instructional and Library Materials Review - Request for Reconsideration Form
2334	Release Time for Religious Instruction
2335-NF(4)	Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issue - Identity Instruction Opt In
3125-NF(1)	Education of Homeless Children - McKenney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Dispute Resolution Form
3416	Administering Medicines to Students
5123	Employer Verification of Employee
8560	Display of Flags and Banners on District Property

Policy 1009FE: Recruitment and Retention - Flexible Instructor Licensing

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

Recruitment and Retention

It is the policy of the School to utilize all resources available to meet the School's objective of recruiting and retaining high-quality staff focused on the individual success of each student. To meet this objective, the School will utilize the flexible instructor licensure opportunities available to the District.

Flexible Instructor Licensing

It is the policy of the School to increase the flexibility and efficiency of the School's resources by utilizing the provision of law allowing flexibility in licensure of instructors and as a means of addressing recruitment and retention of staff. Flexibilities in the following areas are available for the School's enhancement of its programs and services with a focus on individual student success:

- Internships
  - Available to anyone with a current license and endorsement in one subject who wants to move to a new licensed role/endorsed area.
  - Requirements must be satisfied within 3 years
  - Must include a plan between the intern, the school district and an accredited preparation program
- Provisionally Certified
  - May be issued to an otherwise qualified applicant who can provide satisfactory evidence of:
  - The intent to qualify in the future for a class 1 or class 2 certificate and
  - Who has completed a 4-year college program or its equivalent, and
  - Holds a bachelor's degree from a unit of the Montana university system or its equivalent.
- Substitutes
  - Must have a GED or high school diploma
  - Will have completed 3 hours of training by the district
  - Will have submitted a fingerprint background check

(All requirements can be waived by the district if the substitute has prior substitute teaching experience in another public school from November 2002 to earlier)

May not substitute more than 35 consecutive days for the same teacher, however the same substitute can be used for successive absences of different staff as long as each regular teacher for whom the substitute is covering is back by 35 consecutive teaching days.

- Retired Educators
  - School district must certify to OPI and TRS that the district has been unable to fill the position due to no qualified applications or no acceptance of offer by a non-retired teacher.
  - A retired teacher with a date of termination through December 31, 2023, may not be employed under this provision until the retired teacher has a break in service of 150 calendar days unless the retired teacher is employed as a substitute classroom teacher to carry on the duties of a regular, licensed teacher who is temporarily absent or is employed to mentor a newly hired teacher. A retired teacher with a date of termination of January 1, 2024, or later, may not be employed under this provision until the employee has a break in service of 120 calendar days unless the retired teacher is employed as a substitute classroom teacher to carry on the duties of a regular, licensed teacher who is temporarily absent or is employed to mentor a newly hired teacher.Limited to employment in a second or third class elementary district or a second or third class high school district.
  - Retired teacher must have 27 years of experience in TRS.
  - There is a 3-year lifetime limit on the retired individual working under this provision.
- Class 3 Administrative License
  - Valid for a period of 5 years
  - Appropriate administrative areas include: elementary principal, secondary principal, K-12 principal, K-12 superintendent, and supervisor.

- Must be eligible for an appropriately endorsed Class 1,2 or 5 license to teach in the school(s) in which the applicant would be an administrator or would supervise, and qualify as set forth in ARM 10.57414 through 10.57.418
    - An applicant for a Class 3 administrative license who completed an educator preparation program which does not meet the definition in ARM 10.57.102(2), who is currently licensed in another state at the same level of licensure, may be considered for licensure with verification of five years of successful administrative experience as defined in ARM 10.57.102 as documented by a recommendation from a state accredited P-12 school employer on a form prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and approved by the Board of Public Education. The requirements of ARM 10.57.414(1)(c)(i-iii) must be met by an applicant seeking a superintendent endorsement.
- Class 4 for CTE
    - Valid for a period of 5 years
    - Renewable pursuant to the requirements of 10.57.215, ARM and the requirements specific to each type of Class 4 license.
    - 4A – for licensed teachers without a CTE endorsement
    - 4B – for individuals with at least a bachelor's degree
    - 4C – for individuals with a minimum of a high school diploma or GED
- Class 5 alternatives
    - Good for a maximum of 3 years
    - Requirements dependent upon the alternative the district is seeking
- Emergency authorization of employment
    - Individual must have previously held a valid teacher or specialist certificate or have met requirements of rule 10.57.107, ARM
    - Emergency authorization is valid for one year, but can be renewed from year to year provided conditions of scarcity continue to persist

Alternative Teacher Credentialing

The District may employ a teacher possessing a Class 2 certificate issued after completing a certification and endorsement program that meets the requirements of alternative teacher credentialing consistent with Montana law and has been approved by the board of public education upon recommendation of the superintendent of public instruction.

Teacher Residency Program

In accordance with Montana law, the District may participate in a teacher residency program consistent with the terms established by the Office of Public Instruction, a professional educator preparation program, and Board of Trustees in order to recruit and retain high-quality teachers.

Loan Repayment Program

The District may assist any quality educator who meets the qualifications for the state's loan repayment program at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. Loan repayment assistance may be provided on behalf of a quality educator who: (1) is employed newly hired in an identified impacted school experiencing a critical quality educator shortage outlined Section 20-4-503, MCA; and (2) has an educational loan that is not in default and that has a minimum unpaid current balance of at least $1,000 at the time of application.

A quality educator is eligible for state-funded loan repayment assistance for a lifetime total of no more than 3 years and an additional 1 year of loan repayment assistance voluntarily funded by the impacted school or the district under which the impacted school is operated, with the maximum annual loan repayment assistance not to exceed:

- $3,000 of state-funded loan repayment assistance after the first complete year of teaching in an impacted school;
- $4,000 of state-funded loan repayment assistance after the second complete year of teaching in the same impacted school or another impacted school within the same school district;
- $5,000 of state-funded loan repayment assistance after the third complete year of teaching in the same impacted school or another impacted school within the same school district; and

- up to $5,000 of loan repayment assistance funded by the impacted school or the district under which the impacted school is operated after the fourth complete year of teaching in the same impacted school or another impacted school within the same school district.

Notice Form 2314-NF(1): Instructional and Library Materials Review - Request for Reconsideration Form

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

School Library Request for Reconsideration of Material Form

The School has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of school or library resources, please return the completed form in accordance with Policy 2314.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Are you a parent of a student enrolled in the District? ____ yes _____no

Resource on which you are commenting:

___ Book (e-book) ___ Movie ___ Magazine ___ Database
___ Audio Recording ___ Digital Resource ___ Textbook ___ App
___ Newspaper ___ Game ___ Streaming Media ___ Other

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

1. Is the resource part of the curriculum, library collection, or other?

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?

4. What concerns you about the resource?

5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

6. What action are you requesting the committee consider?

MSD DRAFT

Policy 2334: Release Time for Religious Instruction

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

Upon written request of a student's parent or guardian, renewed at least annually, a student must be released from regular school attendance for the purpose of receiving off-campus religious instruction for a period of 1 hour per week minimally.

Early release of a student for the purposes of religious instruction will not adversely affect the student's enrollment status or attendance record.

The School may award credit for completion of a religious instruction released time course and recognize the credits of an independently accredited provider of released time courses. Prior to awarding credit, the District will evaluate the course based on secular criteria that are substantially the same criteria used to evaluate similar courses to determine how much credit to award. The decision to award credit for a released time course must be neutral to, and may not involve any test for, religious content or denominational affiliation.

For the purposes of this Policy, secular criteria may include but are not limited to the following:

1. the number of hours of classroom instruction time;
2. a review of the course syllabus that reflects course requirements and materials used;
3. the methods of assessment used in the course; and
4. the qualifications of the course instructor.

MSDB DRAFT

Notice Form 2335-NF(4): Health Enhancement Curriculum and Related Issues - Identity Instruction Opt In

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide notification of identity instruction in accordance with § 20-7-120, MCA, and District Policy 2335. The term "identity instruction" is defined as: "instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about gender identity or gender expression, or sexual orientation."

Please take notice that identity instruction will be provided in the following course or event:

[Identify the course or event; provide the date and time the course or event will take place; and describe in general the nature of the information that will be provided]

The District may not allow a student to attend or participate in identity instruction without the written permission of the parent or guardian. If you would like your child to receive identity instruction by attending and participating in the above-described course or event, and have not already granted written permission for your child's attendance, please complete and return the attached form.

_____ Date: _____
Superintendent

Identity Instruction Opt-in Form

A parent who wants their student to receive identity instruction at school must confirm their permission to do so by completing this form.

I, _____, Parent or Guardian of, _____ a student enrolled at the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind, hereby grant permission for my child to receive identity instruction by attending [INSERT NAME OF COURSE OR EVENT] on _____, 20__. I understand that if my permission is not granted, my student will not be allowed to attend or participate in this course or event.

I acknowledge I have received notification of my rights in this area under § 20-7-120, MCA, and have been provided an opportunity to review related information and materials on this topic.

_____ _____
Parent Date

Received by:

_____ _____
School Official Date

Notice Form 3125-NF(1): Education of Homeless Children - McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Dispute Resolution Form

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FORM

School District _____ Liaison _____ Telephone _____

Date of first contact by homeless individual, guardian, or representative _____

Homeless Student's Name _____

Describe the issue(s) in question _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

School District Contact _____ Telephone _____
(Superintendent/Principal)

Date _____ (within 7 business days)

Resolution of Liaison/School District Level (describe below) ____ or

Forwarded to OPI Homeless Coordinator [please contact at (406) 444-2036) ____

Date _____ (within 15 business days)

Resolution to OPI Homeless Coordinator Level (describe below) ____ or

Forwarded to Superintendent of Public Instruction ____

Describe Resolution Results _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Homeless Coordinator Signature _____

This form must be filed with

Homeless Coordinator

MSB DRAFT

Policy 3416: Administering Medicines to Students

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

Administering Medication to Students

"Medication" means a medicine, including inhaled bronchodilators, inhaled corticosteroids, and autoinjectable epinephrine, and epinephrine nasal spray, prescribed by a licensed physician as defined in 37-3-102, a physician assistant who has been authorized to prescribe medications as provided in 37-20-404, or an advanced practice registered nurse with prescriptive authority as provided in 37-8-202(1)(h).

Diagnosis and treatment of illness and the prescribing of drugs are never the responsibility of a school employee and should not be practiced by any school personnel.

Administering Medication

The Board permits administration of medication to students in schools in its jurisdiction. A school nurse or other employee who has successfully completed specific training in administration of medication, pursuant to written authorization of a physician or dentist and that of a parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or guardian, may administer medication to any student in the school or may delegate this task pursuant to Montana law.

Emergency Administration of Medication

In the event of an emergency, a school nurse or trained staff member, exempt from the nursing license requirement under § 37-8-103(1)(c), MCA, may administer emergency medication to any student in need thereof on school grounds, in a school building, at a school function, or on a school bus according to a standing order of an authorized physician or a student's private physician. In the event that emergency medication is administered to a student, the school nurse or staff member shall call emergency responders and notify the student's parents/guardians. A building administrator or school nurse shall enter any medication to be administered in an emergency on an individual student medication record and retain the documentation.

Assisting Students with Self-Administration of Medication

A building principal or other school administrator may authorize, in writing, any school employee:

- To assist in self-administration of any drug that may lawfully be sold over the counter without a prescription to a student in compliance with the written instructions and with the written consent of a student's parent or guardian; and
- To assist in self-administration of a prescription drug to a student in compliance with written instructions or standing order of an authorized physician or a student's private physician and with the written consent of a student's parent or guardian.

A school employee authorized, in writing, assist students with self-administration of medications, may only rely on the following techniques:

- Making oral suggestions, prompting, reminding, gesturing, or providing a written guide for self-administering medications;
- Handing to a student a prefilled, labeled medication holder or a labeled unit dose container, syringe, or original marked and labeled container from a pharmacy;
- Opening the lid of a container for a student;

- Guiding the hand of a student to self-administer a medication;
- Holding and assisting a student in drinking fluid to assist in the swallowing of oral medications; and
- Assisting with removal of a medication from a container for a student with a physical disability that prevents independence in the act.
- Other guidance or restrictions previously provided in writing to the school by a student's parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or guardian is on file.

Self-Administration or Possession of Asthma, Severe Allergy, or Anaphylaxis Medication

Students with allergies or asthma may be authorized by the building principal or Superintendent, in consultation with medical personnel, to possess and self-administer emergency medication during the school day, during field trips, school-sponsored events, or while on a school bus. The student shall be authorized to possess and self-administer medication if the following conditions have been met:

- A parent or guardian or individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit has submitted a signed authorization for self-administration of medication, acknowledging that the District and its employees are not liable for injury resulting from the student self-administration of medication.
- The student shall have the prior written approval of his/her primary healthcare provider. The written notice from the student's primary care provider shall specify the name and purpose of the medication, the prescribed dosage, frequency with which it may be administered, and the circumstances that may warrant its use.
- Documentation that the student has demonstrated to the healthcare practitioner and the school nurse, if available, the skill level necessary to use and administer the medication.
- Documentation of a doctor-formulated written treatment plan for managing asthma, severe allergies, or anaphylaxis episodes of the student and for medication use by the student during school hours.

Authorization granted to a student to possess and self-administer medication shall be valid for the current school year only and shall be renewed annually. A student's authorization to possess and self-administer medication may be limited or revoked by the building principal or other administrative personnel.

If provided by the parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or guardian, and in accordance with documentation provided by the student's doctor, backup medication shall be kept at a student's school in a predetermined location or locations to which the student has access in the event of an asthma, severe allergy, or anaphylaxis emergency.

Immediately after using epinephrine during school hours, a student shall report to the school nurse or other adult at the school who shall provide follow up care, including making a call to emergency responders.

Emergency Use of Stock Albuterol

The District may maintain a supply of stock albuterol and single-use disposable holding chambers to be administered by a school nurse or other authorized personnel to a student or nonstudent as needed for respiratory distress. This Policy may not be interpreted to relieve a student's parent or guardian of providing a student's medication or create an expectation that a school will have stock albuterol available.

Definitions

"Stock albuterol" means quick-relief asthma medication that is approved by the United States food and drug administration for the treatment of respiratory distress. The term includes albuterol medication delivered through a metered dose inhaler or dry-powder inhaler that includes a spacer or holding chamber that attaches to a metered dose inhaler to improve the delivery of medication.

"Authorized personnel" means an employee or agent identified by the District who is approved by the District administration to administer a stock medication in a school setting or at a related activity.

"Respiratory distress" means a person's inability to breathe adequately, including the perceived or actual presence of associated symptoms such as coughing, wheezing, or shortness of breath.

Additional Requirements

The Superintendent or his or her designee shall develop a protocol related to the training of school employees, the maintenance and location of the stock albuterol, and the immediate and long-term follow-up to the administration of the medication, including determining when to make a 9-1-1 emergency call.

The stock albuterol must be prescribed by a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant. The school must be designated as the patient and each prescription for stock albuterol must be filled by a licensed pharmacy.

The District may enter into an agreement with a manufacturer of bronchodilators or spacers, a third-party supplier of bronchodilator or spacers, or a health care office to obtain bronchodilators or spacers at no charge, at market price, or at a reduced price, and may accept gifts, grants, or donations to purchase bronchodilators or spacers for emergency use.

Authorized personnel shall complete an annual asthma education program approved by the department of public health and human services. The training must include causes of respiratory distress, recognition of signs and symptoms of respiratory distress, indications for the administration of albuterol, administration techniques, and the need for immediate access to a certified emergency responder.

The stock albuterol must be kept in a secure and easily accessible location.

The District will inform parents or guardians about the potential use of stock albuterol in a respiratory distress emergency and will shall make the protocol available on request.

The District will document the use of stock albuterol following an event and report this use to the department of public health and human services within 3 days in a reporting format determined by the department.

The District will submit an annual report to the department of public health and human services summarizing the use of stock albuterol during each school year in a reporting format determined by the department.

Self-Administration of Other Medication

The District shall permit students who are able to self-administer specific medication to do so provided that all of the following have occurred:

- A physician, dentist, or other licensed health care provider provides a written order for self-administration of said medication;
- Written authorization for self-administration of medication from a student's parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or guardian is on file; and
- A principal and appropriate teachers are informed that a student is self-administering prescribed medication.

Administration of Glucagons

A parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit pursuant to §20-5-503, MCA, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative medical authorization affidavit pursuant to § 40-6-502, MCA, or a guardian of a diabetic student may designate an adult to administer glucagon to their child in an

emergency situation. Written proof of the designation and acceptance of the designation by the parent-designated adult must be filed with the school district.

"Parent-designated adult" means a school district employee, selected by a parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit pursuant to §20-5-503, MCA, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative medical authorization affidavit pursuant to § 40-6-502, MCA, or a guardian of a diabetic student, who voluntarily agrees to administer glucagon to the student.

The parent-designated adult must be trained in recognizing hypoglycemia and the proper method of administering glucagon. Training must be provided by a health care professional, as defined in § 33-36-103, MCA, or a recognized expert in diabetic care selected by the parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative medical authorization affidavit, or a guardian. Written documentation of the training received by the parent-designated adult must be filed with the school district.

The glucagon must be provided by the parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative medical authorization affidavit, or a guardian of the diabetic student.

Handling and Storage of Medications

The Board requires that all medications, including those approved for keeping by students for self-medication, be first delivered by a parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or other responsible adult to a nurse or employee assisting with self-administration of medication. A nurse or assistant:

- Shall examine any new medication to ensure it is properly labeled with dates, name of student, medication name, dosage, and physician's name;
- Shall develop a medication administration plan, if administration is necessary for a student, before any medication is given by school personnel;
- Shall record on the student's individual medication record the date a medication is delivered and the amount of medication received;
- Shall store medication requiring refrigeration at 36° to 46° F;
- Shall store prescribed medicinal preparations in a securely locked storage compartment; and
- Shall store controlled substances in a separate compartment, secured and locked at all times.
- All non-emergency medication shall be kept in a locked, nonportable container, stored in its original container with the original prescription label. Epinephrine, naloxone, and student emergency medication may be kept in portable containers and transported by the school nurse or other authorized school personnel.
- Food is not allowed to be stored in refrigeration unit with medications.
- Shall notify the building administrator, school district nurse, and parent or guardian of any medication error and document it on the medication administration record.

The District shall permit only a forty-five-(45)-school-day supply of a medication for a student to be stored at a school; and all medications, prescription and nonprescription, shall be stored in their original containers.

The District shall limit access to all stored medication to those persons authorized to administer medications or to assist in the self-administration of medications. The District requires every school to maintain a current list of those

persons authorized by delegation from a licensed nurse to administer medications.

The District may maintain a stock supply of auto-injectable epinephrine to be administered by a school nurse or other authorized personnel to any student or nonstudent as needed for actual or perceived anaphylaxis. If the district intends to obtain an order for emergency use of epinephrine in a school setting or at related activities, the district shall adhere to the requirements stated in law.

The District may maintain a stock supply of an opioid antagonist to be administered by a school nurse or other authorized personnel to any student or nonstudent as needed for an actual or perceived opioid overdose in compliance with § 20-5-426, MCA.

If the District stocks a supply of an opioid antagonist, the following requirements apply:

a. The Superintendent or his or her designess shall develop a protocol related to the training of school employees, the maintenance and location of the opioid antagonist, and immediate and long-term follow-up to the administration of the medication, including making a 9-1-1 emergency call.
b. The opioid antagonist must be prescribed by a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant. The school must be designated as the patient, and each prescription for an opioid antagonist must be filled by a licensed pharmacy.
c. The school shall provide training to authorized personnel. The training must include causes of opioid overdose, recognition of signs and symptoms of opioid overdose, indications for the administration of an opioid antagonist, administration technique, and the need for immediate access to a certified emergency responder. Training must be provided by a school nurse, certified emergency responder, or other health care professional.
d. The opioid antagonist must be kept in a secure and easily accessible location.
e. A school nurse or other authorized personnel may, in good faith, administer the opioid antagonist to any student or nonstudent who is experiencing a potential life-threatening opioid overdose based on the protocol developed by the school.
f. If a school stocks an opioid antagonist that has been prescribed to the school, that school shall inform parents or guardians about the potential use of the opioid antagonist in an opioid overdose emergency. The school shall make the protocol available upon request.
g. Neither the District, nor its employees and agents, are liable as a result of any injury arising from the administration of an opioid antagonist, including an expired opioid antagonist, to a student or nonstudent unless an act or omission is the result of gross negligence, willful or wanton misconduct, or an intentional tort.

Disposal of Medication, Medical Equipment, Personal Protective Equipment

The District requires school personnel either to return to a parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or guardian or, with permission of the parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or guardian, to destroy any unused, discontinued, or obsolete medication. A school nurse, in the presence of a witness, shall destroy any medicine not repossessed by a parent or guardian within a seven-(7)-day period of notification by school authorities.

Medical sharps shall be disposed of in an approved sharps container. Building administrators should contact the school nurse or designated employee when such a container is needed. Sharps containers are to be kept in a secure location in the school building. Disposal of sharps container, medical equipment, and personal protective equipment is the responsibility of the school nurse or designated employee in accordance with the Montana Infectious Waste Management Act and the manufacture guidelines specific to the container or equipment.

Policy 5123: Employer Verification of Employee

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

Within three business days of hiring a new employee, the District shall request and maintain a copy of either of the following:

a. the citizenship or work authorization status that has been verified by the United States citizenship and immigration services' E-Verify program; or
b. a completed form I-9 with corresponding documents that establish both identity and employment authorization.

The books, records, and payrolls of the District pertinent to the administration of Title 39, Chapter 2, MCA, must be open to inspection by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry on 3 business days' notice for the purpose of ascertaining adherence to the above requirements.

MSDB DRAFT

Policy 8560: Display of Flags and Banners on District Property

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: Pending

Definitions

"Flag" means any physical or digital material designed for display on a flagpole, building, wall, vehicle, or other structure.

"School property" means buildings, grounds, vehicles, uniforms, and any other property owned, leased, or controlled by the School.

Display of Flags and Banners

No flag or banner may be displayed in or on School property other than the following flags and banners:

a. the United States flag;
b. the official flag of the state of Montana, or any county, municipality, special district, or other political subdivision within the state;
c. the official flag of a school district, public university, or community college;
d. the official flag of any state in the United States;
e. the official flag of any federally recognized tribal nation;
f. the official flag of any federally recognized foreign nation;
g. the official flag of any of the branches and units of the United States military;
h. official historical flags of the United States and the state of Montana, including but not limited to the Betsy Ross flag, Gadsden flag, and other flags of historical significance;
i. the POW/MIA flag, as provided in § 1-1-541, MCA;
j. flags or banners representing official school mascots and colors; and
k. official law enforcement flags, including but not limited to flags honoring law enforcement officers and fallen officers.

No flags or banners may be displayed on District property that represent a political viewpoint, including but not limited to flags or banners regarding a political party, race, sexual orientation, gender, or political ideology. This restriction does not apply to flags recognizing official government entities, law enforcement agencies, military branches, or public service organizations.

Nothing in this policy may be construed to limit the private speech of individuals, and nothing in this policy may be interpreted to restrict expressions of personal belief outside of official government displays.

The restrictions in this policy do not apply to personal clothing, jewelry, or accessories worn by government employees, except where specific uniform policies or official dress codes apply.

MSDB FOUNDATION BOARD MEETING

MONTANA SCHOOL for the DEAF & the BLIND FOUNDATION

Tuesday, October 20, 2026

9:00	Call to Order—Roll Call Mission, Vision, Beliefs Statement Approval of last meeting minutes A. President's Report Marker for Rick Thompson
9:30	B. Zoom Call with Pinion (report of audit findings) Then finish with Financial Statements
10:15	Resume Presidents Report Attendance Policy Board Member Giving Board Member Terms Vote on New President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer New Board Member Develop Priority List of Projects New Donor Gloria Fey
11:00	Break
11:15	Tour Cottages (Updates that have been made)
12:00	Break for Lunch – MSDB Cafeteria
1:00	Student Life Report MSDB Outreach Report School Administration Report
2:00	C. PR/Development Committee Develop Priority List of Projects for Donors $100,000 Donation from the Brondum Foundation Museum Project

2:30	**Superindents Report** **New Building** **New Electronic Signs**
2:45	**Old / New Business** **Needed Bus Drivers**
3:00	**Adjourn Meeting**

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY27_P&L - FY27 P&L

July 2026 - June 2027

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Revenue				
40000 Contributions				
41100 Contributions Temporarily Restricted	1,253.49	52,148.00	-50,894.51	2.40 %
41400 Individual Contributions	105,345.14	60,000.00	45,345.14	175.58 %
41410 Business Contributions	4,328.92	26,000.00	-21,671.08	16.65 %
41415 Memorial & Trust Contributions	100.00	31,000.00	-30,900.00	0.32 %
Total 40000 Contributions	**111,027.55**	**169,148.00**	**-58,120.45**	**65.64 %**
41700 Investment Income				
41710 Investment Interest	0.36	50.00	-49.64	0.72 %
41720 Investment Dividends	28,854.52	110,000.00	-81,145.48	26.23 %
41740 Investment Unrealized Gain (Loss)	-72,902.13		-72,902.13	
41750 Investment Management Fee	-6,971.80	-20,000.00	13,028.20	34.86 %
Total 41700 Investment Income	**-51,019.05**	**90,050.00**	**-141,069.05**	**-56.66 %**
Total Revenue	**$60,008.50**	**$259,198.00**	**$-199,189.50**	**23.15 %**
GROSS PROFIT	**$60,008.50**	**$259,198.00**	**$-199,189.50**	**23.15 %**
Expenditures				
51000 Office/General Administrative Expenditures				
51100 Office/General Administrative Expenditures	50.48	1,000.00	-949.52	5.05 %
51200 Office Equipment & Supplies	330.88	2,500.00	-2,169.12	13.24 %
51600 Quickbooks	955.00	3,384.00	-2,429.00	28.22 %
51800 Foundation Travel & Meeting Expense		3,000.00	-3,000.00	
51910 Insurance	903.00	805.00	98.00	112.17 %
Total 51000 Office/General Administrative Expenditures	**2,239.36**	**10,689.00**	**-8,449.64**	**20.95 %**
52000 Salaries & Wages				
52100 Salaries & Wages	2,068.29	25,376.00	-23,307.71	8.15 %
52300 Payroll Wage Expenses		0.00	0.00	
52400 Payroll / Taxes Fed / FICA	624.43	4,300.00	-3,675.57	14.52 %
52500 SUTA Expense		0.00	0.00	
52600 Workman's Comp.	264.72	950.00	-685.28	27.87 %
53200 ADP Fee	294.81	1,060.00	-765.19	27.81 %
Total 52000 Salaries & Wages	**3,252.25**	**31,686.00**	**-28,433.75**	**10.26 %**
53000 Legal & Professional Services				
53100 Accounting Fees		5,300.00	-5,300.00	
53300 Audit Fee	13,500.00	15,500.00	-2,000.00	87.10 %
Total 53000 Legal & Professional Services	**13,500.00**	**20,800.00**	**-7,300.00**	**64.90 %**
56000 Fundraising & Devlopment				
56100 Express Magazine		24,000.00	-24,000.00	
56200 Fundraising Expense	233.75		233.75	
56300 Grant Writing Expense		0.00	0.00	
56400 Public Relations & Development	121.29	6,000.00	-5,878.71	2.02 %
56410 Bloomerang Subscription		4,327.00	-4,327.00	
56420 HG Consulting Contract	7,500.00	30,000.00	-22,500.00	25.00 %

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY27_P&L - FY27 P&L

July 2026 - June 2027

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Total 56000 Fundraising & Development	**7,855.04**	**64,327.00**	**-56,471.96**	**12.21 %**
57000 MSDB Direct Support				
57100 Accreditation	2,380.97	8,000.00	-5,619.03	29.76 %
57200 Cottage Support	-151.05	2,000.00	-2,151.05	-7.55 %
57250 Cottager Remodel	92,532.83	212,852.00	-120,319.17	43.47 %
57280 Restricted Spending and Special Expenditures	2,758.93	15,000.00	-12,241.07	18.39 %
57300 Hearing Molds & Evaluations	511.92	5,000.00	-4,488.08	10.24 %
57350 Northwest Association of Blind Athletes		11,500.00	-11,500.00	
57399 Professional Development Funding Contract		5,000.00	-5,000.00	
57400 Staff Professional Development	5,403.80	20,000.00	-14,596.20	27.02 %
57500 Staff Awards		7,000.00	-7,000.00	
57550 Student Support	738.47	2,000.00	-1,261.53	36.92 %
57650 Yearbook	751.01	700.00	51.01	107.29 %
57700 Technology & Equipment		5,000.00	-5,000.00	
Total 57000 MSDB Direct Support	**104,926.88**	**294,052.00**	**-189,125.12**	**35.68 %**
58000 Student Activities				
58020 Academic Bowl		9,000.00	-9,000.00	
58030 Arbor Day		500.00	-500.00	
58050 Student Awards		2,000.00	-2,000.00	
58051 Braille Challenge		200.00	-200.00	
58070 Christmas		300.00	-300.00	
58080 Easter		200.00	-200.00	
58090 Expressions of Silence		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
58091 Fall Celebration	2,094.50	2,000.00	94.50	104.73 %
58092 Spring Celebration		3,500.00	-3,500.00	
58100 Family Learning Weekend - Blind and Deaf		16,000.00	-16,000.00	
58120 Flying Hooves Club		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
58140 Goalball	35.00	2,500.00	-2,465.00	1.40 %
58150 Graduation		750.00	-750.00	
58160 Halloween		250.00	-250.00	
58161 Griz Football	2,442.01	4,500.00	-2,057.99	54.27 %
58180 Prom		300.00	-300.00	
58190 Moving Mustangs / Red Ribbon PTHA		200.00	-200.00	
58200 Senior Trip		6,000.00	-6,000.00	
58210 Ski Trip		4,500.00	-4,500.00	
58211 Student Ambassador Program		200.00	-200.00	
58220 Summer Camp - Blind and Deaf		8,000.00	-8,000.00	
58240 Visually Impaired Performers (VIP)		200.00	-200.00	
Total 58000 Student Activities	**4,571.51**	**63,100.00**	**-58,528.49**	**7.24 %**
Total Expenditures	**$136,345.04**	**$484,654.00**	**$-348,308.96**	**28.13 %**
NET OPERATING REVENUE	**$-76,336.54**	**$-225,456.00**	**$149,119.46**	**33.86 %**
Other Revenue				

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY27_P&L - FY27 P&L

July 2026 - June 2027

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
71020 Interest Earned	824.98	1,200.00	-375.02	68.75 %
Total Other Revenue	**$824.98**	**$1,200.00**	**$-375.02**	**68.75 %**
NET OTHER REVENUE	**$824.98**	**$1,200.00**	**$-375.02**	**68.75 %**
NET REVENUE	**$-75,511.56**	**$-224,256.00**	**$148,744.44**	**33.67 %**

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

Great Falls, Montana

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WITH
INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT

June 30, 2026 and 2025



KCOE ISOM

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

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June 30, 2026 and 2025

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KCOE ISOM

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT

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

We have reviewed 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, 2026; the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended; and the related notes to the financial statements. A review includes primarily applying analytical procedures to management's financial data and making inquiries of company management. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements as a whole. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP); this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free of material misstatement whether due to fraud or error.

Accountants' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to conduct the review engagement in accordance with *Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services* promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services Committee of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Those standards require us to perform procedures to obtain limited assurance as a basis for reporting whether we are aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements for them to be in accordance with GAAP. We believe that the results of our procedures provide a reasonable basis for our conclusion.

We are required to be independent of the Foundation and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to our review.

Accountants' Conclusion

Based on our review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in accordance with GAAP.

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT
(Continued)

Report on 2025 Financial Statements

The June 30, 2025, financial statements were audited by us, and we expressed an unmodified opinion on them in our report dated October 21, 2025. We have not performed any auditing procedures since that date.

KCoe Isom, LLP

September 28, 2026
Helena, Montana

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

June 30	Reviewed 2026	Audited 2025
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 458,328	$ 455,667
Investments	3,321,641	2,789,128
Total Current Assets	3,779,969	3,244,795
Other Assets		
Restricted investments	877,001	699,256
TOTAL ASSETS	$ 4,656,970	$ 3,944,051
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	$ 3,069	$ 3,005
Net Assets		
Without donor restrictions:		
Undesignated	3,776,900	3,241,790
With donor restrictions:		
Purpose and time restrictions	366,499	192,060
Perpetual in nature	510,502	507,196
Total Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	877,001	699,256
Total Net Assets	4,653,901	3,941,046
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	$ 4,656,970	$ 3,944,051

See the accompanying notes and independent accountants' review report.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended June 30, 2026	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Reviewed Total
Revenue and Support			
Contributions and grants	$ 106,105	$ 246,511	$ 352,616
Investment income - net of fees	624,761	3,306	628,067
Net assets released from purpose restrictions	72,072	(72,072)	-
Total Revenue and Support	802,938	177,745	980,683
Expenses			
Program services:			
Direct support	130,756	-	130,756
Student activities	30,798	-	30,798
Supporting services:			
Development and fundraising	56,663	-	56,663
General and administrative	49,611	-	49,611
Total Expenses	267,828	-	267,828
Change in Net Assets	535,110	177,745	712,855
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	3,241,790	699,256	3,941,046
Net Assets - End of Year	$ 3,776,900	$ 877,001	$ 4,653,901

See the accompanying notes and independent accountants' review report.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
(Continued)

Year Ended June 30, 2025	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Audited Total
Revenue and Support			
Contributions and grants	$ 291,909	$ 110,345	$ 402,254
Investment income - net of fees	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:			
Development and fundraising	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

See the accompanying notes and independent accountants' review report.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

Year Ended June 30, 2026	Program	Supporting Services: General and Administrative	Supporting Services: Development and Fundraising	Reviewed Total
Academic bowl	$ 7,483	$ -	$ -	$ 7,483
Accounting fees	-	25,750	-	25,750
Accreditation	9,108	-	-	9,108
Advertising	-	-	15,909	15,909
Braille challenge	170	-	-	170
Cottage support	6,000	-	-	6,000
Development and fundraising	-	-	40,754	40,754
Fall celebration	2,052	-	-	2,052
Family learning weekend	4,955	-	-	4,955
Hearing evaluations	3,167	-	-	3,167
Holidays	1,555	-	-	1,555
Insurance	-	803	-	803
Northwest Association of Blind Athletes	11,500	-	-	11,500
Office	-	4,393	-	4,393
Payroll taxes	-	1,180	-	1,180
Professional development	9,456	-	-	9,456
Salaries and wages	-	17,080	-	17,080
Special equipment and grant expenditures	75,985	-	-	75,985
Spring celebration	2,509	-	-	2,509
Staff awards	5,054	-	-	5,054
Student activities	1,077	-	-	1,077
Student awards	2,353	-	-	2,353
Student support	4,141	-	-	4,141
Student trips	6,740	-	-	6,740
Summer camp	1,904	-	-	1,904
Technology and equipment	6,214	-	-	6,214
Travel	-	405	-	405
Yearbook	131	-	-	131
Total Expenses	$ 161,554	$ 49,611	$ 56,663	$ 267,828

See the accompanying notes and independent accountants' review report.

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Foundation, Inc.

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
(Continued)

Year Ended June 30, 2025	Program	Supporting Services: General and Administrative	Supporting Services: Development and Fundraising	Audited Total
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	3,000	-	-	3,000
Insurance	-	803	-	803
Northwest Association of Blind Athletes	11,500	-	-	11,500
Office	-	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

See the accompanying notes and independent accountants' review report.

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

Years Ended June 30	Reviewed 2026	Audited 2025
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Change in net assets	$ 712,855	$ 406,991
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Unrealized gains on investments	(389,312)	(131,195)
Other assets	-	3,000
Accounts payable	64	755
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	323,607	279,551
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of investments	(1,677,234)	(641,444)
Proceeds from sale of investments	1,356,288	605,823
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(320,946)	(35,621)
Net Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,661	243,930
Cash and Cash Equivalents - Beginning of Year	455,667	211,737
Cash and Cash Equivalents - End of Year	$ 458,328	$ 455,667

See the accompanying notes and independent accountants' review report.

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, 2026 and 2025.

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. Those restrictions that are perpetual in nature represent donor-restricted endowment gifts requiring that the principal be maintained permanently. Investment earnings are available for expenditure in support of the Foundation's operations unless otherwise restricted by the donor.

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 purpose 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.

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 September 28, 2026, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

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	Reviewed 2026	Audited 2025
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 458,328	$ 455,667
Investments	4,198,642	3,488,384
Total Financial Assets	4,656,970	3,944,051
Amounts not available to be used within one year:		
Restricted investments	(877,001)	(699,256)
Financial Assets Available to Meet General Expenditures Within One Year	$ 3,779,969	$ 3,244,795

At June 30, 2026, the Foundation had working capital of $3,776,900, and 625 days cash on hand. At June 30, 2025, the Foundation had working capital of $3,241,790, and 561 days cash on hand.

The Foundation's endowment funds consist of donor-restricted endowments. As described in note 7, the endowment has a spending rate of 6% that is transferred to operations subsequent to each year. $9,918 of appropriations from the endowment will be available within 12 months after June 30, 2026. $9,727 of appropriations from the endowment were available within 12 months after June 30, 2025.

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 methodology used for investments measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at June 30, 2026 and 2025.

Exchange-Traded Funds: Assets are valued at the net asset value reported in the active market in which the securities are traded. The valuation occurs throughout the day based on the market value of the underlying securities, as well as the market supply and demand for the particular exchange-traded fund.

Equity Securities: Common stocks are valued at the closing price reported on the active market in which the individual securities are traded.

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:

				Reviewed	
June 30, 2026	Quoted Prices in Active Markets (Level 1)	Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)	Cost	Cumulative Appreciation (Depreciation)
Exchange-traded funds:					
Alternative and other fixed-income bonds	$ 681,698	$ -	$ -	$ 710,158	$ (28,460)
Emerging markets fixed-income bonds	127,823	-	-	125,962	1,861
U.S. corporate investment grade fixed-income bonds	295,163	-	-	301,600	(6,437)
U.S. government treasury bills and notes	468,106	-	-	468,851	(745)
Equity securities:					
Emerging markets	124,191	-	-	99,400	24,791
International	420,292	-	-	251,805	168,487
U.S. large-cap	1,595,519	-	-	931,112	664,407
U.S. mid-cap	305,356	-	-	170,509	134,847
U.S. small-cap	180,494	-	-	104,986	75,508
Total	$ 4,198,642	$ -	$ -	$ 3,164,383	$ 1,034,259

June 30, 2025	Quoted Prices in Active Markets (Level 1)	Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)	Cost	Cumulative Appreciation (Depreciation)
					Audited
Exchange-traded funds:					
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	111,548	-	-	102,675	8,873
International	381,844	-	-	285,781	96,063
U.S. large-cap	1,386,554	-	-	915,032	471,522
U.S. mid-cap	260,050	-	-	176,197	83,853
U.S. small-cap	146,776	-	-	110,311	36,465
Total	$ 3,488,384	$ -	$ -	$ 2,843,437	$ 644,947

The tables above show investments' unrealized gains, losses, and fair values at June 30, 2026 and 2025.

Restricted Investments

Restricted investments are limited in use by donor-imposed restrictions. See note 7 for additional disclosures related to the restricted investments included in the Foundation's endowment.

Net investment income consisted of the following:

June 30	Reviewed 2026	Audited 2025
Dividends and interest	$ 122,524	$ 115,116
Unrealized gain on debt securities	18,052	19,983
Unrealized gain on equity securities	371,260	111,212
Realized gain on equity securities	140,939	77,451
Investment fees	(24,708)	(22,375)
Totals	$ 628,067	$ 301,387

4. NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets with donor-imposed purpose restrictions of the Foundation consisted of the following:

June 30	Reviewed 2026	Audited 2025
Backpacks	$ 446	$ 446
Bulletin boards	140	140
Bowling alley	-	7,386
Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Braille training	1,793	1,793
Cobb Foundation	25,568	23,568
Cottage remodel project	177,612	14,438
Deaf mentor training	321	321
Easter	222	222
Expressions of silence	5,068	4,768
Folding paper machine	405	405
Food pantry	2,999	-
Food program	1,000	1,000
General scholarship	4,250	4,100
Goal ball	25,768	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	1,550	1,500
Library	516	516
Lion's project	5,762	-
Literacy pro development	6	6
Loaf and Jug scholarship	1,000	1,000
Montana Professional Teaching Foundation grant	9	9
Music department	460	1,299
Physical therapy department	200	200
Playground repairs	3,382	3,382
Prison Braille program	1,256	1,256
Parent Teacher's House Association	9,044	9,044
Richard Augon award	846	746
Ruth Matthews award	1,875	1,875
Silent weekend	7	7
Smartboards	8,711	8,711
Stage and lighting	12,221	12,221
Student council trip	120	120
Super bowl party	180	180
Tactile map	8,500	-
Untangling the dots	1,700	1,700
Video project	553	553
Visually impaired performers	2,485	2,485
White Cane Day	140	318
Yearbook	600	600
Totals	$ 366,499	$ 192,060

Net assets released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the purpose of the restrictions specified by donors were as follows:

June 30	Reviewed 2026	Audited 2025
Academic bowl	$ -	$ 100
Bowling alley	7,386	52,832
Cottage remodel project	53,346	2,400
Equipment	4,914	-
Folding paper machine	-	95
Food pantry	2,001	-
General student activities	175	100
Goal ball	-	13,899
Lion's project	2,233	-
Magnifiers	-	987
Music department	1,660	3,700
Pool/Pool equipment	-	155
Parent Teacher's House Association	-	800
Student awards	-	100
Weight room	-	4,457
White Cane Day	357	-
Totals	$ 72,072	$ 79,625

Net assets with donor restrictions that are invested in perpetuity of the Foundation were as follows:

June 30	Reviewed 2026	Audited 2025
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	477,119	473,813
Montana Community Foundation	6,156	6,156
Royal and Norma Johnson	600	600
Ryan scholarship fund	20,000	20,000
Totals	$ 510,502	$ 507,196

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, 2026 and 2025, was $3,306 and $3,243, respectively.

A recap of the Merritt Estate balance is as follows:

June 30	Reviewed 2026	Audited 2025
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, 2026, and 2025	175,243	172,000
Current year's income allocation	3,306	3,243
Balances	$ 477,119	$ 473,813

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. DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING EXPENSE

The Foundation expended $56,663 and $56,862 during the years ended June 30, 2026 and 2025, respectively, on development and fundraising. Expenses incurred include: advertising, fees, dues, travel, meals and entertainment, postage, and supplies.

6. 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 were $15,909 and $18,768 of advertising costs for the years ended June 30, 2026 and 2025, respectively.

7. 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.

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

(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's 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's 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.

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 as of the years ended June 30, 2026 and 2025. 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:

	Without Donor Restrictions		With Donor Restrictions		
	Undesignated	Board-Designated	Purpose or Time Restrictions	Perpetual in Nature	Reviewed Total
Balance - July 1, 2025	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 507,196	$ 507,196
Investment income	9,918	-	-	3,306	13,224
Appropriations	(9,918)	-	-	-	(9,918)
Balance - June 30, 2026	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 510,502	$ 510,502

	Without Donor Restrictions		With Donor Restrictions		
	Undesignated	Board-Designated	Purpose or Time Restrictions	Perpetual in Nature	Audited Total
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

Endowment net asset composition by type of fund was as follows:

June 30, 2026	Undesignated	Board-Designated	Purpose or Time Restrictions	Perpetual in Nature	Reviewed Total
Donor-restricted:					
Endowment fund	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 510,502	$ 510,502

June 30, 2025	Undesignated	Board-Designated	Purpose or Time Restrictions	Perpetual in Nature	Audited Total
Donor-restricted:					
Endowment fund	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 507,196	$ 507,196

8. 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.

9. 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 $481 and $2,330 were made directly to the School during the years ended June 30, 2026 and 2025, 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 by OBPP Prog, Fund, Subclass

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2027 through 04 (Oct)/2027

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

Business Unit	(All)
Program Year	2027
FY_BudPer	(All)
Month	(All)
Source of Auth	(All)
Fund Type	(All)
Account	(All)
Acct Lvl 2	(All)
Org	(All)
Account Type	E
Project	(All)
Ledger	(All)

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OBPP Program Fund	Subclass	Acct Lvl 1	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	Accrual Amt	RG Bud Balance
01 ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM			**1,246,518.00**	**428,857.36**	**0.00**	**817,660.64**
01100 General Fund			**1,243,124.00**	**428,857.36**	**0.00**	**814,266.64**
	300H1 ADMINISTRATION		**986,580.00**	**312,624.29**	**0.00**	**673,955.71**
		61000 Personal Services	960,200.00	303,419.00	0.00	656,781.00
		62000 Operating Expens	26,380.00	9,205.29	0.00	17,174.71
	300H5 STATE ITSD (RST)		**256,544.00**	**116,233.07**	**0.00**	**140,310.93**
		62000 Operating Expens	256,544.00	116,233.07	0.00	140,310.93
02050 School Trust Interest/Income			**3,394.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**3,394.00**
	300H1 ADMINISTRATION		**3,394.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**3,394.00**
		61000 Personal Services	3,394.00	0.00	0.00	3,394.00
02 GENERAL SERVICES			**804,063.00**	**337,791.06**	**0.00**	**466,271.94**
01100 General Fund			**804,063.00**	**337,791.06**	**0.00**	**466,271.94**
	305H1 GENERAL SERVICES		**804,063.00**	**337,791.06**	**0.00**	**466,271.94**
		61000 Personal Services	469,871.00	130,091.94	0.00	339,779.06

	62000 Operating Expens	271,577.00	207,699.12	0.00	63,877.88
	68000 Transfers-out	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
	69000 Debt Service	61,615.00	0.00	0.00	61,615.00
03 STUDENT SERVICES		**2,050,734.00**	**552,569.22**	**0.00**	**1,498,164.78**
01100 General Fund		**2,016,005.00**	**547,425.50**	**0.00**	**1,468,579.50**
310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		**2,016,005.00**	**547,425.50**	**0.00**	**1,468,579.50**
	61000 Personal Services	1,813,536.00	497,521.32	0.00	1,316,014.68
	62000 Operating Expens	202,469.00	49,904.18	0.00	152,564.82
03167 National School Lunch		**34,729.00**	**5,143.72**	**0.00**	**29,585.28**
310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		**34,729.00**	**5,143.72**	**0.00**	**29,585.28**
	62000 Operating Expens	34,729.00	5,143.72	0.00	29,585.28
04 EDUCATION		**7,549,250.53**	**2,124,576.4**	**0.00**	**5,424,674.08**
01100 General Fund		**6,681,164.00**	**1,934,609.4**	**0.00**	**4,746,554.57**
315H1 EDUCATION		**6,605,854.00**	**1,929,428.4**	**0.00**	**4,676,425.57**
	61000 Personal Services	6,337,905.00	1,816,192.8	0.00	4,521,712.15
	62000 Operating Expens	267,949.00	113,235.58	0.00	154,713.42
315H8 INTERPRETER PROF DEV (OTO)		**61,000.00**	**5,181.00**	**0.00**	**55,819.00**
	62000 Operating Expens	61,000.00	5,181.00	0.00	55,819.00
315Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION		**14,310.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**14,310.00**
	61000 Personal Services	14,310.00	0.00	0.00	14,310.00
02050 School Trust Interest/Income		**302,341.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**302,341.00**
315H1 EDUCATION		**302,341.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**302,341.00**
	61000 Personal Services	302,341.00	0.00	0.00	302,341.00
03012 E.C.I.A. Chapter I		**52,861.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**52,861.00**
315H1 EDUCATION		**52,861.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**52,861.00**
	61000 Personal Services	52,861.00	0.00	0.00	52,861.00
03064 EHA, Part B		**119,219.00**	**8,580.48**	**0.00**	**110,638.52**
315H1 EDUCATION		**119,128.00**	**8,580.48**	**0.00**	**110,547.52**
	61000 Personal Services	49,128.00	0.00	0.00	49,128.00
	62000 Operating Expens	70,000.00	8,580.48	0.00	61,419.52
315Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION		**91.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**91.00**

	61000 Personal Services	91.00	0.00	0.00	91.00
03235 DPHHS Grant		**28,500.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**28,500.00**
315AW FY27 PRE-ETS GRANT		**28,500.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**28,500.00**
	62000 Operating Expens	28,500.00	0.00	0.00	28,500.00
03396 DPHHS Grand - Newborn Hearing		**35,000.00**	**1,013.96**	**0.00**	**33,986.04**
315AV FY27 NEWBORN HEARING GRANT		**35,000.00**	**1,013.96**	**0.00**	**33,986.04**
	61000 Personal Services	22,000.00	0.00	0.00	22,000.00
	62000 Operating Expens	13,000.00	1,013.96	0.00	11,986.04
03590 Federal Literacy Grant		**330,165.53**	**180,372.58**	**0.00**	**149,792.95**
315AU MT READS GRANT 9/30/26		**330,165.53**	**180,372.58**	**0.00**	**149,792.95**
	61000 Personal Services	52,720.00	36,927.23	0.00	15,792.77
	62000 Operating Expens	277,445.53	143,445.35	0.00	134,000.18
Grand Total		**11,650,565.53**	**3,443,794.0**	**0.00**	**8,206,771.44**

51130 School for the Deaf & Blind
ORG Budget Summary by OBPP Prog, Fund, Subclass

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2027 through 04 (Oct)/2027

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

Business Unit	(All)
Program Year	2027
FY_BudPer	(All)
Month	(All)
Source of Auth	(All)
Fund Type	(All)
Account	(All)
Acct Lvl 2	(All)
Org	(All)
Account Type	E
Project	(All)
Ledger	(All)

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OBPP Program Fund	Subclass	Acct Lvl 1	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	Accrual Amt	RG Bud Balance
01 ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM			**963,594.00**	**303,419.00**	**0.00**	**660,175.00**
01100 General Fund			**960,200.00**	**303,419.00**	**0.00**	**656,781.00**
	300H1 ADMINISTRATION		**960,200.00**	**303,419.00**	**0.00**	**656,781.00**
		61000 Personal Service	960,200.00	303,419.00	0.00	656,781.00
02050 School Trust Interest/Income			**3,394.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**3,394.00**
	300H1 ADMINISTRATION		**3,394.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**3,394.00**
		61000 Personal Service	3,394.00	0.00	0.00	3,394.00
02 GENERAL SERVICES			**469,871.00**	**130,091.94**	**0.00**	**339,779.06**
01100 General Fund			**469,871.00**	**130,091.94**	**0.00**	**339,779.06**
	305H1 GENERAL SERVICES		**469,871.00**	**130,091.94**	**0.00**	**339,779.06**
		61000 Personal Service	469,871.00	130,091.94	0.00	339,779.06
03 STUDENT SERVICES			**1,813,536.00**	**497,521.32**	**0.00**	**1,316,014.68**
01100 General Fund			**1,813,536.00**	**497,521.32**	**0.00**	**1,316,014.68**
	310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		**1,813,536.00**	**497,521.32**	**0.00**	**1,316,014.68**

61000 Personal Servic	1,813,536.00	497,521.32	0.00	1,316,014.68

04 EDUCATION	**6,831,356.00**	**1,853,120.0**	**0.00**	**4,978,235.92**
01100 General Fund	**6,352,215.00**	**1,816,192.8**	**0.00**	**4,536,022.15**
315H1 EDUCATION	**6,337,905.00**	**1,816,192.8**	**0.00**	**4,521,712.15**
61000 Personal Servic	6,337,905.00	1,816,192.8	0.00	4,521,712.15
315Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION	**14,310.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**14,310.00**
61000 Personal Servic	14,310.00	0.00	0.00	14,310.00
02050 School Trust Interest/Income	**302,341.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**302,341.00**
315H1 EDUCATION	**302,341.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**302,341.00**
61000 Personal Servic	302,341.00	0.00	0.00	302,341.00
03012 E.C.I.A. Chapter I	**52,861.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**52,861.00**
315H1 EDUCATION	**52,861.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**52,861.00**
61000 Personal Servic	52,861.00	0.00	0.00	52,861.00
03064 EHA, Part B	**49,219.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**49,219.00**
315H1 EDUCATION	**49,128.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**49,128.00**
61000 Personal Servic	49,128.00	0.00	0.00	49,128.00
315Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION	**91.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**91.00**
61000 Personal Servic	91.00	0.00	0.00	91.00
03396 DPHHS Grand - Newborn Hearing	**22,000.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**22,000.00**
315AV FY27 NEWBORN HEARING GRANT	**22,000.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**22,000.00**
61000 Personal Servic	22,000.00	0.00	0.00	22,000.00
03590 Federal Literacy Grant	**52,720.00**	**36,927.23**	**0.00**	**15,792.77**
315AU MT READS GRANT 9/30/26	**52,720.00**	**36,927.23**	**0.00**	**15,792.77**
61000 Personal Servic	52,720.00	36,927.23	0.00	15,792.77
Grand Total	**10,078,357.0(**	**2,784,152.3**	**0.00**	**7,294,204.66**

51130 School for the Deaf & Blind
ORG Budget Summary by OBPP Prog, Fund, Subclass

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2027 through 04 (Oct)/2027

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

Business Unit	(All)
Program Year	2027
FY_BudPer	(All)
Month	(All)
Source of Auth	(All)
Fund Type	(All)
Account	(All)
Acct Lvl 2	(All)
Org	(All)
Account Type	E
Project	(All)
Ledger	(All)

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OBPP Program Fund	Subclass	Acct Lvl 1	ORG Budget	ctuals Amt	Accrual Amt	RG Bud Balance
01 ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM			**282,924.00**	**125,438.3(**	**0.00**	**157,485.64**
01100 General Fund			**282,924.00**	**125,438.3(**	**0.00**	**157,485.64**
	300H1 ADMINISTRATION		**26,380.00**	**9,205.29**	**0.00**	**17,174.71**
		62000 Operating Expens(	26,380.00	9,205.29	0.00	17,174.71
	300H5 STATE ITSD (RST)		**256,544.00**	**116,233.07**	**0.00**	**140,310.93**
		62000 Operating Expens(	256,544.00	116,233.07	0.00	140,310.93
02 GENERAL SERVICES			**334,192.00**	**207,699.1:**	**0.00**	**126,492.88**
01100 General Fund			**334,192.00**	**207,699.1:**	**0.00**	**126,492.88**
	305H1 GENERAL SERVICES		**334,192.00**	**207,699.1:**	**0.00**	**126,492.88**
		62000 Operating Expens(	271,577.00	207,699.1:	0.00	63,877.88
		68000 Transfers-out	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
		69000 Debt Service	61,615.00	0.00	0.00	61,615.00
03 STUDENT SERVICES			**237,198.00**	**55,047.90**	**0.00**	**182,150.10**
01100 General Fund			**202,469.00**	**49,904.18**	**0.00**	**152,564.82**

310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		202,469.00	49,904.18	0.00	152,564.82
	62000 Operating Expens	202,469.00	49,904.18	0.00	152,564.82
03167 National School Lunch		34,729.00	5,143.72	0.00	29,585.28
310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		34,729.00	5,143.72	0.00	29,585.28
	62000 Operating Expens	34,729.00	5,143.72	0.00	29,585.28
04 EDUCATION		717,894.53	271,456.37	0.00	446,438.16
01100 General Fund		328,949.00	118,416.58	0.00	210,532.42
315H1 EDUCATION		267,949.00	113,235.58	0.00	154,713.42
	62000 Operating Expens	267,949.00	113,235.58	0.00	154,713.42
315H8 INTERPRETER PROF DEV (OTO)		61,000.00	5,181.00	0.00	55,819.00
	62000 Operating Expens	61,000.00	5,181.00	0.00	55,819.00
03064 EHA, Part B		70,000.00	8,580.48	0.00	61,419.52
315H1 EDUCATION		70,000.00	8,580.48	0.00	61,419.52
	62000 Operating Expens	70,000.00	8,580.48	0.00	61,419.52
03235 DPHHS Grant		28,500.00	0.00	0.00	28,500.00
315AW FY27 PRE-ETS GRANT		28,500.00	0.00	0.00	28,500.00
	62000 Operating Expens	28,500.00	0.00	0.00	28,500.00
03396 DPHHS Grand - Newborn Hearing		13,000.00	1,013.96	0.00	11,986.04
315AV FY27 NEWBORN HEARING GRANT		13,000.00	1,013.96	0.00	11,986.04
	62000 Operating Expens	13,000.00	1,013.96	0.00	11,986.04
03590 Federal Literacy Grant		277,445.53	143,445.35	0.00	134,000.18
315AU MT READS GRANT 9/30/26		277,445.53	143,445.35	0.00	134,000.18
	62000 Operating Expens	277,445.53	143,445.35	0.00	134,000.18
Grand Total		1,572,208.53	659,641.75	0.00	912,566.78

PAYROLL TOTALS		General Fund	School Trust	MSDB misc MOU's	General Fund	General Fund	General Fund	WORKERS COMP	School Trust	IDEA Pre-school & Part B	IDEA Outreach	WORKERS COMP	Newborn Hearing	MT Reads Grant		
		PGM 1 01100	PGM 1 02050	PGM 1 02259	PGM 2 01100	PGM 3 01100	PGM 4 01100	PGM 4 01100	PGM 4 02050	PGM 4 03012	PGM 4 03064	PGM 4 1100	PGM 4 03396	PGM 4 03590		
	Budget	$960,200.00	$3,394.00	$5,934.23	$469,871.00	$1,813,536.00	$6,352,215.00	$0.00	$302,341.00	$52,861.00	$49,219.00	$0.00	$0.00	$52,720.00	$10,062,291.23	
	PPE:														$0.00	
1	7/10/2026	($25,938.85)			($14,223.26)	($47,578.86)	($185,221.31)								($272,962.28)	
2	7/24/2026	($39,577.26)			($16,601.79)	($53,206.94)	($287,887.99)								($397,273.98)	
3	8/7/2026	($37,907.87)			($15,811.12)	($49,968.63)	($241,285.73)								($344,973.35)	
4	8/21/2026	($39,115.99)			($15,657.29)	($59,324.37)	($245,295.82)								($359,393.47)	
5	9/4/2026	($38,793.80)			($17,200.23)	($69,681.32)	($231,848.64)								($357,523.99)	
6	9/18/2026	($33,883.10)			($13,999.81)	($58,655.15)	($189,968.10)								($296,506.16)	
7	10/2/2026	($38,798.54)			($17,200.24)	($70,700.22)	($219,465.68)								($346,164.68)	
8	10/16/2026	($46,073.60)			($16,698.20)	($72,202.10)	($183,993.30)							($36,927.23)	($355,894.43)	
9	10/30/2026														$0.00	
10	11/13/2026														$0.00	
11	11/27/2026														$0.00	
12	12/11/2026														$0.00	
13	12/25/2026														$0.00	
14	1/8/2026														$0.00	
15	1/22/2026														$0.00	
16	2/5/2026														$0.00	
17	2/19/2026														$0.00	
18	3/6/2026														$0.00	
19	3/19/2026														$0.00	
20	4/2/2026														$0.00	
21	4/16/2026														$0.00	
22	4/30/2026														$0.00	
23	5/14/2026														$0.00	
24	5/28/2026														$0.00	
25	6/11/2026														$0.00	
26	6/25/2026														$0.00	
	TOTAL PAYROLL:	($300,089.01)	$0.00	$0.00	($127,391.94)	($481,317.59)	($1,784,966.57)	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	($36,927.23)	($2,730,692.34)	
	BALANCE	$660,110.99	$3,394.00	$5,934.23	$342,479.06	$1,332,218.41	$4,567,248.43	$0.00	$302,341.00	$52,861.00	$49,219.00	$0.00	$0.00	$15,792.77	$7,331,598.89	* TIES TO GL
8	AVERAGE PAYROLL	($37,511.13)	$0.00	$0.00	($15,923.99)	($60,164.70)	($223,120.82)	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	($4,615.90)	($341,336.54)	Average payroll
18	ESTIMATED PAYROLL	($675,200.27)	$0.00	$0.00	($286,631.87)	($1,082,964.58)	($4,016,174.78)	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	($83,086.27)	($6,144,057.77)	
	Retirement payouts:	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
	PROJECTED FYE BAL:	($15,089.28)	$3,394.00	$5,934.23	$55,847.20	$249,253.83	$551,073.65	$0.00	$302,341.00	$52,861.00	$49,219.00	$0.00	$0.00	($67,293.50)	$1,187,541.13	Total with Grants
						FOUR PROGRAM TOT/	$841,085.39		Estimated balance left in 4 programs							

9089 Mont Sch for Deaf & Blind District	Student Enrollment Summary Report
3911 Central Avenue, Great Falls, MT 59405	Effective Date: 11/04/2026 Enrollment Types: P, S, N
Generated on 11/04/2026 01:35:56 AM Page 1 of 1	Total Race/Ethnicities: 5 of 7 Total Schools: 2
	Race/Ethnicity Source: Federal Male/Female/Total: 18/20/38

Student Population by Race/Ethnicity and Grade Level (Male/Female/Total)

MT Sch For Deaf & Blnd 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	-	0/2/2	-	-	-	-	-	0/2/2
02	-	-	-	-	-	1/1/2	-	1/1/2
04	-	-	-	-	-	2/1/3	-	2/1/3
06	-	-	-	-	-	2/3/5	-	2/3/5
07	-	-	-	-	-	1/1/2	1/1/2	2/2/4
08	-	-	-	-	-	0/1/1	-	0/1/1
KG	-	-	-	-	-	2/0/2	-	2/0/2
PK	-	-	-	-	-	0/1/1	-	0/1/1
PS	0/1/1	-	-	-	-	0/1/1	-	0/2/2
All Grades	0/1/1	0/2/2	-	-	-	8/9/17	1/1/2	9/13/22

MT Sch For Deaf & Blnd 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	-	-	0/2/2	0/1/1	1/3/4
10	1/0/1	-	1/0/1	-	-	1/0/1	-	3/0/3
11	0/1/1	2/0/2	-	-	-	0/2/2	1/0/1	3/3/6
12	-	1/0/1	-	-	-	1/1/2	-	2/1/3
All Grades	1/1/2	3/0/3	2/0/2	-	-	2/5/7	1/1/2	9/7/16

Student Population Excluding White not of Hispanic Origin

School	Total	Percentage
MT Sch For Deaf & Blnd El	5	22.73%
MT Sch For Deaf & Blnd HS	9	56.25%
Total	14	36.84%



Admissions

INQUIRY	
Inquiry	1
Inquiry Completed	10
Inactive Inquiry	5
Inquiry For Campus Services	1
Inquiry For Outreach Services	4
Inquiry For Special Events Services	0
Inquiry For Student Group Activities Services	0
Inquiry Referral From Ehdi	0
Inquiry Referred To Outreach In Progress	16
Inquiry Referred To Outreach Qualified	18
Inquiry Referred To Outreach Unqualified	5

APPLICANT	
Applicant	1
Application Withdrawn By Parent	0
Collecting Educational Documents	0
Collecting Medical Documents	0

APPLICATION COMPLETE	
Application Complete	0
Review In Progress	0
Waitlisted	0
Applicant Ineligible For Services	0
Current Ten Day In Process	1
Document Review Meeting Scheduled	0
Ten Day Observation Scheduled	0

ACCEPTED	
Accepted	0
Did Not Enroll	0
Enrollment Date Selected	0
Parent Declined	0

Journey of a Learner	LOWER PK-2				UPPER 3-6				MIDDLE 7-8				HIGH 9-12			
Effective Communicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Expressive: Engagement in a Conversation	1	4		5	...			2		7	2		...			
Expressive: Perspectives			1		1						4			3		1
Receptive: Components of Active Listening	3	2		4		3	4	2	1	2		3			1	
Responsible Learner	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Learning Advocacy	1						3		1	2			1			
Goals and Prioritizing	3	4	5			6	2	3			2				2	
Expectations			2	5	1	4				3	4	7		3		
Feedback Cycle		1			1				2							2
Independent Person	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Emotional Maturity	1		3		1		11	7			3	7				
Making Decisions	3	1		4	3		1	4	1		3			12		
Advocating/Asking for Help/Questions/ Finding Resources(support Network)		1				1	6			8		1	1			
Self Navigating	1	2				3					4				4	6
Flexible Thinker	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Interpersonal Skills/Listening with Empathy	6			1	2		1		1	2	3			1		
Action		1	5			4		2				2			1	
Thinking	2									2						2
Problem Solver	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Problem Solving Process	1	2	3	4	1	3		8	1	2	4	6	2		4	7
Perseverance	1					1				3		1				3
Digital Citizen	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Digital Literacy	2	8	10	5	4	10		13	11	15		1	6		2	8
Access Devices						3	2	7		4	2	6		3		
TOTAL # to be reported	12	11	7	7	10	10	9	9	8	11	11	9	6	6	6	7

Example of 1st quarter student information

Teacher responsible	**Code**	Student A	Student B	Student c	Student D	Student E
ELA	**IP.EM.UE.1**	3	3	3	1	3
Social Studies	**DC.DL.UE.4**	3	2	2	3	2

1	RL.LA.LE.1	Grade Level	Content Area	Category	Code	I Can Statement	Diagnostic Link
39	**Lower Elementary**	**2**	Math	**Flexible Thinker**	**FT.IL.LE.6**	**I can sort good ideas and bad ideas.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Gsc**
40	**Lower Elementary**	**2**	Math	**Problem Solver**	**PS.P.LE.1**	**I can sort difficult tasks from easy tasks.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/17Cn**
41	**Lower Elementary**	**2**	Science	**Digital Citizen**	**DC.DL.LE.2**	**I can sort safe from unsafe situations.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Go_**
42	Lower Elementary	2	Social Studies	Digital Citizen	DC.AD.LE.3	I can define username.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_buQk
43	Lower Elementary	2	Social Studies	Digital Citizen	DC.AD.LE.4	I can define account.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oKVP5
44	Lower Elementary	2	Social Studies	Digital Citizen	DC.DL.LE.1	I can describe respect.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rqJud
45	Lower Elementary	K	ELA	Effective Communicator	EC.EC.LE.2	I can start a conversation.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/17NMe
46	Lower Elementary	K	ELA	Responsible Learner	RL.E.LE.7	I can identify a group learning environment.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SV4m
47	Lower Elementary	K	Math	Independent Person	IP.AA.LE.3	I can identify when I do not need help.	
48	**Lower Elementary**	**K**	Math	**Responsible Learner**	**RL.LA.LE.1**	**I can identify the qualities of a learner.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/1V8f**
49	**Lower Elementary**	**K**	Science	**Flexible Thinker**	**FT.T.LE.2**	**I can recognize a change.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/19yxi**
50	**Lower Elementary**	**K**	Science	**Independent Person**	**IP.SN.LE.1**	**I can describe what I know about a topic**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IWU**
51	Lower Elementary	K	Social Studies	Digital Citizen	DC.DL.LE.3	I can describe privacy.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XqjvAI
52	Lower Elementary	K	Social Studies	Digital Citizen	DC.DL.LE.7	I can define a safe adult.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XqjvAI
53	Lower Elementary	PreK	ELA	Effective Communicator	EC.RL.LE.1	I can face the speaker.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dV6vG
54	Lower Elementary	PreK	Health/PE	Flexible Thinker	FT.IL.LE.4	I can include others in my play.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sDRtA
55	Lower Elementary	PreK	Science	Digital Citizen	DC.AD.LE.1	I can identify different devices.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/16FUKS
56	Lower Elementary	PreK	Social Studies	Independent Person	IP.EM.LE.7	I can thank someone.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yRZwc
57	Middle School	7	ELA	Effective Communicator	EC.EC.MS.4	I can identify the different manners of communication.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Dm78
58	Middle School	7	ELA	Effective Communicator	EC.EC.MS.6	I can explain the difference between informal and formal languag	https://docs.google.com/document/d/19n2Tp
59	Middle School	7	ELA	Independent Person	IP.EM.MS.2	I can identify emotions in others.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Y7fHfF
60	Middle School	7	Health/PE	Digital Citizen	DC.AD.MS.5	I can sort between beneficial and non-beneficial.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1H1ingv
61	**Middle School**	**7**	Math	**Independent Person**	**IP.MD.MS.1**	**I can brainstorm alternatives.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/16GQ**
62	**Middle School**	**7**	Math	**Problem Solver**	**PS.PSP.MS.1**	**I can distinguish problems from non-problems.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GGC**
63	Middle School	7	Math	Problem Solver	PS.PSP.MS.8	I can explain the problem solving process.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/19c78c
64	Middle School	7	Science	Flexible Thinker	FT.A.MS.1	I can explain why there are different ways of doing things.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1G8Z01
65	Middle School	7	Science	Independent Person	IP.SN.MS.1	I can reflect on what I know and ask a questions about something	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Qwwc
66	**Middle School**	**7**	Science	**Responsible Learner**	**RL.FC.MS.2**	**I can seek feedback.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ANC**
67	**Middle School**	**7**	Social Studies	**Digital Citizen**	**DC.DL.MS.11**	**I can explain why digital safety rules are important.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-_Td**
68	Middle School	7	Social Studies	Independent Person	IP.EM.MS.10	I can list things I am grateful for.	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-xFMh
69	Middle School	8	ELA	Effective Communicator	EC.EC.MS.1	I can explain why productive and respectful conversations are imp	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tevblc
70	**Middle School**	**8**	ELA	**Effective Communicator**	**EC.RL.MS.1**	**I can explain the components of active listening.**	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YwR**
71	Middle School	8	ELA	Independent Person	IP.EM.MS.1	I can identify emotions in myself .	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WzFw

❖ MACIE LIAISON – (Item 8)

Julia Maxwell

ITEM 8

MACIE REPORT

Action Items:

- **Gisele Forrest, MIEA Representative**
- **Bonnie Rosette, SAM Representative**

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 2026

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:
Requested Decision	**1.** Approve the Montana Indian Education Association Representative **2.** Approve the School Administrators of Montana Representative
Related Issue(s)	November MACIE Meeting
Recommendations	Approve the MIEA Representative to MACIE Approve the SAM Representative to MACIE

Montana Indian Education Association Representative

Gisele Forrest

Gisele Forrest is an enrolled Fort Peck Nakoda member with ties to the Fort Belknap Indian Community. Raised in Missoula, Montana, she graduated from the University of Montana with a degree in Business Administration, an emphasis in Management, and a minor in Native American Studies. Gisele brings more than 20 years of experience in nonprofit leadership, community advocacy, and public service.

As President of the Montana Indian Education Association (MIEA), Gisele continues a long-standing commitment to Indian education advocacy, promoting educational equity, cultural preservation, and meaningful representation of Native voices in educational policy and decision-making. Her advocacy focuses on strengthening relationships among tribal nations, families, educators, and communities while addressing systemic barriers that affect Native student achievement and well-being. She believes that

Native students deserve educational environments that honor their identities, recognize their cultural strengths, and provide equitable opportunities for success.

Gisele is also an Indigenous artist, entrepreneur, and community volunteer who believes cultural education extends beyond the classroom. Through beadwork, creative workshops, and community involvement, she strives to promote cultural learning, strengthen intergenerational connections, and share Nakoda knowledge and traditions.

Gisele looks forward to representing MIEA on the Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education and continuing the important work of advocating for Indian education, strengthening community partnerships, and ensuring that Native voices and perspectives remain central to Montana's educational future.

School Administrators of Montana Representative

Bonnie Rosette

Bonnie Rosette served 21 years in education, including 19 years dedicated to public education. As a proud member of the Blackfeet Nation, she brings a strong commitment to supporting Indigenous students, strengthening educational opportunities, and building meaningful relationships within tribal communities and school communities. Her professional experience has provided her with a broad understanding of the educational system from classroom support, teacher development, to administration and leadership.

❖ **CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE – (Item 9)**

Lisa Schmidt

ITEM 9

INFORMATION ON PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL FALL ENROLLMENT DATA

Christy Mock-Stutz

Public Charter School Fall Enrollment Counts

***Preliminary** data as of* October 31, 2026

This is the third year that Montana's public charter schools, operating under § 20-6-812, MCA, are open and operational. There is one new public charter school opening this school year. New public charter schools are provided funding through a basic entitlement based upon their anticipated Annual Number of Belonging (ANB) count, provided to the OPI in the spring prior to opening, and then confirmed after the October count day. Existing charter schools are provided basic entitlement funding based upon their ANB from the prior year.

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. 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).

Charter Schools Enrollment/ANB counts

District	LE	School Name	SC	Budget Unit	Fall 2026 Student Count	Current Year ANB FY2027	Basic Entitle-ment amount FY27	Fall 2027 Student Count	ANB Require-ment: Greater than
Billings Elem	0965	Billings Multilingual Academy	3003	E2	17	3	$ -	36	70
Billings H S	0966	Billings Multilingual Academy	3004	H2	24	11	$ -	74	40
Billings H S	0966	Billings Early College School	3005	H3	107	55	$ 375,333	125	40
Billings H S	0966	Billings Opportunity School	3006	H4	110	102	$ 375,333	109	40
Bozeman H S	0351	Bridger Charter School	3027	H2	134	69	$ 375,333	113	40
Butte HS	1212	Butte Pathway Academy	3034	H2	33	44	$ 375,333	67	40
Corvallis K-12	0731	Rise Charter & Distance	3010	E2	267	276	$ 62,554	337	70
Corvallis K-12	0731	Rise Charter & Distance	3011	M2	65	64	$ 125,110	86	20
Corvallis K-12	0731	Rise Charter & Distance	3012	H2	68	60	$ 375,333	89	40

District	LE	School Name	SC	Budget Unit	Fall 2026 Student Count	Current Year ANB FY2027	Basic Entitlement amount FY27	Fall 2027 Student Count	ANB Requirement: Greater than
Corvallis K-12	0731	Rise Charter & Pathways	3013	E3	613	241	$ 62,554	560	70
Corvallis K-12	0731	Rise Charter & Pathways	3014	M3	189	39	$ 125,110	195	20
Corvallis K-12	0731	Rise Charter & Pathways	3015	H3	214	63	$ 375,333	386	20
East Helena K-12	1240	227 Academy	3028	E2	2	2	$ -	1	70
East Helena K-12	1240	227 Academy	3028	M2	22	26	$ 125,110	28	20
East Helena K-12	1240	227 Academy	3029	H2	56	60	$ 375,333	49	40
Fergus HS	0259	Central MT CTE Academy	3030	H2	290	74	$ 375,333	299	40
Flathead H S	0311	Kalispell Rising Wolf Charter	3018	H3	228	59	$ 375,333	249	40
Flathead H S	0311	Flathead Pace Academy	3019	H2	237	89	$ 375,333	297	40
Frenchtown K-12	0599	Bronc Fast Track	3017	H2	56	80	$ 375,333	66	40
Great Falls Elem	0098	CORE School at Morningside	3016	E2	321	325	$ 62,554	314	70
Hamilton K-12	0735	Bitterroot Polytech	3020	M2	15	27	$ 125,110	24	20
Hamilton K-12	0735	Bitterroot Polytech	3021	H2	46	47	$ 375,333	59	40
Hardin EL	0023	Big Horn Academy	3035	E2	0	0	$ -	19	20
Hardin HS	1189	Big Horn Academy	3036	H2	70	76	$ 375,333	78	40
Helena Elem	0487	Helena Montessori Charter Schl	3022	E3	216	224	$ 62,554	216	70
Helena Elem	0487	Mount Ascension Learning Academy	3023	E2	48	18	$ -	0	70
Helena Elem	0487	Mount Ascension Learning Academy	3024	M2	37	13	$ -	0	20
Helena H S	0488	Mount Ascension Learning Academy	3025	H2	105	72	$ 375,333	91	40
Helena H S	0488	Helena P.A.L.	3026	H3	62	77	$ 375,333	72	40
Libby K-12	0522	Libby Central Charter School	3033	H2	40	45	$ 375,333	45	40
Livingston Elem*	0612	Pathways Charter 7-8	3038	M2	0	0	$ -	0	20
Missoula Elem	0583	Missoula TEACH Academy	3009	E3	70	75	$ 62,554	101	70
Missoula H S	0584	Missoula Connect Academy	3008	H3	67	73	$ 375,333	66	40
Park HS*	0613	Pathways Charter 9-12	3039	H2	0	0	$ -	0	40
Ronan EL	1199	Ronan Charter Academy	3031	M2	13	14	$ -	58	20
Ronan HS	1200	Ronan Charter Academy	3032	H2	29	32	$ -	96	40
Stevensville HS**	0733	Health Sciences	3037	H2	0	0	$ 375,333	53	40

*New charter schools approved in 2025, scheduled to open in SY2027.
**New charter school opened in 2026-2027.

Charter School Primary and Secondary Service Types- *preliminary* as of October 31, 2026

School Name	Current Year ANB FY2027	Fall 2027 Student Count	Primary Service Type					Secondary Service Type				
			F (1.0)	T (.75)	H (.5)	Q (.25)	N (0)	F (1.0)	T (.75)	H (.5)	Q (.25)	N (0)
227 Academy	2	1										
227 Academy	26	28	6	1	13	4	5					
227 Academy	60	49	12	23	5	2	6					1
Big Horn Academy	0	19	19									
Big Horn Academy	76	78	76			2						
Billings Early College School	55	125	2	3	91	14	15					
Billings Multilingual Academy	3	36			36							
Billings Multilingual Academy	11	74			34					10	23	7
Billings Opportunity School	102	109	75	1	26		4		1	2		
Bitterroot Polytech	27	24	23									1
Bitterroot Polytech	47	59	41	8	3					7		
Bridger Charter School	69	113						15	29	40	29	
Bronc Fast Track	80	66	66									
Butte Pathway Academy	44	67	67									
Central MT CTE Academy	74	299						33	28	42	62	134
CORE School at Morningside	325	314	309	1	4							
Flathead Pace Academy	89	297								70	227	
Helena Montessori Charter Schl	224	216	216									
Helena P.A.L.	77	72	71					1				
Kalispell Rising Wolf Charter	59	249	8	14					1	78	92	56
Libby Central Charter School	45	45	43				1			1		
Missoula Connect Academy	73	66	53	6	2		5					
Missoula TEACH Academy	75	101	101									
Mount Ascension Learning Academy	18	0										
Mount Ascension Learning Academy	13	0										
Mount Ascension Learning Academy	72	91	49		2			1		12	27	
Rise Charter & Distance	276	337	329	1	3	4						
Rise Charter & Distance	64	86	81	3	2							

School Name	Current Year ANB FY2027	Fall 2027 Student Count	Primary Service Type					Secondary Service Type				
			F (1.0)	T (.75)	H (.5)	Q (.25)	N (0)	F (1.0)	T (.75)	H (.5)	Q (.25)	N (0)
Rise Charter & Distance	60	89	57	7	5	1			2	12	3	2
Rise Charter & Pathways	241	560	129							9	422	
Rise Charter & Pathways	39	195	49					1		40	102	3
Rise Charter & Pathways	63	386	11	28	3	3			44	48	187	62
Ronan Charter Academy	14	58	4	1	2					17	34	
Ronan Charter Academy	32	96	31	4	5	2			3	13	38	
Stevensville Health Sciences	0	53	52								1	9

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TOURS

10:30AM **VISIT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS CLASSROOMS**
Hyalite Elementary, Bozeman MT

************RECONVENE AT 1:00PM************

- **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – (Items 10-14)**

Dr. Ron Slinger

ITEM 10

PRESENTATION ON THE MONTANA EDUCATORS HELPING EDUCATORS PROJECT: CLASSROOM COACH

Dr. Michael Brody, Montana State University

Montana Educators Helping Montana Educators: Classroom Coach

Executive Summary for the Montana Board of Public Education November 18, 2026

REQUEST TO THE BOARD: Guidance on safeguards, governance conditions, stakeholder participation, and evidence standards for a voluntary, limited pilot. **No statewide adoption or implementation approval is being requested.**

PURPOSE

Classroom Coach is a developing, research-informed, AI-assisted reflection resource that helps teachers clarify immediate problems of practice and prepare for productive conversations with mentors, administrators, colleagues, or specialists.

MONTANA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

A Montana Delphi study engaged **36 participants**: 14 K-12 teachers, 9 administrators, and 13 teacher educators. Their agreement informed four professional-learning domains: **adaptive instruction; relational, inclusive, and culturally responsive practice; classroom leadership, management, and ethics; and reflective practice and professional collaboration.**

FROM MONTANA RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

1 LISTEN
Montana educators identify the knowledge, skills, and dispositions new teachers need.

2 SYNTHESIZE
Delphi consensus organizes those priorities into a professional-learning framework.

3 TRANSLATE
Classroom Coach turns the framework into reflection prompts and pathways to human support.

4 TEST RESPONSIBLY
A limited pilot examines usefulness, accuracy, equity, accessibility, privacy, and oversight.

INTENDED ROLE AND ESSENTIAL BOUNDARIES

CLASSROOM COACH IS INTENDED TO:	CLASSROOM COACH WILL NOT:
• Prompt reflection and examination of evidence • Connect classroom questions to professional learning • Prepare educators to seek appropriate human support • Strengthen conversations with mentors, administrators, colleagues, or specialists	• Evaluate, score, rank, or compare educators • Make licensure, supervision, employment, or personnel decisions • Make authoritative legal, policy, medical, mental-health, placement, or eligibility decisions • Collect identifiable student, family, or employee information, or replace mandated reporting, emergency procedures, local policy, or human expertise

RESPONSIBLE PATH FORWARD

If development proceeds, the next step would be a voluntary, time-limited pilot with approved uses, informed participation, privacy and data-retention rules, human oversight, stakeholder review, and predetermined criteria to continue, revise, pause, or stop.

FIVE GOVERNANCE QUESTIONS FOR THE BOARD

1. Purpose: How should Classroom Coach be defined so it remains a reflection and professional-learning resource?	**2. Boundaries:** Which uses should be expressly prohibited?
3. Privacy: What privacy, security, confidentiality, and data-retention safeguards should be non-negotiable?	**4. Human oversight:** When should the resource direct an educator to an administrator, mentor, specialist, local policy, emergency procedure, or required reporting process?
5. Evidence: What evidence should be required before a pilot begins and before broader implementation is considered?	**REQUESTED OUTCOME: Board guidance on guardrails, stakeholder voices, and evidence standards for a responsible pilot and any future expansion.**

MICHAEL BRODY | Department of Education | Montana State University | Bozeman, MT 59717 | brody@montana.edu
brody@montana.edu

MONTANA BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Bozeman • November 18, 2026

Montana Educators Helping Montana Educators: Classroom Coach

A Montana research-to-practice briefing

Michael Brody

brody@montana.edu
Montana State University
Department of Education



Supporting Teachers Is a Daily Systems Issue

Recruitment matters. What happens after a teacher enters the classroom matters too.

CAPACITY

Mentors and principals have limited time.

DISTANCE

Rural educators may have fewer nearby support options.

COMPLEXITY

Classroom decisions span instruction, behavior, families, and professional responsibilities.

TIMING

Questions arise between scheduled support opportunities.

Board lens: How can statewide expectations support quality without creating another compliance system?

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We Asked Experienced Educators, Administrators and Teacher Ed. Faculty

- What **knowledge** do alternatively certified teachers need to know to be successful?
- What **skills** do alternatively certified teachers need to learn to be successful?
- What **dispositions** do alternatively certified teachers need to demonstrate to be successful?

14	9	13
K–12 teachers	Administrators	Teacher educators

Three rounds: open responses → refined statements → importance ratings

Montana Educators, Administrators and Teacher Ed Faculty generated the priorities!

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Standards Set Expectations; Delphi Identifies Support Priorities

Both emphasize professional practice; Delphi makes dispositions and professional growth more explicit.

DELPHI CONSENSUS



7 of 29
KNOWLEDGE

19 of 26
SKILLS

27 of 34
DISPOSITIONS

53
met both criteria

Consensus criterion:
mean ≥ 4.00 and SD ≤ 0.75

CROSSWALK ANALYSIS OF 12 MONTANA TEACHING-STANDARDS INDICATORS

3 Knowledge **6 Skills** **3 Dispositions**

Different units of analysis: 12 broad state indicators and 89 detailed Delphi statements.

Standards describe what educators are expected to know and demonstrate.
Delphi adds practitioner-informed detail about support for growing toward those expectations.

Sources: ARM 10.58.501 (2023); Brody & Reuer (2026); standards-to-Delphi crosswalk analysis.

Four Areas for Professional Learning

A practical structure for induction, mentoring, coaching, and teacher reflection.

1 Learning-Centered & Adaptive Instruction

Planning, assessment, differentiation, responsive adjustment

2 Relational, Inclusive & Culturally Responsive Practice

Relationships, belonging, family and community responsiveness

3 Classroom Leadership, Management & Ethics

Routines, behavior support, preparedness, professional responsibility

4 Reflective Practice & Professional Collaboration

Feedback, help-seeking, resilience, continued growth

Use the domains as conversation prompts, not as a validated evaluation rubric.

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What Classroom Coach Is—and Is Not

A developing reflection resource, not a decision-maker.

INTENDED ROLE

A thinking prompt

Helps clarify a problem of practice.

A bridge

Connects questions with professional learning themes.

A conversation starter

Helps prepare for mentor, PLC, or administrator discussion.

BOUNDARIES

Not an evaluator

Does not score teacher performance.

Not a policy source

Does not replace district guidance.

Not a substitute

Does not replace mentors, administrators, or specialists.

Classroom Coach is not a standalone application.
It is intended to support mentor/supervisor/teacher interactions to improve teaching and learning.

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LIVE DEMONSTRATION

See Classroom Coach in Action

One hypothetical question. One short response. Four things to notice.

brodyaltcert.github.io/AltCert/

DEMONSTRATION QUESTION

"Several students are disengaged during independent work. I have tried redirecting them, but it is not helping. What should I consider?"

OPEN LIVE SITE

1. **Clarifying questions**
2. **Professional connections**
3. **Practical options**
4. **Human collaboration**

Never enter identifiable student, teacher or school information.

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What Classroom Coach Should Not Be Used For

Clear exclusions protect students, teachers, and administrators.

PERSONNEL DECISIONS

No scoring, ranking, evaluation, or discipline.

CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS

No identifiable student, family, or employee information.

SAFETY & REPORTING

No substitute for mandated reporting or emergency procedures.

SPECIALIZED DECISIONS

No eligibility, placement, legal, medical, or mental-health determinations.

POLICY INTERPRETATION

No replacement for district, state, or federal guidance.

AUTOMATED AUTHORITY

No final decisions without accountable human review.

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Six Governance Decisions Before a Pilot

Start small, make expectations explicit, and evaluate before scaling.

1 PURPOSE

What problem are we trying to solve?

2 PARTICIPANTS

Which voluntary sites and roles are included?

3 APPROVED USES

What questions are appropriate?

4 SAFEGUARDS

What data, privacy, and escalation rules apply?

5 SUPPORT

Who provides human review and escalation?

6 EVIDENCE

What would make us continue, revise, or stop?

The Board can help define the conditions for learning, trust, and accountability.

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A BOARD CONVERSATION ABOUT RESPONSIBLE TEACHER SUPPORT

Questions for the Board

- Where does this align with the Board's responsibilities?
- What safeguards and boundaries are essential?
- What evidence should be required before expansion?

Michael Brody | brody@montana.edu



ITEM 11

INFORMATION ON SITE VISIT, STATE EXIT REPORT, AND CORRECTIVE PLAN FOR MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHERN EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Dr Julie Murgel
Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date: November 19, 2026

Presentation	Review of the State Accreditation Program Report for Montana State University-Northern's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in the College of Arts, Sciences, & Education.
Presenter	Julie Murgel Crystal Andrews
Position Title	Chief Program Officer Senior Manager, School and Educator Effectiveness Office of Public Instruction
Overview	The State Superintendent of Public Instruction presents to the Board of Public Education (BPE) the State Accreditation Program Report for Montana State University-Northern's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in the College of Arts, Sciences, & Education. The State Final Report including a summary of results and a corrective action plan and timeline is included in the BPE Agenda Packet. Dr. Curtis Smeby, Interim Dean, along with several faculty members will be available to provide comments and respond to questions from the BPE.
Requested Decision(s)	Information Only
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	N/A

Susie Hedalen, Superintendent
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501

Phone: 406.444.3680
opi.mt.gov

November 6, 2026

TO: Dr. Curtis Smeby
Interim Dean, College of Arts, Sciences & Education
Montana State University Northern

FROM: Crystal Andrews
Senior Manager, School & Educator Effectiveness
Montana Office of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: **Final** State Accreditation Program Report 2026

On October 22, 2026, the State Accreditation two-year review of the Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education took place at Montana State University Northern. This site review was conducted by the Montana Office of the Public Instruction (OPI). This review aimed to assess whether adequate progress (met or met with notation) had been achieved regarding three standards previously cited as stipulations during the April 2024 comprehensive accreditation review. Prior to the site visit, a cadre of qualified educators reviewed the Institutional Reports provided by Montana State University Northern for the following three Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (PEPPS).

- 10.58.314 INITIAL PROGRAM IMPACT
- 10.58.315 INITIAL PROVIDER QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
- 10.58.608 ADVANCED PROGRAM SATISFACTION WITH PREPARATION

The Final State Accreditation Program Report 2026 is attached.

Below are the next steps and the projected timeline for the Board of Public Education (BPE) approval process.

- Upon the recommendation of the State Superintendent, the Final State Accreditation Program Report will be presented to the BPE as an information item on November 19, 2026 and an action item on November 20, 2026.
- Due to limited progress on the three standards designated as stipulations, the State Superintendent recommends "Accreditation with Probation," accompanied by a mandatory corrective action plan to resolve these stipulations and a firm 6-month deadline for submitting progress reports.

For more information, contact Crystal Andrews by telephone at 406-593-8278 or by email at Crystal.Andrews@mt.gov.

cc: Jamie Corley, Accreditation Specialist, Montana Office of Public Instruction
Julie Murgel, Chief Program Officer, Montana Office of Public Instruction

Susie Hedalen, Superintendent
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DEFINITIONS WHICH PERTAIN TO THIS REPORT

Standard is met: Regular accreditation for a period of seven years.

Standard is met with notation: Regular accreditation with minor deviations with most of the components of a standard met. This could involve incomplete items on the Institutional Report or clarification/corrections needed. As those items are rectified, the recommendation to the BPE will reflect the current and corrected status.

Area for Improvement (AFI): Standard is met with weakness. The site review team identified a weakness in the evidence for a standard or component. Area for Improvement should be remediated by the next accreditation cycle, and progress toward improvement is reported annually through the annual report to the OPI/BPE. During the next accreditation review, the EPP must demonstrate that the AFIs have been corrected. If the AFIs have not been corrected, a stipulation may be cited in the same area.

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.

Accreditation with Probation: According to the Higher Learning Commission, Accreditation with Probation refers to "a public, temporary sanction given by an accrediting body when an institution, school, or program fails to meet one or more established standards or criteria." While under probation, the EPP maintains its status as **fully accredited**, allowing enrolled students to graduate and seek full licensure without disruption.

Initial Standards

ARM	TITLE	2024 STATUS	2026 STATUS
10.58.314	**Initial Program Impact**	Stipulation	Stipulation
10.58.315	**Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement**	Stipulation	Area for Improvement

Advanced Standards

ARM	TITLE	2024 STATUS	2026 STATUS
10.58.608	**Advanced Program Satisfaction with Preparation**	Stipulation	Stipulation

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Montana State University Northern
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review

Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: <u>10.58.314 Initial Program Impact</u>

Summary of Findings: The Institutional Reports and on-site interviews were used to evaluate Montana State University-Northern's alignment to ARM 10.58.314. Information provided during the interviews reflected a change in leadership and direction of the program over the last two years.

The EPP issued completer and employer surveys to gather information on areas of satisfaction and areas needing improvement. The EPP expressed that small numbers of completers in recent years have made it difficult to receive survey results. The EPP did not have evidence of any other attempts or methods beyond surveys and one employer interview to measure the impact of program completers.

Evidence Consistent with Meeting the Standard: The limited data collected through surveys over two years included: 3 completers in 2023-24 and 2 in 2024-25, and 4 employers in 2023-24 and 2 in 2024-25.

Evidence Inconsistent with Meeting the Standard: Due to low survey participation and a lack of additional submitted data, the EPP has not established through valid and reliable evidence that program completers effectively impact P-12 student learning. Onsite focus groups confirmed that no alternative measures were used to evaluate candidate impact, nor were limited survey responses followed up to verify their reliability or validity.

Over a two-year span, most graduate respondents rated their preparation as ineffective on half of the survey items, noting concerns over course organization and online transitions. Conversely, the 2023–2024 employer survey of four administrators showed high satisfaction with content knowledge, legal compliance, and student engagement, while identifying classroom management and peer interaction as key areas needing growth.

The Initial Programs alumni interview template is insufficient. It consists of four non-specific open-ended questions. Although the data obtained from a single interview offers some useful insights, the overall inquiry lacks necessary psychometric rigor due to insufficient scope and item density. The institutional interview protocol fails to address critical operational areas such as technology integration, student learning assessment, classroom management, differentiated instruction, and the application of content standards. To produce actionable and meaningful data, the protocol must incorporate systematic follow-up probing questions.

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Based on this lone interview, the EPP concluded that the completer exhibited high satisfaction and readiness for teaching, citing supportive faculty, impactful coursework, a student-centered focus, and practical experiences with adjunct faculty as key strengths. The EPP noted areas for growth, including the review of course scheduling, sequencing, and policy delivery. However, relying on a single interview offers an insufficient empirical basis for drawing valid conclusions.

In summary, the January 2025 administration of the satisfaction surveys yielded an identical response rate of only two participants per instrument. This nominal sample size provides an insufficient empirical foundation to satisfy the data expansion mandates required to clear existing OPI stipulation or support a rating change. The systematic divergence between graduate self-criticism and a lack of administrator observational depth indicates that the current surveys lack the constructive validity necessary to capture accurate data on novice teacher performance. The current qualitative assessment framework relies on a single interview using four non-specific, open-ended questions that lack the rigor required to measure initial program impact. To serve as a compliant, actionable tool to measure impact, the protocol must explicitly and systematically evaluate performance indicators that are completely missing from the current template, including the assessment of student learning, classroom management, technology integration, content standards application, and differentiated instruction.

Final Rating:

- **Stipulation:** The 2024 final accreditation report approved by the BPE required the EPP to address the existing stipulation by broadening completer and employer data collection beyond the 2022–2023 reporting cycle. While satisfaction surveys for completers and employers were conducted and evaluated in January 2025, participation remained minimal, yielding insufficient data to justify a change in rating.

Corrective Action: To address the stipulation, the following corrective actions steps must be completed and submitted to the OPI by March 1, 2027. A progress report on completed items will be presented by the EPP to the BPE March 18-19, 2027.

1. **Data Volume Expansion:** Redesign its employer and completer data collection strategy to achieve a minimum 50% response rate and resolve key employer survey methodological constraints.
2. **Enhance Survey Participation & Validity:** Implement targeted outreach strategies and multi-channel follow-up protocols for completer and employer satisfaction surveys to increase participation rates. Establish secondary validation and verification procedures for limited survey responses.
3. **Instrument Structure and Competency Mapping:** Redesign the Initial Programs Alumni Interview Template to increase rigor, item density, and scope by adding a multi-interview structure, strategic follow-up prompts, and explicit alignment to core professional competencies.

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4. **Establish Multiple Direct Impact Measures:** Implement diverse, verifiable additional measures beyond simple survey instruments to collect empirical evidence demonstrating completer impact on P-12 student learning.
5. **Praxis Results Analysis:** Analyze three consecutive years of PRAXIS results to identify actionable curriculum adjustments for EPP completer preparation.

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Montana State University Northern
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review

Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.315 Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Summary of Findings: Evidence in the form of various surveys, agendas, application forms, handbooks, and evaluation questions and rubrics were provided along with the Institutional Report for 10.58.315 Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement.

The EPP has established a quality-assurance framework and provides several examples of program improvement and innovation informed by data and stakeholder feedback. However, the submitted evidence does not yet demonstrate a sustained, evidence-based quality-assurance system built on multiple valid and reliable measures of both candidate and completer impact on P–12 students. Insufficient evidence was provided regarding how measures are used to assess P–12 impact and to demonstrate how inquiry and data are systematically used over time to establish priorities, strengthen program elements and capacity, and evaluate the results of changes made.

Evidence Consistent with Meeting the Standard: The EPP has implemented a quality-assurance framework and presented various instances of program enhancements and innovations driven by data analysis and stakeholder input. Demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement through feedback, the provider has established priorities to fortify some program elements. For example, open-ended survey suggestions prompted the integration of the InTASC-aligned Danielson Model to structure evaluations and self-reflections. Additionally, in response to declining enrollment and the geographical separation of candidates and partner schools, the EPP expanded online course offerings and remote check-ins with faculty and supervisors.

To track candidate progression, the EPP utilizes minimal measures that align with professional standards and program expectations. Evidence confirms that survey, enrollment, and programmatic data are reviewed during faculty meetings and annual Data Day events. The EPP recently has been providing quality-assurance summaries to faculty, administrators, and other key stakeholders, illustrating how stakeholder perspectives and program performance metrics directly shape ongoing program revisions and strategic goals.

Evidence Inconsistent with Meeting the Standard: The submitted evidence does not yet demonstrate a sustained, evidence-based quality-assurance system built on multiple valid and reliable measures of both candidate and completer impact on P–12 students. Additional components are needed for how the measures are used to assess P–12 impact and to

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demonstrate how inquiry and data are systematically used over time to establish priorities, strengthen program elements and capacity, and evaluate the results of changes made.

The evidence does not clearly demonstrate a systematic process for monitoring completer impact and provider operational effectiveness or document how assessment data are entered, verified, reported, and used in programmatic decision making. Additional work on the quality assurance system is needed to establish how the quality-assurance system operates from data collection and entry through reporting and program improvement.

Furthermore, the submitted evidence raises concerns regarding the verifiability and consistency of certain data and the resulting interpretations. For instance, the Assessment of Continuous Growth combines aggregated sums across semesters with varying observation counts, displays inconsistencies in scoring ranges and reported ratings, and treats "Not Observed" entries as zero. Standardized procedures for data quality, evaluator consistency, appropriate analysis, and processes supporting valid, uniform, and actionable interpretations are either absent or insufficiently defined.

In addition, the EPP fails to clearly show systematic evaluation of program performance relative to established goals and standards, nor does it provide meaningful analysis of outcomes over time. While the Assessment of Continuous Growth incorporates repeated observations designed to track candidate growth, the provided summaries omit analyses of progress from earlier to later observations, and no accompanying commentary was found to explain findings or corresponding program adjustments. Consequently, the EPP has not demonstrated full implementation of its described assessment and action-planning processes.

Finally, the EPP reflects a pattern of presenting and discussing data rather than conducting systematic analysis, leaving the connection between specific findings and resource allocation decisions unclear. The provider did not demonstrate how quality-assurance data analysis informs identified priorities, resource allocation, programmatic updates, and subsequent evaluations of those decisions.

Final Rating:

- **Area for Improvement:** The 2024 final accreditation report approved by the BPE required the EPP to provide a transition plan from the former quality assurance system to the new proposed system. While some progress has been made in the development of components of a quality assurance system, more evidence is needed to show how it systematically uses high-quality data and broad stakeholder input to drive program improvements. The EPP presents data but lacks systematic analysis, clear ties to resource allocation, and consistent participation from all stakeholder groups.

Corrective Action: Due to the current quality assurance system not aligning to the current needs of the program, the new system needs further development. The quality assurance system is the foundation of the program and is in need of being relevant to the current

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components of the EPP programs as well as being fully implemented to ensure candidates are effectively prepared to take on the needs of the diverse educational environments in Montana. In order to remove this stipulation and move from an area of improvement to “met” or “met with notation” the EPP needs to complete the following action items and submit evidence to the OPI by May 1, 2027. A progress report on completed items will be presented by the EPP to the BPE May 20-21, 2027.

1. The EPP must show how its data-driven decisions actively lead to programmatic enhancements. The EPP cannot just collect data; it must document how that data cycles drive operational changes.
    - **Establish Data-Quality and Data-Cleaning Protocols:** Develop and implement standardized rules for data entry, cleaning, and aggregation. Specifically, eliminate the practice of treating "Not Observed" as a numerical zero, and transition from aggregated sums to standardized averages or growth metrics when semester observation counts differ.
    - **Create a “Data to Action” Map:** Document the complete operational workflow of the quality-assurance system, by outlining exactly how data enters the system, who analyzes it, how it is reported, and what specific programmatic decisions were made based on it. This map must explicitly show how data moves from initial collection and entry, through verification and reporting, to specific faculty actions, resource allocations, and subsequent re-evaluation.
    - **Form Structural Longitudinal Growth and Analyses:** Implement specific tracking to analyze candidate trajectory from baseline to final observations (e.g., within the Assessment of Continuous Growth) and evaluate overall program performance against established benchmarks over multiple semesters.
    - **Track the Outcomes of Changes:** Document a specific baseline data point, the intervention or program improvement implemented, and the subsequent data cycle showing whether the change successfully solved a problem or improved a program area.
2. The EPP needs to strengthen data integrity by showing that the assessment tools provide actionable data.
    - **Establish EPP-Created Tool Validity:** Document the formal processes used to establish the content validity and inter-rater reliability of program rubrics, observation tools, and surveys used across the program, including classes and clinicals.
    - **Disaggregate Your Data:** Show improvement by analyzing data disaggregated by program endorsement areas to identify performance gaps.
3. The EPP must prove that stakeholders are actively driving change, not just filling out occasional feedback surveys.
    - **Engage Data Governance Committees:** Formalize a regular meeting schedule with an advisory board consisting of both internal stakeholders (faculty, staff, candidates) and external stakeholders (P-12 partners, employers, alumni).

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- **Document Stakeholder-Driven Modifications:** Keep clear minutes or action logs showing exactly where a stakeholder recommendation directly influenced curriculum or clinical changes.

4. The EPP must systematically track performance over time to confirm that modifications are yielding positive results.
    - **Link Interventions to the Accountability Measures:** Align programmatic improvements to trends seen in ARM 10.58.314 outcomes, such as P-12 student growth, employer satisfaction, or teacher retention rates.

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Montana State University Northern
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review

Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: <u>10.58.608 Advanced Program Satisfaction with Preparation</u>

Summary of Findings: The Montana State University-Northern offers one graduate degree leading to licensure, which is Counseling Education. The Institutional Report submitted included evidence in the form of a graduate survey, email communications, and advanced program accreditation meeting minutes. Interviews conducted during the on-site visit were also used to evaluate alignment to ARM 10.58.608 Advanced Program Satisfaction with Preparation. The overall findings for this advance standard mirror the findings in the initial standard in ARM 10.58.314 referenced above.

Evidence Consistent with Meeting the Standard: Four graduate surveys were provided to show 100% of the graduates are employed. Survey data relayed satisfaction with the program from both current candidates and partners.

Evidence Inconsistent with Meeting the Standard: The satisfaction surveys results do not satisfy the stipulation, the response rate was limited to four completers and one employer. This nominal sample size fails to provide sufficient empirical evidence. It is recognized that the sample size of these surveys is small due to the population size of the EPP candidate enrollment. That said, there were no additional steps taken to substantiate the evidence beyond the surveys. The survey result indicated overall program effectiveness. More data is needed to adequately evaluate alignment to employer satisfaction.

Final Rating:

- **Stipulation:** Although the EPP administered and reviewed employer and completer satisfaction surveys in January 2025 to meet the 2024 BPE-approved accreditation report mandate to expand data collection past the 2022–2023 cycle, low participation rates generated insufficient data to warrant a rating revision.

Corrective Action Plan: To resolve this stipulation, the EPP must fulfill action steps 1–4 from the initial standard (ARM 10.58.314) for the advanced standard (10.58.608) and submit all completed materials to the OPI by March 1, 2027. Additionally, the EPP will present a progress update on these deliverables to the BPE during its March 18–19, 2027 meeting.

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Comprehensive Corrective Action Plan & Timeline

Overview

This action plan outlines and organizes all corrective steps recommended to the Board of Public Education (BPE) by the State Superintendent for Montana State University Northern. Designed to resolve three probation-level stipulations promptly, the plan establishes clear deliverables, milestones, and progress reporting schedules for the March and May 2027 BPE presentations. To maintain accreditation and exit probation, MSU-Northern must achieve ratings of either met or met with notation across these areas by May 2027.

Phase / Target Date	Action Items & Deliverables	Targeted Standard(s)	Reporting Milestone
Phase I: (By Mar 1, 2027)	• Data Volume Expansion & Outreach Strategy (≥50% response goal) • Instrument Redesign (Alumni Interview & Survey Mapping) • Multiple Direct Impact Measures Implementation • 3-Year PRAXIS Results Curriculum Analysis	ARM 10.58.314 (Initial Program Impact) ARM 10.58.608 (Advanced Program Satisfaction)	BPE Progress Presentation: Mar 18–19, 2027
Phase II: (By May 1, 2027)	• Data-Quality & Cleaning Protocols (eliminate "Not Observed" as zero) • Operational "Data to Action" Workflow Map • Longitudinal Candidate Growth Tracking Framework • Baseline to Intervention Outcome Tracking • EPP-Created Tool Validity & Reliability Documentation • Disaggregated Data Analysis by Endorsement Area • Data Governance Committee Formalization & Action Logs • Alignment of Interventions to Accountability Measures	ARM 10.58.315 (Quality Assurance & Continuous Improvement)	BPE Progress Presentation: May 20–21, 2027

ITEM 12

ACTION ON THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF UNIVERSITY OF PROVIDENCE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date: November 19-20, 2026

Presentation	Recommend Approval of the Final State Accreditation Program Report for the University of Providence's Teacher Education Program and Extending the Current Accreditation Status through August 20, 2027.
Presenter	Crystal Andrews
Position Title	Senior Manager, School and Educator Effectiveness Office of Public Instruction
Overview	The State Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends the approval of the Final State Accreditation Program Report for the University of Providence's Teacher Education Program and maintaining its existing accreditation status through August 20, 2027. The State Final Report is included in the BPE Agenda Packet along with notification from the University of Providence.
Requested Decision(s)	Action Item
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	1. Approve the Final State Accreditation Program Report for the University of Providence's Teacher Education Program as recommended by State Superintendent Hedalen. 2. Approve maintaining the University of Providence's existing accreditation status through August 20, 2027 as recommended by State Superintendent Hedalen.

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October 30, 2026

TO: Dr. K. Xan Kemp
Director of Education Programs
Education Program
University of Providence

FROM: Crystal Andrews
Senior Manager
Accreditation Unit
Montana Office of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: **Final** State Accreditation Program Report 2026

On October 2, 2026, the State Accreditation review of the Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) in the Teacher Education Program occurred onsite at the University of Providence. This site review was conducted by the Montana Office of the Public Instruction (OPI). Prior to the site visit, a cadre of qualified educators including college professors, administrators, and content specialists reviewed the Institutional Reports provided by University of Providence for the endorsement areas. During the onsite review, the OPI team reviewed submitted documents and conducted focus groups regarding the initial standards, ARM 10.58.311 to 10.58.315.

The purpose of the review is to verify that the Institutional Report of the EPP meets the requirements of the Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (PEPPS) for both initial program and endorsement standards. The draft report provides the results of the endorsement review relating to the program endorsement areas as outlined in ARM 10.58:

- 10.58.311 Initial Content and Pedagogical Knowledge
- 10.58.312 Initial Clinical Partnerships and Practices
- 10.58.313 Initial Candidate Quality Recruitment, Progression, and Support
- 10.58.314 Initial Program Impact
- 10.58.315 Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement
- 10.58.501 Teaching Standards
- 10.58.513 Health
- 10.58.520 Physical Education
- 10.58.532 Elementary

The Final State Accreditation Program Report 2026 is attached.

Below are the next steps and the projected timeline for the Board of Public Education (BPE) approval process.

- In light of the upcoming closure of the University of Providence on August 20, 2027, UP must decide between two options by November 6, 2026:
    1. Continue with the accreditation process detailed below, or
    2. Notify the OPI via email that it accepts the final report and will not pursue further EPP accreditation past August 20, 2027, requesting that the OPI seek approval from the BPE in the November 2026 meeting to maintain its existing accreditation status through August 20, 2027.

Accreditation Process Next Steps:

- University of Providence may submit a rejoinder to OPI by November 20, 2026.
- Upon the recommendation of the State Superintendent, the Final State Accreditation Program Report will be presented to the BPE as an information item at the January 2027 (tentative) BPE meeting.
- The BPE will take action on the Final State Accreditation Program Report and the Accreditation/Approval status of the EPP in the Teacher Education Program at the University of Providence at the March 2027 (tentative) BPE meeting.

For more information, contact Crystal Andrews by telephone at 406-593-8278 or by email at Crystal.Andrews@mt.gov.

cc: Jamie Corley, Accreditation Specialist, Montana Office of Public Instruction
Julie Murgel, Chief Program Officer, Montana Office of Public Instruction

DEFINITIONS WHICH PERTAIN TO THIS REPORT

Standard is met (Met): Regular accreditation for a period of seven years.

Standard is met with notation (Met with Notation): Regular accreditation with minor deviations with most of the components of a standard met. This could involve incomplete items on the Institutional Report or clarification/corrections needed. As those items are rectified, the recommendation to the BPE will reflect the current and corrected status.

Area for Improvement (AFI): Standard is met with weakness. The site review team identified a weakness in the evidence for a standard or component. Area for Improvement should be remediated by the next accreditation cycle, and progress toward improvement is reported annually through the annual report to the OPI/BPE. During the next accreditation review, the EPP must demonstrate that the AFIs have been corrected. If the AFIs have not been corrected, a stipulation may be cited in the same area.

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 Program Standards

ARM	TITLE	STATUS
10.58.311	Initial Content and Pedagogical Knowledge	Met with Notation
10.58.312	Initial Clinical Partnerships and Practice	Stipulation*
10.58.313	Initial Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity	Met with Notation
10.58.314	Initial Program Impact	Stipulation
10.58.315	Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Stipulation

**2022- AFI 2026- AFI*

Teaching Program Standards

ARM	TITLE	STATUS
10.58.501	**Teaching Standards** Elementary	Met with Notation
10.58.513	**Health** Undergraduate	AFI
10.58.520	**Physical Education** Undergraduate	AFI
10.58.532	**Elementary** Undergraduate	Met with Notation

OVERALL COMMENDATIONS

- **Content & Pedagogical Competence:** Candidates actively engage in coursework and field experiences, successfully meeting established standards for content and pedagogical skills through assessments like MACK evaluations and candidate work samples (10.58.311).
- **Clinical Partnerships:** The program has established a foundational partnership with Great Falls Public Schools to co-design clinical placements and share progress data, providing early practical application (10.58.312).
- **Candidate Progression & Support:** Utilizes a robust multi-gate assessment system (tracking GPA, professional dispositions, and clinical skills) paired with dedicated faculty advising and targeted support (10.58.313).
- **Cultural Integration:** Thoughtfully integrates Indian Education for All (IEFA) across the core curriculum, incorporating tribal history, culture, and language (10.58.501).
- **Community Engagement & Faculty Commitment:** Faculty demonstrate a strong dedication to student learning, supported by community outreach programs like Team UP that connect coursework with adaptive PE and health enhancement across grade bands (10.58.513, 10.58.520).

- **Documentation & Rubrics:** Thorough and detailed course rubrics and activity-to-standard alignments are provided across content areas (10.58.532).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Syllabi & Curriculum Alignment:** Update outdated course syllabi, directly map all coursework to program standards, and resolve discrepancies between reporting standards (10.58.311).
- **Clinical Diversity & Tracking:** Expand clinical placement sites across diverse demographics, modalities, and socioeconomic settings; establish formal feedback loops among stakeholders; and implement a shared digital tracking tool for student progress (10.58.312).
- **Disposition Tracking & Grievances:** Develop systematic processes for tracking candidate professional dispositions beyond academic metrics and create a formal mechanism for logging and resolving candidate complaints (10.58.313).
- **Program Impact Data:** Design and implement a comprehensive data collection system to measure completer impact on P-12 student learning, employer satisfaction, and use data-driven review loops for curriculum revisions (10.58.314).
- **Quality Assurance System:** Establish a fully operational quality assurance framework utilizing multi-measure data and form an active stakeholder advisory committee that meets regularly (10.58.315).
- **Instructional Frameworks & Lesson Planning:** Strengthen lesson planning templates to align standards, measurable objectives, and assessments; embed structured skill-analysis modules; and expand dedicated English Language Learner (ELL) instructional frameworks (10.58.501, 10.58.513, 10.58.520).
- **Reading Instruction:** Strengthen reading coursework across programs by shifting toward brain-based reading instruction grounded in the Science of Reading (10.58.532).

University of Providence
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Fall 2026

Preliminary Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.311 Initial Content and Pedagogical Knowledge

Summary of Findings: The evidence submitted includes various assessment methods such as Montana Assessment of Content Knowledge (MACK) assessments and scores, candidate work samples, coursework, clinical evaluation rubrics, and a knowledge, skills, and disposition rubric. The evidence review shows that the submitted materials meet the standards with noted weakness because course syllabi are outdated and the coursework does not map to the program standards.

Evidence Consistent with Meeting the Standard: The evidence submitted demonstrates that candidates are engaged in coursework and field experiences and that they meet established standards for content and pedagogical competence.

Evidence Inconsistent with Meeting the Standard: While the evidence submitted meets the standard, this is met with notation due to outdated course syllabi and a lack of alignment of the course learning outcomes to the program outcomes. Additionally, the evidence submitted for 10.58.311 and 10.58.532 contradict each other, it is noted that there is a discrepancy or alignment error. Outdated course syllabi and unmapped coursework hinder the alignment of learning outcomes with state standards, making it difficult to verify candidate competency.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a Rationale for Each: It is recommended that UP update all course syllabi to accurately reflect current course content, review and map all coursework directly to program standards, and resolve the discrepancy in evidence provided between standards 10.58.311 and 10.58.532 to ensure consistency across reporting. Resolving evidence contradictions between standards guarantees clear, consistent, and valid program documentation for accreditation review.

Recommendation: Met with notation

University of Providence
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Fall 2026

Preliminary Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.312 Initial Candidate Partnerships and Practice

Summary of Findings: The Teacher Education Program established a clinical partnership with Great Falls Public Schools, yet failed to develop necessary additional partnerships. The review indicated a lack of required breadth in collaborative clinical sites to support diverse candidate placement.

Evidence Consistent with Meeting the Standard: The program established a working relationship with Great Falls Public Schools, co-designing initial clinical placements, and sharing basic candidate progress data. It was evident that candidates are provided opportunities to apply course work in practice early within their programming.

Evidence Inconsistent with Meeting the Standard: Evidence does not currently indicate that programs provide sufficient, high-quality clinical practice across diverse settings, nor do they show consistent and formal stakeholder collaboration to monitor and advance candidate development.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a Rationale for Each: Improvements should focus on establishing clinical placement sites across varied demographics, modalities, school settings, and socioeconomic levels. This ensures candidates gain experience with diverse student populations, meeting standard accreditation requirements for comprehensive preparation. The program must establish a feedback loop protocol detailing the frequency, methods, and responsible parties for communication between field supervisors, program faculty, and cooperating teachers that co-constructs mutually beneficial P-12 school and community arrangements for clinical preparation and shared responsibility for continuous improvement of candidate preparation. Documented feedback loops guarantee that candidate weaknesses are identified and addressed immediately through a reliable, multi-party communication channel. Finally, the program must establish a shared digital tracking tool used consistently across all cohorts to monitor student teacher progress and milestone completion. A centralized and shared tool provides transparent, real-time data to verify that every candidate is systematically evaluated and supported throughout student teaching.

Recommendation: Stipulation
*The University of Providence received an Area for Improvement for 10.58.312 in both the previous and current review cycles. Because this is the second consecutive Area for Improvement for this standard, the final recommendation is a stipulation.

University of Providence
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Fall 2026

Preliminary Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.313 Initial Candidate Quality Recruitment, Progression, and Support

Summary of Findings: The EPP facilitates streamlined admission processes without requiring standardized testing, offering accessible entry pathways for prospective candidates. Student retention, development, and completion are supported through a comprehensive four-gate progression monitoring system, dedicated faculty academic advising, and program wide student support services designed to track candidate growth at key milestones.

Evidence Consistent with Meeting the Standard: The program systematically utilizes a multigate assessment system to continuously evaluate candidate progression across grade point average (GPA) requirements, professional disposition evaluations, and practical clinical skills. The EPP integrates these metrics with targeted academic support pathways and remediation resources to foster candidate success. Candidates expressed individualized support from the facility through-out their preparation.

Evidence Inconsistent with Meeting the Standard: While the program demonstrates compliance sufficient to meet the overall standard, this evaluation is designated as met with notation. Specifically, there is an absence of sufficient documented evidence demonstrating ongoing monitoring and tracking of professional candidate dispositions beyond standard academic metrics. Additionally, the teacher education unit lacks a formal, functional system for systematically logging, investigating, and resolving candidate complaints and grievances.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a Rationale for Each: The EPP lacks a systematic process for ongoing monitoring and tracking of candidate professional dispositions beyond academic metrics, as well as a formal system for logging, investigating, and resolving candidate complaints and grievances. Standardized tracking of professional dispositions ensures consistent evaluation of candidate readiness throughout the program. Additionally, a formal grievance logging and resolution mechanism is necessary to guarantee fair administrative procedures and document candidate support outcomes.

Recommendation: Met with notation

University of Providence
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Fall 2026

Preliminary Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.314 Initial Program Impact

Summary of Findings: The program submitted insufficient data to evaluate completer effectiveness, employer satisfaction, or program relevance. Because the volume of submitted evidence falls far below the required minimum threshold, no meaningful analysis or valid conclusions can be drawn regarding overall program quality or candidate impact at this time.

Evidence Consistent with Meeting the Standard: The program submitted limited metrics for program impact.

Evidence Inconsistent with Meeting the Standard: The UP teacher education program did not submit a sufficient threshold of data to allow evaluators to interpret or verify completer effectiveness, employer satisfaction, or the perception of program relevance.

While the EPP outlined planned assessment measures, the actual data repository lacked the sample sizes, response rates, and longitudinal evidence required to make valid assertions about the impact of its graduates on P-12 student learning. Consequently, there is no institutional evidence that the EPP actively uses programmatic impact data for continuous improvement.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a Rationale for Each: The program must design and fully implement a comprehensive system to collect objective data measuring completer impact on P-12 student learning. The program should be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of its completer's instruction on P-12 student learning and development and completer and employer satisfaction with the relevance and effectiveness of preparation, using valid and reliable data, including employer and program completer surveys, and that program completers perceive their preparation as relevant to the responsibilities they encounter on the job and that the preparation was effective. The program must also establish an annual data-collection cycle for standardized milestone surveys targeting both recent completers and their direct employers. Lastly, the program must create a formal data-review process that uses impact data to drive regular curriculum revisions and strategic program updates. Without a structured review loop, the provider cannot demonstrate that it uses field performance data to inform, correct, and continuously improve its training models.

Recommendation: Stipulation

University of Providence
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Fall 2026

Initial Standards Narrative Report

10.58.315 Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Summary of findings: While the department utilizes qualitative reflections and teaching surveys, the program failed to supply documented data streams or verified evidence of stakeholder collaboration, rendering the EPP unable to prove that it evaluates program efficacy or implements data-driven adjustments.

Evidence consistent with meeting the standard: There was no evidence provided consistent with meeting the standard.

Evidence inconsistent with meeting the standard: The program lacks an aggregate data collection system capable of tracking candidate progression, operational effectiveness, and post-graduation outcomes. The EPP cannot prove that its curriculum, clinical experiences, or pedagogical methodologies are being regularly reviewed or updated for continuous improvement.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a Rationale for Each: The program must establish and submit a fully operational, systematic 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. This plan must capture candidate performance, completer effectiveness, and program operations. Additionally, the program must form an active stakeholder advisory committee. This group must include local school partners, teachers, recent graduates, and community members. They must meet quarterly with documented agendas, minutes, and feedback loops. The program must implement and maintain a quality assurance system consisting of multiple measures that can monitor candidate progress, completer impacts, and provider operational effectiveness. Finally, the program must assure that internal and external stakeholders are engaged in program design, evaluation, and continuous innovative improvement processes.

Recommendation: Stipulation

University of Providence
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Fall 2026

Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.501 Teaching Standards - Elementary

Validating Statement: The program provides comprehensive experiences that meet the standards outlined in 10.58.501.

Sources of Evidence: Course syllabi, assignments, activities, and assessments

Assessment Aligned to Standard: There is a solid connection between coursework that is clearly aligned to the standards meeting the intent, dispositions, and proficiencies in each.

Evaluation: The University of Providence EPP offers clinical and classroom experiences that facilitate the professional growth of teacher education candidates. The curriculum follows a logical sequence that ensures comprehensive alignment with the standards established in ARM 10.58.501. Furthermore, evidence from course syllabi demonstrates a deliberate integration of these standards into the program's core learning outcomes.

Commendation: The EPP demonstrates intentional integration of Indian Education for All (IEFA) by embedding the history, cultural heritage, language, and contemporary status of Montana's sovereign tribal nations across the core curriculum. The program was thoughtful about developing programs of study that would meet the standards across the continuum of the program culminating in practice during student teaching. The evidence in each standard showed the program intentionally addressed scope of the standard to prepare proficient teachers with a diverse set of pedagogical skills and competencies that are easily transferable to the classroom to impact student growth. Overall, the program has all the necessary elements in place to develop quality educators.

Improvements: While all the standards for teaching were met, two areas where the program may direct future attention is that of having a more delineated focus on English Language Learners (ELLs) in instruction, perspectives on culture and language, and how those elements interact to influence classroom engagement and growth. The program should systematically embed explicit, scientifically-based reading strategies across all content-area methods courses and expand dedicated ELL instructional frameworks, ensuring teacher candidates possess practical, classroom-ready competencies for diverse learners.

Accreditation Recommendation: Met with Notation

University of Providence
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Fall 2026

Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.513 Health

Validating Statement: The department utilizes a variety of course-based projects to introduce and explore key health education topics. In addition, the Team UP program provides opportunities for teacher candidates to engage with community partners.

Sources of Evidence: Course syllabi; student work samples; variety of documentation of course content

Assessment Aligned to Standard: The evidence provided to demonstrate alignment between the assessment and the standard was not consistently comprehensive and, in some cases, did not fully reflect the criteria or definitions necessary to meet the standard.

Evaluation: The department is currently not meeting the baseline criteria for institutional effectiveness and program quality. While it is evident that faculty demonstrate a strong commitment to teaching and student learning, ongoing challenges related to assessment practices and curriculum best practices are limiting the program's ability to fully support student success and ensure long-term sustainability.

The assignments and assessments designed for teacher candidates appear to emphasize foundational knowledge and skills but may not consistently provide opportunities for deeper engagement with the health education standards. As a result, candidates may have limited opportunities to demonstrate higher-order thinking, critical analysis, and comprehensive application of the standards in authentic educational contexts.

Commendations: The UP program fosters meaningful connections between academic learning and community outreach. Faculty members show a clear, strong commitment to student learning and instructional delivery. Candidates were provided multiple opportunities to engage in the field across grade bands with adaptive PE and Health enhancement.

Improvements: A key recommendation is to strengthen the emphasis on comprehensive lesson planning, with particular attention to the alignment of standards, learning objectives, instructional activities, and assessments. Teacher candidates should be provided with opportunities to develop cohesive lesson plans that extend beyond isolated activities and demonstrate intentional instructional design.

An additional recommendation is to strengthen teacher candidates' preparation for implementing a coordinated school health program through authentic applied learning experiences. While discussion-based activities provide an important foundation, candidates would benefit from opportunities to engage in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of these initiatives. Furthermore, the program should provide opportunities for candidates to develop a comprehensive scope and sequence that systematically addresses the components to meet the diverse needs of all student populations.

Lastly, diversity initiatives are heavily limited to the Special Olympics population. It is recommended to develop a comprehensive scope and sequence that systematically trains candidates to address the health education needs of all diverse student populations.

Recommendation: Area for Improvement

University of Providence
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Fall 2026

Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.520 Physical Education

Validating Statement: The department utilizes a variety of course-based projects to introduce and explore key topics of physical education. In addition, The TEAM UP program provides opportunities for teacher candidates to engage with community partners.

Sources of Evidence: Course syllabi; student work samples; variety of documentation of course content.

Assessment Aligned to Standard: The evidence submitted did not consistently provide complete documentation of assessment practices aligned with the standard, and some examples did not fully meet the established definitions or expectations associated with the standard.

Evaluation: The department currently falls short of baseline institutional effectiveness and program quality standards. Systemic deficiencies were identified in assessment processes and curriculum review, which can impact student outcomes and program sustainability.

Specifically, it is not clear where teacher candidates are systematically taught to analyze academic standards, develop measurable learning objectives, and align assessments within the lesson planning process. The provided evidence does not clearly demonstrate that teacher candidates can effectively design and implement instructional progression.

While candidates may possess strong content knowledge and personal experience in physical activity or athletics, effective teaching requires the ability to systematically analyze skills, break down complex movements and concepts into developmentally appropriate components, and modify instruction to support varying levels of student readiness and ability.

Commendations: Evidence that candidates can demonstrate responsible personal and social behaviors. Team UP program fosters meaningful connections between academic learning and community outreach.

Improvements: Greater emphasis should be placed on helping candidates create comprehensive lesson plans that clearly connect standards, objectives, instructional activities, and assessments while illustrating how student learning will develop over time. While instructional activities and games can serve as valuable teaching strategies, they should be embedded within a well-structured lesson plan that articulates specific learning outcomes, assessment methods, and opportunities for skill acquisition and growth.

For assessment and planning, the program demonstrates unclear tracking of academic standards and measurable objectives. It is recommended to revise core syllabi to introduce a mandatory, unified lesson planning template that explicitly links academic standards to backward-mapped, measurable learning objectives and matched assessment items.

For instructional progress in physical education, the program lacks evidence for skill breakdown and differentiation. It is recommended to embed structured skill-analysis modules within methods courses. Candidates must produce data verifying their ability to break down complex motor skills into developmentally appropriate components.

Recommendation: Area for Improvement

University of Providence
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Fall 2026

Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: **10.58.532 Elementary**

Validating Statement: A variety of assessments are used throughout the program from projects with rubrics that match the ISLLC and PEPP Standards to end of term final examinations. During the final week-long capstone experience candidates participate in a thorough evaluation of the University of Providence administrator preparation program.

Sources of Evidence: Course syllabi and other documentation of course content.

Assessment Aligned to Standard: A distinct program of alignment with standards is available in course syllabi, course descriptions in the course catalog.

Evaluation: While syllabi, lesson plans, course activities, and student work samples were provided with enough detail to meet the accreditation requirements, the University of Providence's educator preparation program did not provide pre-service candidate data or supporting evidence to demonstrate the quality or effectiveness of the program. Specifically, the review lacked evidence related to candidate PRAXIS performance, program outcomes, stakeholder feedback, completer success, or other data sources that would allow a reviewer to evaluate whether the program is meeting its stated goals and preparing candidates to meet professional standards.

Without this evidence, it is challenging to determine the extent to which the program engages in continuous improvement or demonstrates effectiveness in preparing educator candidates for successful practice. The documentation review should include a systematic process for collecting, analyzing, and using candidate and program performance data to demonstrate program quality.

Commendations: Thorough course rubrics were provided for all content areas, along with activities aligning to standards.

Improvements: Additional pre-service teacher data is requested to determine the effectiveness and overall experience of the program. The content across the reading courses could be significantly strengthened through a shift toward a brain-based approach to reading instruction using the Science of Reading and frameworks such as the Simple View of Reading, Scarborough's Rope, and the Four-part processor and Ehri's phases of development to anchor the concepts and guide candidates to teach reading.

Recommendation: Met with notation

November 2, 2026
Crystal Andrews, Jamie Corley, Julie Murgel
Office of Public Instruction
1227 11th Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

Re: University of Providence Teacher Education Program Response to OPI Final Report

Dear Montana Office of Public Instruction:

Thank you for providing two options for the University of Providence (UP) to select from in response to OPI's final report on the Teacher Education Program. It was especially gracious of OPI to offer the second option given the institution's recent news of closure.

UP's Teacher Education Program has decided to accept the final report and will not pursue further EPP accreditation past August 20, 2027. We request that OPI seek approval from the BPE in the November 2026 meeting to maintain existing accreditation status through August 20, 2027.

If there is anything I can do or provide, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

Xan

~

Kyla "Xan" Kemp, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Elementary Education
Director of Education Programs
University of Providence
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1301 20th St. South | Great Falls, MT 59405

ITEM13

ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER REPORT

Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date: November 18-20, 2026

Presentation	Annual Educator Preparation Program Report
Presenter	Crystal Andrews
Position Title	Senior Manager, School and Educator Effectiveness Office of Public Instruction
Overview	This presentation will provide an overview of Montana's eleven 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 eleven (1 alternative) 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. ● Tools used to verify content knowledge.
Requested Decision(s)	Information Only
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	N/A

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2026 Educator Preparation Program Report

Compiled October 2026

Introduction:

This report provides an overview of Montana's eleven Educator Preparation Program (EPP) providers (including one alternative program) 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 educator preparation programs.
- The accreditation status of the eleven 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 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 eleven MT accreditation programs.
- Tools used to verify content knowledge.

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Section 1: Accreditation Review Schedule

MONTANA EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDERS (EPPs)
ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT SCHEDULE
Seven-year Cycles: Current – 2025-2031; Future – 2032-2038

EPP	SCHEDULE 2018-2024	SCHEDULE 2025-2031	SCHEDULE 2032- 2038
University of Providence	S2019 STATE (*S2022**)	F2026 STATE	
Montana State University-Northern	S2024 STATE	S2026 (*F2026**)	S2031 STATE
Rocky Mountain College	F2020 STATE (*S2021**)	F2027 STATE	
University of Montana-Missoula	S2020 JOINT (*S2022**)	S2027 JOINT (*S2028**)	
University of Montana-Western	F2022 JOINT	F2029 JOINT	
Montana State University-Bozeman	F2022 JOINT (*F2023**)	F2029 JOINT	
Salish Kootenai College	S2024 STATE	S2031 STATE	
Montana State University-Billings	S2024 JOINT (*S2025**)	S2031 JOINT	
Carroll College	S2019 STATE (*S2021**)	S2026 STATE	S2033 STATE
Stone Child College	S2019 STATE	S2026 STATE	
American Board	S2024 INITIAL	S2026 STATE	S2033 STATE
Montana State University-Bozeman	Special Ed.	S2027	
University of Montana	HPE/MS Secondary	S2027 (*S2028**)	

JOINT= State and CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation)

* Good Cause Extension

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Section 2: Accreditation Status

University	American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence
Mailing Address	1123 Zonolite Road, Suite 29, Atlanta, GA 30306
Website Address	https://www.americanboard.org/
Education Department Head	Isabelle Welch
Email Address	iwelch@americanboard.org
Telephone	
Regional Accreditor	

Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	**Accrediting Entity**	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	January 2026	**Required Action**	None

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Certificate	Date of Initial Approval	YES, if still approved or Date Discontinued	Month/ Year of Site Review
Biology 5-12			C	2024	YES	January 2026
Chemistry 5-12			C	2024	YES	January 2026
English Language Arts 5-12			C	2024	YES	January 2026
Elementary Education K-8			C	2024	YES	January 2026
Elementary Ed./Sp. Ed.			C	2024	YES	January 2026
General Science (Broadfield) 5-12			C	2024	YES	January 2026
History 5-12			C	2024	YES	January 2026
Math 5-12			C	2024	YES	January 2026
Physics 5-12			C	2024	YES	January 2026
Special Education K-12			C	2024	YES	January 2026

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University	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	February 2026	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	February 2026
Elementary Ed & Special Education Combined	Major				YES	February 2026
English	Major		1970		YES	February 2026
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	February 2026
Health and Physical Education 7-12			1970	1986		

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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	February 2026
Science Broadfield	Major		2021		YES	February 2026
Social Studies Broadfield	Major		1970		YES	February 2026
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	February 2026
Speech Drama			1970	1990		

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University	**Montana State University- Billings**
Mailing Address	1500 University Dr. Billings, MT 59101
Website Address	www.msubillings.edu
Dean	Ted Purinton
Email Address	ted.purinton@msubillings.edu
Licensure Official	Jordan Knisely
Email Address	jordan.knisely@msubillings.edu
Telephone	(406) 657-2293
Regional Accreditor	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	**Accrediting Entity**	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	April 2025: 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 NASAD	April 2025
Biology	Major/ Minor		1978	2019		April 2025
Business Education			1978	Graduate 1986 Major/ Minor 1993		
Chemistry	Major/ Minor		1978	2019		April 2025
Computer Science			1999	2003		
Dramatics			1978	1982		
Early Childhood Education P-3	Minor		2016		YES	April 2025
Earth Science	Minor		1978	2019		April 2025
Economics	Minor		1978	2017		
Economics-Sociology			1986	1989		
Educational Technology- Area of Permissive Special Competency		Graduate	2009	2017		

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Elementary Education	Major	Graduate	1986		YES	April 2025
English/Language Arts	Major/ Minor		1978		YES	April 2025
Exceptional Children			1978	1986		
French			1978	2005		
Geography	Minor		1978	2019		April 2025
German			1978	Major 1996		
Health	Minor		1984		YES	April 2025
History	Major/ Minor		1978	Graduate 1996	YES	April 2025
History- Political Science			1986	1997		
Library Media K-12			1978	1992		
Mathematics	Major/ Minor		1978	Graduate 1996	YES	April 2025
Music K-12	Major		1978	Minor 1985, Graduate 1996	YES NASM	April 2025
Physical Education and Health	Major/ Minor		1978		YES	April 2025
Physical Science			1978	Discontinued from 1981-1991 and in 1997		
Physics	Minor		1978	2019		April 2025
Government / Political Science	Minor		1978		YES	April 2025
Psychology	Minor		1978	2019		April 2025
Reading Specialists K-12	Minor	Graduate	1978	Major 1985	YES	April 2025
Science Broadfield	Major		1978	2025	Placed in Moratorium 2025-26 (with students undergoing teachout for the next few years)	April 2025

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Social Studies Broadfield	Major		1978		YES	April 2025
Sociology	Minor		1978	2019		April 2025
Spanish	Major/ Minor		1978	2019		April 2025
Special Education K-12	Double Major	Graduate	1978		YES	April 2025
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

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University	Montana State University- Bozeman
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- certificate	
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- certifi cate	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
Special Education	Minor		2025		YES	
Speech-Communication			1973	1985		

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Theatre Art			1980	2002		
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

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Email Address	smebyc@msun.edu
Licensure Official	Jennifer Anderson
Email Address	jennifer.anderson32@msun.edu
Telephone	(406) 265-3757
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
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		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

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University	Rocky Mountain College
Mailing Address	1511 Poly Drive Billings, MT 59102
Website Address	www.rocky.edu
Director of Educational Leadership	Jodi Carlson, M.Ed.
Email Address	jodi.carlson@rocky.edu
Licensure Official	Jodi Carlson, M.Ed.
Email Address	jodi.carlson@rocky.edu
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			

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University	Salish Kootenai College
Mailing Address	58138 Hwy 93 PO Box 70 Pablo, MT 59855
Website Address	https://education.skc.edu/
Education Division Chair and Licensure Official	Douglas S. Ruhman – Dean of Education Division
Email Address	douglas_ruhman@skc.edu
Telephone	(406) 275-4763
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**	None

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

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University	Stone Child College
Mailing Address	8294 Upper Box Elder Rd Box Elder, MT 59521
Website Address	www.stonechild.edu
Education Department Head	Susan Sutherland, Jeremy MacDonald
Email Address	ssutherland@stonechild.edu, jmacdonald@stonechild.edu
Telephone	406-395-4875 ext. 1252
Regional Accreditor	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	Accrediting Entity	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	April 2026	Required Action	Areas of stipulation will be addressed in Spring 2028 to retain accreditation.

Program/ Title	Undergrad	Graduate	Date of Initial Approval	Date Discontinued	YES if active	Month/ Year of Site Review-Approval
Elementary Education	Major		2019		YES	April 2026

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University	University of Montana
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Dean	Dr. Jenn Snow
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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 2026 Graduate 1982		April 2022
Economics	Major/ Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982	Major/ Minor YES	April 2022

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Early Childhood Education P-3	Major/ Minor	Graduate	Minor 2015, Major 2017		YES	April 2022
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	2026		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 2027		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

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Russian	Major/ Minor	Graduate	1977	Graduate 1982 Major/ Minor 2026		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
Special Education P-12 (standalone BA)	Major			Major	YES	July 2026
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

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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

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Industrial Trades and Technology Education	Minor		1978	2015		
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

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Accreditation Status	Regular Accreditation	**Accrediting Entity**	Board of Public Education
BPE Site Review	October 2026	**Required Action**	2026 Approval

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 2026
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		
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 2026
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		

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Section 3 Endorsement Areas

M = Major m = Minor G = Graduate C= Certificate	Montana Educator Preparation Programs										
Endorsement Areas	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	MG	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	C
Elem/Sp. Ed. Combo	M										C
English 5-12	M	Mm	M	M	Mm			Mm	Mm		C
ESL			GC								
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			GC						m		

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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											
School Counselor		G	G	G				G			
School Psychologist								G			
Science BF 5-12	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					Mm	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			

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Section 4: Title II Higher Education Report

The 2026 Montana State Report includes data reported to the Department in October 2026. For many data elements, such as the number of individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs, the OPI reported on **AY 2024-2025 data**.

Total State Enrollment

Year	Total Enrolled	Subset of Program Completers
2022-2023	1755	547
2023-2024	1479	495
2024-2025	**1742**	**511**

Comparison of Completers over 3 years

Year	This Year	Last Year	Change over 1 Year
2024-2025	**511**	**495**	**3.23%**
2023-2024	495	547	-9.51%
2022-2023	547	555	-1.44%

Total Enrollment by Program 2024-2025

Program	Total Enrolled	Subset of Program Completers
American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (Alt)	163	48
Carroll College	34	19
Montana State University-Billings	188	66
Montana State University-Bozeman	340	115
Montana State University-Bozeman (Alt)	41	24
Montana State University-Northern	38	13
Rocky Mountain College	72	8
Salish Kootenai College	41	2
Stone Child College	11	11
University of Montana	186	85
University of Montana-Western	600	113
University of Providence	28	7

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Section 5: Updates on Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulation

Summary of EPPs' Reported Progress by Standard

10.58.312 Initial Clinical Partnerships and Practice

- The Education Department strengthened clinical partnerships by reestablishing its Advisory Board in fall 2026. The board, which includes school administrators, experienced teachers, community leaders, faculty, and alumni, meets monthly to provide feedback on program curriculum, clinical placements, and other department initiatives.
- A faculty member serving as the clinical supervisor coordinates all clinical and student teaching placements in collaboration with teacher candidates. Before placements begin, the clinical supervisor, cooperating teacher, and candidate meet to review expectations, roles, and responsibilities. Throughout the placement, the clinical supervisor maintains ongoing communication with cooperating teachers to monitor candidate progress and address concerns.
- Teacher candidates also participate in weekly meetings with the clinical supervisor to reflect on their field experiences, discuss the application of educational theory in classroom settings, share challenges, and receive guidance and peer support.
- At the end of each clinical experience, both candidates and cooperating teachers complete evaluations. Feedback and identified concerns are shared with the Education Department to support program evaluation, continuous improvement, and the enhancement of clinical experiences for future teacher candidates.

- The program is enhancing engagement with external stakeholders by improving documentation of partner involvement and creating additional opportunities for collaboration with school partners. A **Community of Practice** has been established as a new mechanism for stakeholder participation, feedback, and ongoing partnership in program improvement efforts.

- Clinical experiences have been a major focus of program improvement over the past several years, guided by the work of the Clinical Experiences Committee (CEC) and strengthened by the appointment of a new Director of Clinical Experiences in late 2024. The committee expanded its focus from policy development to broader clinical partnerships and practice, leading several improvements in field experiences.

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- Key initiatives included expanding teacher liaison positions to additional schools, refining clinical experience requirements, establishing a common faculty observation tool, clarifying expectations for school partners, and improving systems for tracking candidate progress through program milestones.
- The program also demonstrated strong collaboration with local school district partners. Feedback from candidates and school partners prompted a review of clinical experiences related to English language learners and diverse student populations. Through ongoing collaboration with district leaders and community organizations, seminars were integrated into coursework and clinical experiences were redesigned to provide broader preparation for working with diverse learners while maintaining attention to linguistic diversity.
- Partnership efforts have also led to discussions about establishing demonstration schools using a community school model and expanding collaboration through a teacher residency program with school districts across the state. These initiatives reflect the program's commitment to strengthening clinical partnerships, enhancing candidate preparation, and responding to stakeholder feedback through continuous improvement.

10.58.314 Initial Program Impact

- The Education Department has established a comprehensive assessment system to evaluate teacher candidate learning and program effectiveness. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and assessment measures are defined for each course and included in syllabi. While assessment data is currently collected through Excel spreadsheets, the department is transitioning to Watermark, with faculty and staff receiving training to improve data collection, analysis, and reporting.

- Teacher candidates are assessed throughout the program using multiple measures aligned to the InTASC/501 Standards. A digital Reflective Practice and Professional Growth Plan tracks candidates' knowledge, skills, dispositions, and experiences. Additional assessments include coursework GPA, student teaching and clinical evaluations, observation instruments, and the Professional Actions and Critical Dispositions Assessment.

- The department uses both direct measures (lesson plans, evaluations, portfolios, GPA, and candidate tracking data) and indirect measures (exit surveys, job placement data, employer feedback, and advisory board input) to assess candidate performance and program quality. This multi-faceted approach supports continuous program improvement.

- To strengthen stakeholder involvement, the department has reestablished an Advisory Board composed of educators, administrators, community representatives, faculty, and alumni. As the transition to Watermark progresses, the department expects to improve its ability to analyze and

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share assessment results, gather meaningful stakeholder feedback, and make data-informed decisions that enhance curriculum, instruction, and teacher preparation outcomes.

10.58.315 Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

- Beginning in summer 2026, the Education Department requires all faculty to enter assessment data into Watermark using the Elementary Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) Evidence Progressions and InTASC Alignment framework. Ongoing professional development is being provided to ensure faculty and staff can effectively use Watermark for assessment data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- The department's primary objective is to build a comprehensive, accessible assessment system that supports informed decision-making, monitors student learning outcomes, and drives continuous program improvement. Watermark will support these efforts through several key functions:
    - **Outcomes Assessment & Planning:** Aligns institutional goals, mission statements, strategic plans, and program learning outcomes while supporting program review and accreditation processes.
    - **Course Evaluations & Surveys (CES):** Collects standardized student feedback and provides trend-based reports to inform instructional and curriculum improvements.
    - **Student Learning & Licensure/Assessment Projects:** Uses rubrics, portfolios, artifact submissions, and learning management system integrations to assess student learning outcomes and manage clinical experiences and internships.
    - **Faculty Success (Digital Measures):** Centralizes faculty activity reporting related to teaching, research, service, annual evaluations, promotion, tenure, and grant reporting.

- Following a 2024 state accreditation review, an Area for Improvement (AFI) was identified in Standard 10.58.315 related to the completion of the Critical Assignments Database (CAD), a key component of the education program's quality assurance system. Although the overall quality assurance processes were commended, the CAD was still under development at the time of the review.
- The department subsequently completed the CAD in late 2024 and began full implementation during the 2025-2026 academic year. The system tracks candidate progress using measures aligned with professional teaching standards, Indigenous education requirements, institutional values, and program outcomes.
- Each fall, faculty review CAD data alongside portfolio results, student teaching assessments, graduate exit surveys, and other performance measures to identify areas for program improvement. These findings are incorporated into annual planning and institutional assessment processes.
- To strengthen transparency and stakeholder engagement, the department also developed a comprehensive overview of its quality assurance system and shared it with its Education Advisory

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Board, which includes representatives from local school districts and education agencies. Together, these efforts support ongoing monitoring of candidate performance, data-informed decision-making, and continuous program improvement.

- The program is revising its primary assessment tools, particularly the **Teacher Work Sample** and **Lesson Plan** evaluations, to strengthen the overall quality assurance system. Improvements made to these key assessments will guide revisions to other assessment tools. The program is also focused on collecting a larger volume of assessment data to better evaluate candidate performance and program effectiveness.
- Efforts are underway to improve the quality, consistency, and usefulness of assessment data. To support stronger data collection, management, and analysis, the program is pursuing approval for a dedicated **data specialist** position.

- The work of the Department of Teaching and Learning for the past four academic years focused significantly on greater alignment, and documentation of the alignment, between coursework, standards, and assessments. A summer 2024 work session for faculty jump-started work on significant curriculum and assessment revisions. In Autumn 2025, we implemented a new common lesson plan and reflection assessment instrument. We continue to gather and share data from the previous site visit in spring 2022. 24-26 saw numerous changes documented throughout the annual report which is impacting the QAS. Members of the leadership team and the QAS committee have been moving along with the status quo while these changes work through faculty and systems.
- While most of the assessments used by the program were reviewed related to validity and reliability before the most recent site visit, we completed the process again with recent revisions. During the spring of 2025, the faculty did considerable work on a new common lesson plan rubric and reflection, which is replacing the Applied Research and Reflective Practice project currently completed during student teaching. The lesson plan and reflection assessments were reviewed by partners and piloted in Autumn 2025 with reliability work ongoing. The faculty also revisited reliability work for the other program assessments during the 25-26 academic year to adjust instruments and provide training for faculty, if needed.

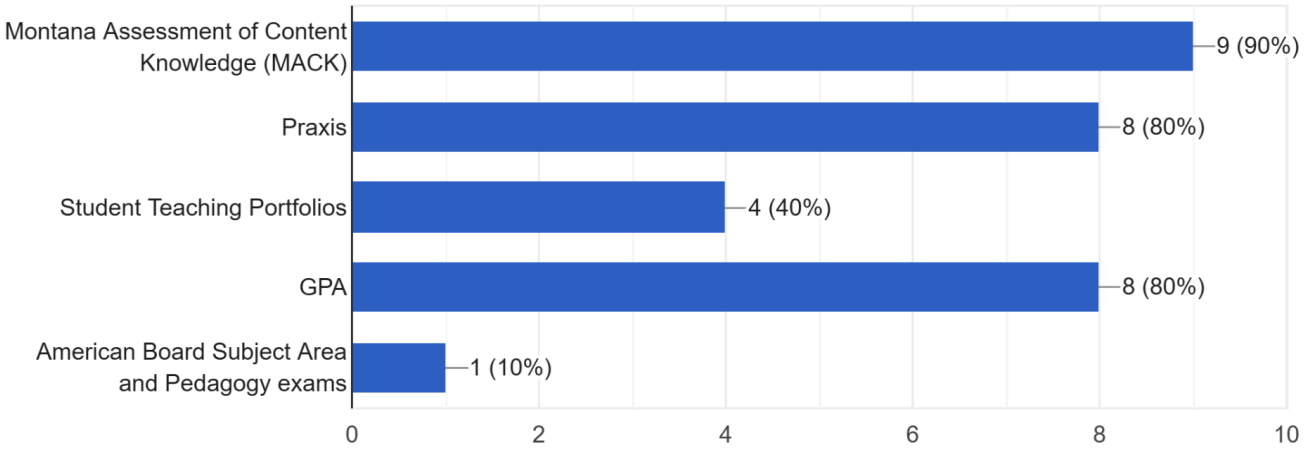
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Section 6: Tools Used for Content Knowledge

Select the tools your EPP uses to verify content knowledge.

10 responses



ITEM 14

INFORMATION ON THE ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT PROVIDERS LIST

Marie Judisch
Aimee Konzen

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date: November 18-20, 2026

Presentation	FY 2025-26 Professional Development Unit Provider System Annual Report
Presenter	Marie Judisch and Aimee Konzen
Position Title	Senior Manager, Academic Outcomes and Instruction Standards, Instruction, Professional Learning Director Office of Public Instruction
Overview	This presentation provides to the Board of Public Education (BPE) a comprehensive overview of professional development activities conducted in 2025-26. The report is attached.
Requested Decision(s)	Information Item
Related Issue(s)	n/a
Recommendation(s)	n/a

Montana Office of Public Instruction

Professional Development Unit Provider System Annual Report

July 2025 – June 2026

Report Created by:

Eva Cox, Professional Development Specialist
Academic Outcomes and Instruction Unit

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Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive overview of professional development activities delivered by Montana's approved Professional Development Unit (PDU) providers during fiscal year 2026 (July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026). It summarizes statewide participation trends, highlights key outcomes, and identifies areas for system improvement as the Office of Public Instruction prepares for the July 2027 launch of the updated PDU Provider System.

Key Highlights

- **4,789 professional development events** were recorded statewide in FY2026.
- **415,362 Professional Development Units (PDUs)** were issued to Montana educators, an increase of over 52,000 from the previous fiscal year.
- **70,372 certificates** were issued by approved providers, reflecting strong participation across the state.
- **School districts, professional education organizations, and government agencies** continued to provide the majority of PD opportunities, PDUs, and certificates.
- The **Teacher Learning Hub**—now on Canvas—issued **4,533 certificates** representing **6.4% of all attended PD**, with **23 online offerings** included in statewide reporting.
- **1,793 online professional development opportunities** were available, increasing educator access across Montana.
- Data inconsistencies occurred due to providers not cleaning up canceled events or reporting certificates; these issues will be addressed in the upcoming system redesign.
- The **new Professional Development Unit Provider System** (launching July 2027) will improve data accuracy, streamline workflows, increase provider compliance, and better support educator licensure and professional learning pathways. Information on the new system can be found at opi.mt.gov

In this report, you will find:

- Statewide totals for Professional Development Units (PDUs), certificates issued, and professional learning opportunities offered
- Breakdowns of PD opportunities, PDUs, certificates, and online offerings by provider type

- Teacher Learning Hub participation data following its transition to a new Learning Management System (LMS)
- Analysis of reporting trends, data inconsistencies, and provider compliance challenges
- Context on systemwide needs that informed the development of the upcoming upgraded PDUP system

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 system collects 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 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, staff manually enter the data to generate this report. The upcoming system will be able to provide data on demand and establish protocols for the review and acknowledgement of high-quality professional development. It will also record certificate issuance.

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 before 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.

Data Analysis

This report encompasses all professional development unit activities recorded in the Professional Development Unit Provider (PDUP) System for fiscal year 2026, covering the period from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. All events entered in the PDUP System are counted as professional development opportunities, whether certificates were issued or not. 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. It is also important to note that the Learning Hub data presented here covers the period from December 11, 2025, through June 30, 2026. Excluding the

Moodle data provides a cleaner and more consistent dataset for analysis, given the inconsistencies in course availability resulting from the platform transition.

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 2026, some providers canceled PDU activities after entering them into the system but did not follow the required procedure to remove those events from their provider records. Providers cannot currently delete events directly from the portal. They must email the professional development specialist to request removal, and this step was not always completed. In addition, some providers did not return to the system to report the number of certificates issued for completed activities.

OPI Professional Learning staff are working with these providers to ensure accurate reporting in the Professional Development Unit Provider System. The new system under development is being designed to prevent these issues going forward.

Fiscal Year 2026 Provider Report Summary

As of June 30, 2026, the PDUP System included 529 registered providers and 742 users. Collectively, they recorded 4,766 events, which resulted in the issuance of 403,719 professional development units (PDUs) to Montana educators (up 52,058 from last FY). The number of certificates reported as issued throughout FY2026 was 65,839 (up 5,603 from last year). School districts, professional education organizations, and government agencies provided the majority of the professional development opportunities, units, and certificates. The Teacher Learning Hub recorded 4,533 certificates issued for a total of 11,643 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 2026. This data includes the Learning Hub numbers (Canvas). Key findings include:**Total PDUs Issued:** A total of 415,362 PDUs were issued across 4,789 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 70,372 certificates were issued.
- **Online Participation:** 1.28% of online PD opportunities were delivered through the Teacher Learning Hub since the move to Canvas in December, 2025.

  Highlights

  - Teacher Learning Hub: 4533 certificates issued, representing 6.4% of all attended PD.
  - Online PD total: 1,793 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. Each event may 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	2,228	46.5%
Professional Education Organizations	1,364	28.5%
Government Agencies	854	17.8%
Universities and Colleges	285	6.0%
County Superintendents	29	0.6%
Teacher Learning Hub	23	0.5%
Tribal	6	0.1%
Total Number of Events	4,789	

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
School Districts	182,443	43.9%
Professional Education Organizations	137,239	33.0%
Government Agencies	65,109	15.7%
Universities and Colleges	16,957	4.1%
Teacher Learning Hub	11,643	2.8%
County Superintendents	1,770	0.4%
Tribal	201	0.05%
Total Numbers of PDUs	415,362	

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 2026.

Provider Type	Number of Certs	Percentage of Total
School Districts	30,974	44.0%
Professional Education Organizations	18,713	26.6%
Government Agencies	14,048	20.0%
Teacher Learning Hub	4,533	6.4%
Universities and Colleges	1,738	2.5%
County Superintendents	331	0.5%
Tribal	35	0.05%
Total Number of Certificates Issued	70,372	

Online Reporting Data

This fiscal year, 1,793 online professional learning opportunities were available statewide. Of these, 1.28% were offered through the Teacher Learning Hub, further increasing access for educators across Montana.

Provider Type	Number of Online Offerings	Percentage of Total
Professional Education Organizations	728	40.6%
Government Agencies	530	29.6%
School Districts	441	24.6%
Universities and Colleges	67	3.7%
Teacher Learning Hub	23	1.3%
County Superintendents	4	0.2%
Tribal	0	0.0%
Total Number of Online Events	1,793	

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	833
Special Education	576
General School Issues and Administration	508
English Language Arts & Literacy	501
Technology	452
General Montana Content Standards	394
Assessment/Evaluation/Data	329
Indian Education for All	318
Integration with Other Subjects	295
Health and Physical Education	287

Category	Number of Times Selected
Mathematics	258
Social Studies	253
Career and Technical Education	224
Differentiation	220
Science	218
Arts	154
Mentoring/Induction	141
English Language Proficiency	113
Library Media	80
Nutrition	29

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 (Canvas). Providers may select only one category. Special Education & MTSS, General School Issues & Administration, 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
AAE-Assessment	1
CTE-Career Technical Education	1
ELA-ELA & Literacy	3
FAE-Fine Arts	0
GIA-General School Issues & Administration	4
HEE-Health Enhancement	0
IEA-Indian Education for All	1
LMS-Library, Media, Information Systems & Technology	1
MAC-Mathematics	1
MHB-Mental Health & Behavior	1
OPI-OPI Employee Training Center	0

Category	Number of Times Selected
OTH-Other	0
SCI-Science	0
SOS-Social Studies	0
SPE-Special Education & MTSS	5
SUS-Support Staff	1
UIS-Universal Instructional Strategies	4
WRL-World Languages	0

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
Fergus County Superintendent of Schools	7	63	43	0
Gallatin County Superintendent of Schools	2	14	16	0
Hill County Superintendent of Schools	4	20	35	1
Lake County Superintendent of Schools	1	6	1	0
Missoula County Superintendent of Schools	1	6	0	0
Montana Catholic Schools	5	39	130	1
Richland County Superintendent of Schools	9	70	106	2
Total	**29**	**218**	**331**	**4**

Government Agencies

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Department of Justice	1	8	0	0
Dept of Labor & Industry Employment Relations Division	2	29	5	0
DLI/Jobs for Montana's Graduates	3	39	39	1
DPHHS - Early Childhood Services Bureau	1	9	0	0
Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest	1	2	17	0
Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory	1	16	20	0
Montana Board of Public Education	12	55	55	0
Montana Department of Corrections	6	105	13	1
Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks	23	138	167	0
Montana Historical Society	76	417	582	39
Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind	101	284	913	28
Montana State Library	1	16	0	0
Montana Teachers' Retirement System	9	9	181	9
Montana Youth Challenge Academy	2	10	22	0
Office of Public Instruction - Accreditation and Licensure	5	22	16	5
Office of Public Instruction - Assessment	12	45	277	12
Office of Public Instruction - Coordinated School Health	16	76	213	0
Office of Public Instruction - CTAE Division	47	422	994	10
Office of Public Instruction - Education Innovations	2	30	32	1
Office of Public Instruction - Federal Programs	31	73	637	28
Office of Public Instruction - Indian Education	56	107	467	50
Office of Public Instruction - Learning Hub	36	133	4,983	36
Office of Public Instruction - Montana Literacy Grants	12	12	241	12
Office of Public Instruction - Special Education	221	690	3,348	164
Office of Public Instruction - Standards, Instruction, and Professional Learning	80	145	513	78
Office of Public Instruction - Traffic Education	2	16	18	0
Office of Public Instruction - Tribal Student Achievement and Relations	5	15	79	2
OPI - School Improvement and Engagement	7	20	115	4
OPI - Single Event Providers	83	1,023	101	50
Total	**854**	**4,013**	**13,264**	**530**

Professional Education Organizations

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
406 Educational Consulting, LLC	1	8	10	0
ACE-Alliance for Curriculum Enhancement	16	257	1,428	5
Action Potential Learning, LLC DBA Model Teaching	47	360	81	47
American Prairie Field School	2	23	5	0
American School Counselor Association	17	842	12	17
Angst Learning Services, LLC	8	18	490	0
Archie Bray Foundation	1	1	1	0
Big Sky Kodály (AOKE Affiliate)	2	6	33	2
Big Sky Special Needs Coop	1	6	14	0
Billings Area Family Violence Task Force	1	16	0	0
Bitterroot Valley Education Coop	8	56	65	1
Bonneville Environmental Foundation	4	10	2	4
Bridgercare	1	16	10	0
Brightways Learning	5	68	66	0
Buffalo Bill Center of the West	5	70	15	4
Business Professional of America-Montana Association	1	9	51	0
Cabinet Mountain Cooperative	8	87	72	0
Carter County Museum	17	39	74	0
CE Credits Online	45	1,860	5	45
Center for Emotional Education	2	34	0	2
Central Montana Learning Resource Center Co-op	7	39	217	1
Chickadee Community Services	22	136	157	8
Child Care Resources	3	19	9	1
Childhelp Speak Up Be Safe Curriculum	12	36	0	12
Chrysalis School	10	81	60	2
Code Girls United	2	39	30	2
CodeHS	8	8	6	8
Delta Kappa Gamma - Mu Chapter	2	15	7	0
Delta Kappa Gamma Omicron Chapter	4	4	18	0
Discovery Education	21	53	273	15
Dolce Canto, Inc.	3	63	3	0
Domestic and Sexual Violence Services	3	6	67	0
Ecology Project International	1	45	0	0
Edufest	7	25	7	7

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Elevation Science Institute	2	16	0	0
Flathead Special Education Cooperative	5	10	72	3
Glacier Institute	14	111	8	0
Global Leadership Network	1	9	4	0
Golden Triangle Cooperative	61	496	665	5
Great Divide Education Services	3	17	15	0
High Trust Teacher Center	2	60	9	0
Identity, Inc.	1	8	32	0
Inspired Classroom	3	3	0	0
Institute for Multi-Sensory Education	3	63	3	0
Jack Creek Preserve Foundation - Conservation Field School	3	20	10	0
Jamazon Journeys	1	48	1	0
Jenn's Whole Health Coaching LLC	4	96	0	4
Jeremy Bullock Safe Schools Summit	1	12	51	0
Journeys Consulting, LLC	2	6	6	0
Kaleva Law Office	5	26	443	3
Land To Hand Montana	2	5	29	0
Lillio Academy	65	80	2	65
MFPE	7	96	902	2
Missoula Area Education Cooperative	5	40	32	0
Missoula Writing Collaborative	8	26	14	0
MJ Murdock Charitable Trust	2	37	0	0
Montana 4-H	3	26	20	0
Montana Afterschool Alliance	9	47	67	3
Montana Art Education Association	1	11	0	0
Montana Association for Career and Technical Education	1	12	135	0
Montana Association for Pupil Transportation	4	58	9	0
Montana Association for the Education of Young Children	2	35	0	0
Montana Association of Family and Consumer Sciences	1	12	0	0
Montana Association of Private Schools	1	5	15	0
Montana Association of School Business Officials	8	54	8	2
Montana Association of School Psychologists	13	64	150	9
Montana Audubon Center	1	25	1	0

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Montana Chamber Foundation	3	30	46	0
Montana Coaches Association	1	19	258	0
Montana Council For Exceptional Children	1	12	200	0
Montana Council on Economic Education	7	21	80	5
Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics	2	24	37	1
Montana Discovery Foundation	2	80	5	2
Montana Environmental Education Association	5	57	30	3
Montana Farmers Union	2	23	31	0
Montana Learning Center	2	38	38	0
Montana Library Association	3	29	16	0
Montana Mindfulness Project	1	14	5	1
Montana Music Educators Association	2	22	253	0
Montana Natural History Center	2	40	1	1
Montana PBS	56	138	1,250	55
Montana Post Secondary Educational Opportunities Council	1	5	0	0
Montana Professional Learning Collaborative (MTPLC)	121	1,394	2,932	77
Montana School Boards Association	8	44	273	7
Montana School Counselor Association	4	23	256	2
Montana Small Schools Alliance	30	137	545	10
Montana State Literacy Association	1	12	63	0
Montana State Music Teachers Association	1	12	4	0
Montana Traffic Education Association	2	42	64	0
Montana Youth in Transition	1	13	38	0
Northwest Earth & Space Sciences Pathways (CWU)	1	15	1	1
Northwest Montana Reading Council	2	12	159	0
OPI Montana DRIVE Program	2	16	6	0
Ortho Montana	1	6	24	0
Pacific Northwest Library Association	2	26	2	1
Park County Special Education Coop	3	18	150	0
PESI, Inc	63	216	71	0
Peter Siner Google Trainer	2	60	0	2
Prairie View Curriculum Consortium	40	68	673	29
Prairie View Special Services	2	16	0	0
Professional Development Institute	1	50	0	1

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Project Archaeology	3	22	16	1
Raising Highly Capable Kids	3	36	18	0
Reach Higher Montana	1	30	28	0
Ready to Educate	2	60	0	2
Red Lodge Clay Center	1	10	0	0
Redgrave Education, LLC	2	49	22	1
Region I CSPD	1	2	9	0
Region II CSPD	9	28	39	5
Region III CSPD/Montana Center	23	90	279	4
Region IV CSPD	8	33	189	1
Sarah Byrd Coaching and Training	1	3	0	0
School Administrators of Montana	42	671	1,936	8
School Services of Montana	52	215	1,483	4
SHAPE Montana	2	30	150	0
Special Olympics Montana Unified Champion Schools	16	31	167	0
Stillwater Historical Society/Museum of the Beartooths	1	8	0	0
Stillwater Sweetgrass Special Education Cooperative	1	5	7	0
STRIVE	5	89	54	3
Tamarack Grief Resource Center	10	33	62	1
TeachMe Professional Development	109	285	0	109
Teaching Channel	19	750	19	19
Teller Wildlife Refuge	3	12	63	0
The AI Education Project	5	6	82	3
The Family Tree Center	2	16	7	1
The Foundation for Montana History	1	5	0	0
The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History	4	74	4	4
The National Energy Education Development Project	1	6	14	0
The Source for Learning	81	109	106	81
Tim Tharp, Certified Instructor for Youth MHFA and QPR	10	20	167	0
TPN.health	4	4	52	4
Transformative Reading Teacher Group	7	124	33	0
Treasure State Orff (Montana Chapter of American Orff Schulwerk Association)	3	17	56	0
Walsworth Yearbooks	1	16	13	0
WM-CSPD	5	24	99	0

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Yellowstone Art Museum	2	3	2	0
Yellowstone Forever	2	80	1	0
Yellowstone-West/Carbon County Special Services Coop	3	17	32	0
Zero to Five Montana	1	10	2	0
Total	**1,364**	**11,744**	**18,713**	**728**

School Districts

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Absarokee Public Schools	1	8	16	0
Alberton School District	5	37	0	1
Amsterdam School District	3	66	28	1
Anaconda School District #10	16	66	496	2
Anderson School	3	24	10	1
Arlee Joint School District #8	6	96	143	0
Baker Public Schools	5	12	105	0
Bear Paw Cooperative	12	108	116	0
Beaverhead County High School	1	3	8	0
Belfry School District	2	12	30	0
Belgrade Public Schools	86	506	325	18
Big Sky School District #72	12	163	61	6
Big Timber Grade School	6	6	47	0
Bigfork School District #38	1	6	0	1
Billings Catholic Schools	6	59	139	3
Billings Public Schools	312	3,049	3,275	104
Blue Creek School	3	21	18	0
Boulder Elementary School District	2	9	34	0
Box Elder School District 13G	8	25	303	0
Bozeman Public Schools	82	674	1,994	32
Bridger School District	5	72	70	0
Broadus Public Schools	1	3	12	0
Brockton Public Schools	8	105	134	2
Browning Public Schools	34	513	368	17
Butte Central Catholic High School	3	14	45	0
Butte Central Catholic Schools	5	8	77	1
Butte School District #1	33	232	1,505	8
Cayuse Prairie School	1	6	3	0
Chinook Public Schools	2	8	24	1
Choteau School District 1	5	40	37	0
Clancy Elementary	8	19	237	0
Colstrip Public Schools	6	51	140	0
Columbia Falls Schools	42	464	395	13
Conrad Public Schools	2	9	56	0
Corvallis School District	21	76	303	5

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Cottonwood Day School	5	33	0	2
Culbertson K-12 Schools	8	37	63	5
Cut Bank Public Schools	26	105	326	0
Darby Public Schools	2	9	52	2
De La Salle Blackfeet School	1	40	14	0
Deer Lodge Elementary	5	21	164	0
Dodson School District	3	26	62	0
Dutton/Brady K-12 Schools	7	62	65	1
East Glacier Park Grade School	3	46	18	0
East Helena Public Schools District #9	25	98	513	0
Elder Grove School	7	27	42	0
Elysian School	5	43	35	1
Ennis School District #52	10	60	40	9
Eureka Public Schools	5	18	34	0
Evergreen School District # 50	15	74	216	0
Fair-Mont-Egan School District #3	1	2	9	0
Fairview Public Schools	1	4	50	0
Florence-Carlton School	4	12	19	0
Forsyth Public Schools	5	18	126	0
Fort Benton High School/Middle School	2	14	0	0
Frenchtown School District #40	4	31	290	0
Fromberg School	5	60	72	2
Frontier Elementary District #3	8	25	111	4
Gallatin Gateway School District #35	4	52	52	0
Gardiner Public School	1	6	7	0
Glasgow K-12 Schools	4	18	315	2
Glendive Public Schools	8	51	62	1
Great Falls Central Catholic High School	2	30	2	2
Great Falls Public Schools	99	644	1,938	0
Hamilton K-12 Schools	25	74	694	0
Hardin Public Schools	21	184	778	0
Harlem Public Schools District #12	7	48	360	0
Harlowton Public Schools	3	8	29	0
Havre Public Schools	61	313	726	15
Hays Lodgepole School Dist. #50	1	6	30	0
Headwaters Academy	7	103	17	2
Heart Butte School	4	16	74	1

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Helena Christian School	4	14	17	0
Helena Public Schools	133	1,014	1,194	10
Hellgate Elementary School District	3	57	138	0
Heritage Academy	2	75	11	1
Heritage Christian School	14	19	135	0
Hinsdale Public School	4	8	16	2
Hot Springs School	4	13	0	3
Huntley Project K-12 Schools	3	23	11	0
Hysham Public Schools	1	3	12	0
Jefferson High School	5	23	1	0
Joliet Public School	1	12	0	0
Kalispell Public Schools	220	1,389	1,282	14
Lambert Public Schools	1	24	8	0
Lame Deer Public Schools	10	24	270	0
Laurel Public Schools	32	154	760	1
Lavina Public School	1	24	40	0
Lewistown Public Schools	2	8	99	0
Libby K-12 Schools	14	75	415	1
Lincoln K-12 Schools	13	47	93	0
Livingston School District #1 and #4	27	125	503	4
Lockwood School	23	205	164	11
Lolo School District	5	31	141	0
Malta Public Schools	4	21	74	0
Manhattan Christian School	9	43	120	4
Manhattan Public Schools	12	60	184	6
Marion public schools	19	40	36	16
Miles City Unified School District	14	83	584	1
Missoula Catholic Schools	2	14	36	0
Missoula County Public Schools	124	884	1,695	14
Monforton School District #27	1	6	8	0
Montana City School	1	10	1	1
Montana Digital Academy	35	114	397	18
Nashua K-12 Schools	3	6	32	0
Noxon School District #10	6	32	72	1
Olney Bissell School District 58	1	4	0	0
Philipsburg K-12 Public Schools	8	15	118	0
Plains Public Schools	3	12	62	0

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Plentywood K-12 Schools	2	7	23	0
Plevna School District	1	6	0	1
Polson Public Schools	8	50	192	2
Poplar Elementary	5	45	0	0
Powell County Schools	3	25	40	1
Ramsay Schools	2	20	0	0
Red Lodge School District #1	1	6	1	0
Rocky Boy Schools	1	6	60	0
Ronan School District #30	8	54	168	0
Roy School District	5	14	10	5
Ryegate Public Schools	3	4	33	0
Scobey K-12 Schools	2	20	2	2
Shelby Public Schools	1	6	3	0
Shepherd Public Schools	6	79	102	2
Shields Valley Schools	3	21	22	0
Sidney Public Schools	2	6	34	0
Smith Valley School District 89	3	21	34	0
Somers School District 29	9	52	127	1
St Regis K-12 School District	5	24	100	0
St. Andrew School	7	22	47	1
St. Ignatius School District	3	24	125	0
St. Labre Indian Schools	12	107	416	2
St. Mary's Catholic School	1	6	16	1
St. Patrick's Academy High School	3	35	6	2
Stanford School District #12	1	3	0	0
Stevensville Public Schools	11	59	313	2
Superior K-12 Public Schools	6	43	81	0
Swan River School	1	12	0	0
Sweetgrass County High School	2	10	38	0
Target Range School District #23	2	16	0	0
Thompson Falls Public Schools	15	56	443	3
Three Forks Schools	2	6	130	0
Townsend School District #1	8	47	112	0
Trego School	1	4	15	1
Trinity Lutheran School - Billings	3	7	18	0
Trout Creek School District 6	3	9	15	0
Troy Public Schools	13	58	170	4

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Turner Public Schools	4	16	54	0
Twin Bridges K-12 School District #7	12	61	108	4
Ulm Elementary School	6	29	63	1
Valier School District #18	3	28	60	0
Vaughn School	1	6	20	0
Victor Public School District	5	21	52	0
West Glacier Elementary	4	15	28	4
West Valley School District	2	10	2	1
West Yellowstone School District 69	6	55	85	0
Westby School District	1	21	15	0
White Sulphur Springs School District 8	1	3	22	1
Whitefish Public Schools	79	532	377	23
Whitehall Public Schools	1	6	70	0
Wibaux Public Schools	5	26	71	2
Wolf Point School District	15	111	339	1
Yellowstone Academy	2	18	14	1
Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch	1	6	10	0
Total (163 Districts)	**2,228**	**15,653**	**30,974**	**441**

Tribal*

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
CSKT Education Department	6	27	35	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.

Universities and Colleges

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Carroll College	1	13	0	0
Center for the Advancement of Positive Education in the PJW College of Education, University of Montana	13	295	47	10
Dawson Community College	6	26	30	3
DIG Field School - University of Washington	1	30	0	0
Flathead Valley Community College	1	7	1	0
Fort Peck Community College	1	30	15	0
Great Falls College MSU	6	61	56	0
Helena College	10	162	10	10
Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center at the University of Montana	3	42	16	0
Michael Cunningham AGBU Armenian Virtual College, Yerevan, Armenia	2	7	0	2
Miles Community College	12	135	11	2
Missoula College UM, Cybersecurity	1	56	22	1
Montana Early Childhood Project / MSU	18	71	21	6
Montana State University - Modern Languages and Literature	7	51	109	0
Montana State University - Storytelling Grant	1	10	47	1
Montana State University American Choral Directors Chapter	1	12	0	0
Montana State University Extension	1	6	12	0
Montana State University Extension Directors Office	1	12	20	0
Montana State University Extension Glacier County	2	6	10	0
Montana State University Music Department	1	19	12	0
Montana State University Science Math Resource Center	2	49	16	0
Montana State University Teacher Education Program	2	8	7	1
Montana Tech of the University of Montana	6	57	11	2
MSU - Department of Education	1	14	16	0
MSU Center for Research on Rural Education	5	10	0	0
MSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Program	1	12	5	0
MSU Extension Forestry	2	27	5	0
MSU Valley County Extension	1	16	0	0
MSUBillings College of Education	5	52	8	0

Provider Name	Number of Events	Number of PDUs Available	Number of Certificates Issued	Online Offerings
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at University of Montana (MOLLI)	61	390	10	15
Salish Kootenai College	18	174	212	1
spectrUM Discovery Area (University of Montana science museum)	6	12	0	3
Stone Child College	15	61	327	0
The Art of Education	2	30	11	2
The University of Montana - Montana Safe Schools Center	12	121	86	1
TRIO Upward Bound at the University of Montana	7	186	7	0
UM - Center for Children, Families and Workforce Development	9	54	222	5
UM - College of Education	21	243	192	0
UM - Rural Institute	1	6	21	0
UM Bitterroot	4	39	48	1
University of Montana - Flathead Lake Biological Station	1	6	0	0
University of Montana Conference Services	4	42	62	0
University of Montana Linguistics Program	3	10	11	0
University of Montana School of Public and Community Health Sciences	1	2	0	1
Yellowstone Writing Project	6	48	22	0
Total	**285**	**2,713**	**1,738**	**67**

❖ **ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – (Items 15-20)**

Dr. Hannah Neiskens

ITEM 15

ACTION ON THE CORRECTIVE PLANS FOR SCHOOLS IN DEFICIENT STATUS FOR ACCREDITATION

- **Lame Deer High School**

Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date: November 18-20, 2026

Presentation	Recommend Approval of the Corrective Plan for SY 2025-26
Presenter	Crystal Andrews
Position Title	Senior Manager, School and Educator Effectiveness Office of Public Instruction
Overview	This presentation provides information to the Board of Public Education (BPE) for consideration of the corrective plan for Lame Deer High School for the 2025-2026 Accreditation Report. The state superintendent recommends approval of the corrective plans as presented. The report is attached and Superintendent Falls Down from Lame Deer Public Schools should be available virtually.
Requested Decision(s)	Action Item
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	Approval of the corrective plan for Lame Deer High School for the 2025-2026 school year as recommended by the State Superintendent.

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

Focus Area	Action Step	Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcome
	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
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

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.

eer Public Schools (0867) School: Lame Deer High School (1816) Year: 2026-

Corrective Plan

Open Date: Aug 31, 2026 | Due Date: Oct 30, 2026 | ⚠ STATUS: PAST DUE | 🔒 LOCKED | Admin Delete

CP. ONLY COMPLETE IF CONTACTED BY OPI.

Please select the reason why the school is in a corrective plan and describe a systematic procedure and timeline for resolving deviations.

Select the reason you are in a corrective plan. Select all that apply.

- ☐ Assurance Standards (Rubrics A-R)
- ☑ Student Performance Standards (SPA-SPC)

Required

Please describe your systematic procedure and timeline for resolving deviations.

Required

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.

Required

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.)

Required

Identify responsible parties and deadlines for corrective action.

Required

Describe how progress will be tracked and monitored.

Required

Provide evidence that the local board of trustees has approved this plan.

Corrective Plan_August 29th 2025 (2) (1) (1).docx

Lame Deer Public School Improvement Plan2.docx

No evidence that the local board of trustees has approved this plan was submitted.

ITEM 16

ACTION ON VARIANCE TO STANDARDS REQUESTS AND RENEWALS

Action Items:

- **Initial Applications**
- **Renewal Applications**

Crystal Andrews
Ellery Hill

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date: November 19-20, 2026

Presentation	Recommend Approval of the 2026-27 Initial and Renewal Variances to Standards (VTS) applications.
Presenter	Crystal Andrews Ellery Hill
Position Title	Senior Manager, School and Educator Effectiveness Data Analyst, Accreditation and Licensure 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. Application materials can be found at this link.
Requested Decision(s)	Approval of the eight Variances to Standards applications.
Related Issue(s)	None
Recommendation(s)	Action 1: Approve State Superintendent Hedalen's recommendation of the four requests for Initial Variances to Standards. Action 2: Approve State Superintendent Hedalen's recommendations of the four requests for Renewal of Variances to Standards.

Susie Hedalen, Superintendent
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Agenda

October 29th, 2026

9:00 AM Call to Order

- Roll Call
- Statement of Public Participation
    - *The Variance to standards Review Board encourages the public to participate in board discussions. Persons who wish to participate should sign the public comment sign-in sheet and identify themselves to the board chair prior to the board's consideration of the matter in which the person are concerned. Anyone wishing to participate in board discussions will be recognized by the chairperson in keeping with normal board parliamentary procedure. The public will be afforded the opportunity to comment before the Review board on every action item on the agenda prior to final board action.*
- Adoption of Agenda
- Review of ARM 10.55.604 & 10.55.608
- Board Terms.
- Approval of **October 30, 2025**, Meeting Minutes
- Review & Make Recommendations - Initial Applications
- Public Comment
- Adjourn

Initial Applications:

1. **Montana City Elementary - Montana City School (SC: 0614); Montana City Middle School (SC: 1715)**
   10.55.704 - Administrative Personnel: Assignment of District Superintendents

2. **Stevensville Public Schools – Stevensville Health Sciences (SC: 3037)**
   10.55.709 – Library Media Specialist

3. **Sunburst K-12 Schools - Sunburst Elementary (SC: 1167); Sunburst 7-8 (SC: 1781); Sunburst High School (SC: 1168)**
   10.55.709 – Library Media Specialist

4. **Thompson Falls Public Schools - Thompson Falls High School (SC: 1048)**
   10.55.709 – Library Media Specialist

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Summary: Initial Application for Variance to Standards

A local board of trustees may apply to the Board of Public Education (BPE) through the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OPI) for a variance to an assurance standard or section of an assurance standard(s). Applications cannot request variances from statutory criteria, educator licensure or endorsement standards, or content standards.

Requirements

- The application must describe how and why the proposed variance is:
  - Workable
  - Educationally Sound
  - Designed to meet or exceed results under established standards
  - Aligned with applicable program standards (ARM 10.55.1101-10.55.2201)

- The district must provide evidence of stakeholder involvement, including trustees, administrators, teachers, classified staff, families, community members, and students (as applicable).

- The local board must formally adopt the variance application at a properly noticed board meeting and include official minutes as documentation.

Review Process

The Superintendent refers applications to a review board, which evaluates them using uniform rubric to ensure consistent, high-quality submissions statewide.

The review board provides a recommendation to the Superintendent, who then submits a final recommendation to the BPE for approval, modification, or denial.

If approved, a variance is initially valid for up to two years, with ongoing monitoring by the Superintendent.

Signature Approving Initial Variances to Standards Applications:

Superintendent of Public Instruction: _____

Date: _____

Board of Public Education Chair: _____

Date: _____

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2026-2027 Variance to Standards
Initial Application Summary

1. **Montana City Elementary - Montana City School (SC: 0614); Montana City Middle School (SC: 1715)**
    a. 10.55.704 - Administrative Personnel: Assignment of District Superintendents
        I. Application Request: To allow the FTE of their superintendent to be 0.75 FTE, rather than 1.0 FTE so the superintendent may take on 0.25 FTE as a principal. The district will retain its existing 1.0 FTE principal, resulting in a total of 0.75 FTE superintendent and 1.25 FTE principals.

        II. The requirement is a 1.0 FTE superintendent.

        III. Workable Reason: Administrative structure meets district needs and reduces their administrative costs, which has allowed the district to hire a 1.0 FTE interventionist and a part-time (2 days per week) certified teacher to support their special education students and staff. Additionally, behavioral support services have been contracted with an outside organization.

        IV. The initial request is for 2 years.

---

2. **Stevensville Public Schools – Stevensville Health Sciences (SC: 3037)**
    a. 10.55.709 - Library Media Services, K-12
        I. Application Request: 0 FTE of library.

        II. The requirement is .001 FTE library media specialist for the school

        III. Workable Reason: The Health Sciences school is located within the regular high school. The combined high schools' enrollment is 344 which is well within the 1.00 requirement. The high school has a 1.00 FTE librarian.

        IV. The initial request is for 2 years.

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2026-2027 Variance to Standards
Initial Application Summary

3. **Sunburst K-12 Schools - Sunburst Elementary (SC: 1167); Sunburst 7-8 (SC: 1781); Sunburst High School (SC: 1168)**
    b. 10.55.709 - Library Media Services, K-12
        I. Application Request: 0 FTE of library.

        II. The requirement is .001 FTE library media specialist for each school (.003 FTE for the district).

        III. Workable Reason: A certified teacher is providing library services while working toward their library certification. There has been a lack of qualified applicants for the position.

        IV. The initial request is for 2 years.

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4. **Thompson Falls Public Schools - Thompson Falls High School (SC: 1048)**
    a. 10.55.709 - Library Media Services, K-12
        I. Application Request: To have 0 licensed library FTE for the High School Library.

        II. The requirement is a .5 FTE library media specialist. 1.001 Total FTE needed for entire district.

        III. Workable Reason: 0.5 FTE from the Social Studies teacher is devoted to the library. A paraprofessional is assigned to help students in the library. English teachers will assist with supporting research skills.

        IV. The initial request is for 2 years.

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Summary: Renewal of Variance to Standards

After the initial two-year approval period, a district may apply to renew its approved variance to continue implementation. The school district shall provide evidence to the Superintendent of Public Instruction that the methods selected by the district implement, meet, or exceed results that could have been achieved under established standards.

Requirements for Renewal

- The district must provide evidence showing that the variance has been successfully implemented and that it meets or exceeds the results that would have been achieved under the standard requirements.
- Evidence may include data, evaluation results, or other documentation demonstrating the variance's effectiveness and educational soundness.
- The Superintendent of Public Instruction reviews the renewal evidence and determines whether the variance remains workable and educationally sound.

Approval and Duration

- If the Superintendent finds the variance continues to meet or exceed standards, they recommend continued approval to the Board of Public Education.
- The Board of Public Education may renew the variance for up to three years at a time.
- The variance may be subsequently renewed if the district continues to show that it maintains or exceeds expected results.
- If a variance is found not to be effective, the Superintendent may recommend revocation, and if the Board of Public Education concurs, that decision is final.
- A district may discontinue an approved variance at any time by notifying the Superintendent in writing.

Signature Approving Renewal Variances to Standards Applications:

Superintendent of Public Instruction: _____ Date: _____

Board of Public Education Chair: _____ Date: _____

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2026-2027 Variance to Standards
Renewal Application Summary

1. **Bigfork Public Schools - Bigfork Elementary (SC: 0442); Bigfork 6-8 (SC: 1660)**
    a. 10.55.709 - Library Media Services, K-12
        i. Application Request: To utilize 1.0 FTE for the library services for the elementary and middle school.
        ii. The requirement is a 1.5 FTE Library Media Specialist
        iii. Workable Reasons: Shared campus for the two schools. The schools' have a 1.0 FTE library media specialist and 2.5 FTE paraprofessionals to support library media services.
        iv. This is a renewal request for 3 years.

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2. **Columbia Falls Public Schools - Columbia Falls Junior High School (SC: 0419)**
    a. 10.55.709 - Library Media Services, K-12
        i. Application Request: A 1.0 FTE library media specialist with the support of a paraprofessional.
        ii. The requirement is a 1.5 FTE Library Media Specialist
        iii. Workable Reasons: In addition to the 1.0 librarian the school has additional paraprofessional support for 7 hours per day in the library.
        iv. This is a renewal request for 3 years.

---

3. **Elysian Elementary - Elysian Middle School (SC: 1831)**
    a. 10.55.709(1)(b)) .5 FTE for schools with 126-250 students
        i. Application Request: to be allowed to have 1.0 total Librarian FTE for K-5 and 6-8 MS with .02 FTE Paraprofessional support.
        ii. The FTE required for Elysian Middle School is 0.50 FTE. Entire district is 1.5 with a total enrollment in the district being a little over 400.
        iii. Workable Reasons: Library is centrally located for all grade levels as the two school share a single building. They will continue to utilize para support in the library
        iv. This is the second Renewal Request for three years.

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2026-2027 Variance to Standards
Renewal Application Summary

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4. St. Ignatius K-12 Schools - St. Ignatius Middle School (SC: 1719)

a. 10.55.709 - Library Media Services, K-12

i. Application Request: 0 FTE library media specialist at the middle school. A full-time paraprofessional will provide library services while under the guidance of the library media specialist that serves the district's elementary and high school, with additional assistance from 2 certified teachers.

ii. The requirement is 0.001 FTE.

iii. Workable Reasons: They have a full-time librarian that meets the needs of the district. Additionally, they utilize a paraprofessional working full-time in the middle school library to support students. They have 2 FTE teachers teaching library science, reading, and Title I.

iv. This is a renewal request for 3 years.

ITEM 17

INFORMATON ON THE ANNUAL DATA COLLECTION

Nicole Thuotte

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date:

Presentation	Annual Data Collection Report
Presenter	Nicole Thuotte
Position Title	EDUCATE Data Team Unit Manager
Overview	This report provides an overview of the Data Collection calendar, training and outreach completed by the EDUCATE team and collaborations with other OPI teams.
Requested Decision(s)	n/a
Related Issue(s)	n/a
Recommendation(s)	

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Annual Collection Update – November 2026

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 (2025-2026)
- Fall Student Count for ANB
- Future Ready Certification
- Fall Enrollment Count
- Fall Program Participation
- Fall Personnel
- Fall Teacher Class
- Fall Career and Technical Education
- 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 Campus Playbook Series for Fall Reporting to support districts with data collection, validation, and certification in Infinite Campus. This five-part learning series, held weekly from August 21 to September 18, 2026, 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 200 participants registered for Campus Playbook (including Superintendents, data clerks, secretaries, 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 fall.

In addition to the statewide training and fall data collection, the EDUCATE team hosted day-and-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. Several other day-long, on-demand meetings were held in Great Falls, Butte, Helena, Kalispell, and Billings – offering districts a

more in-depth opportunity to explore their data. The EDUCATE team also presented at the MASBO New Clerk's workshop in Lewistown.

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.

To reduce duplicative data entry for districts, the EDUCATE team and Accreditation collaborated to adjust data entry and certification dates for QEC and the annual data collection elements in the AccredMT platform. Districts will only report staff and course information once (due by December 18th, with final corrections through December 31st, in accordance with ARM 10.21.201). To assist districts with reporting, the OPI opened accreditation reports in early September. This allows districts ample time 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.

To further assist districts with data accuracy, the EDUCATE team is continuing the use of the new Certification tools in Infinite Campus to attach hard stop errors to Data Certifications. Districts cannot complete their certifications until they clear their errors, minimizing the back and forth between districts and the EDUCATE team when districts certify with errors. The team has also expanded the number of validation reports available to districts, allowing them to see their data from a variety of viewpoints.

Finally, the EDUCATE team has been working with the Department of Labor, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, as well as OPI CTE and School Finance staff to provide additional validations for the first year of the Future Ready collection. The OPI has published a report within MAEFAIRS that aggregates data for 2025-26 graduates, so districts can see who has reached a Future Ready goal level and where data may be missing for students.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Thuotte, EDUCATE Data Team Unit Manager, at nthuotte@mt.gov.

ITEM 18

REVIEW OF THE ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 55, SPECIAL EDUCATION TECHNICIAN STANDARDS

Dr. Julie Murgel
Patrick Cates

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date: November 18-20, 2026

Presentation	The Economic Impact Statement for the updated changes to ARM 10.55 School Accreditation.
Presenter	Patrick Cates Julie Murgel
Position Title	Senior Manager, Safety and Student Supports Chief Program Officer Office of Public Instruction
Overview	Provide an overview of the Economic Impact Statement (EIS) outlined in Section 2-4-405, MCA to evaluate, quantify, and publicize the financial and operational effects of proposed changes to ARM 10.55 relative to the Special Education Technicians role and the removal of graduation via IEP goals.
Requested Decision(s)	
Related Issue(s)	NRC ARM 10.55 § 2-4-405, MCA
Recommendation(s)	Approve the Economic Impact Statement to be submitted to the Education Interim Budget Committee

Economic Impact Statement Administrative Rule of Montana, Chapter 55: Special Education Graduation & Special Education Technician

Montana Office of Public Instruction

November 2026

Executive Summary

In late 2025, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, with approval from the Montana Board of Public Education (BPE), initiated a review of two items regarding ARM Title 10, Chapter 55. The first item pertains to Montana's Educational Opportunity for Special Education, as outlined in ARM Title 10, Chapter 55, Subchapter 8. This review aims to update graduation requirements for special education students. The second item is the addition of the Special Education Technician roles and responsibilities under ARM Title 10, Chapter 55, Subchapter 7. The Special Education Technician position was recently added to ARM 10.57.439. This review aims to establish the roles and responsibilities for Special Education Technicians.

As required by § 20-7-101, MCA, these standards, part of the accreditation process, must be adopted by the BPE with the Superintendent's recommendation, and developed through negotiated rulemaking. In compliance with § 2-4-405, MCA, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) has prepared this economic impact statement in consultation with the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee (NRC).

To assess potential economic impacts of the proposed rule amendments to ARM 10.55.8 and ARM 10.55.7, OPI surveyed school personnel and stakeholders. The survey was distributed via the OPI Current newsletter to over 18,000 recipients on August 27, 2026. With an initial low response rate, the survey was re-sent directly to superintendents and special education directors, extended an extra month, and distributed through a partnership with the School Administrators of Montana (SAM). After the additional outreach a total of 47 submissions were collected, informing this report.

Introduction

The Superintendent and OPI staff established a Chapter 55 Special Education Technician Task Force, which included special education directors and teachers from across Montana. The Task Force proposed roles and responsibilities for Special Education Technicians based on the training and experience required to achieve a Special Education Technician License (ARM 10.57.439) and in alignment with State Eligibility requirements under 34 CFR § 300.1 and aligned with the Superintendent's vision. The Task Force provided feedback and recommendations. Final revisions were submitted to the Superintendent and the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee (NRC).

The Superintendent also brought forward a recommendation to amend ARM

10.55.805. A federal court settlement was reached on August 13, 2025. The settlement determined that all students achieving a regular Montana high school diploma must meet the same graduation standards established by the state and local school district. This is in direct conflict with ARM 10.55.805(4):

> *A student eligible to receive special education services as identified under IDEA and who has successfully completed the goals identified on an individualized education program for high school completion shall be awarded a diploma.*

The recommendation to remove Subsection 4 of ARM 10.55.805 was submitted to the NRC.

The NRC (members listed in Appendix B) reviewed the proposed rule amendment and additions, meeting virtually from May 2026 to June 2026, and ensured the recommendations were in alignment with The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), MCA, ARM, and would be beneficial to supporting the education of Montana's students with disabilities.

The rules proposals are listed below with a summary of changes:

- 10.55.805(4) – Educational Opportunity Special Education - Amend:
    - *Repeal Subsection 4 in alignment with the federal court settlement regarding education of Montana's students with disabilities ages 18-22.*
- 10.55.7 – School Leadership - Adopt:

  ARM 10.55.725 to establish duties and responsibilities for Special Education Technicians.

Economic Impact Statement Required Elements

Pursuant to § 20-7-101(1), MCA, the Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction prepared this economic impact statement in consultation with the NRC, in accordance with §2-4-405, MCA. Each required element of the economic impact statement is outlined below.

a) Affected Classes of Persons

> *Describe the classes of persons who will be affected by the proposed rule, including classes that will bear the costs of the proposed rule and classes that will benefit from the proposed rule. Refer to § 2−4− 405 (2)(a), MCA.*

The proposed rule changes will impact the following groups: school district trustees, K-12 administrators, special education teachers, general education teachers, clerks/business officials, parents of children with disabilities, and K-12 public school students with disabilities.

The costs associated with implementing the rule changes will be borne by local school districts.

Beneficiaries of the rule changes include trustees, administrators, teachers, students with disabilities and their families, as well as the communities served by Montana's accredited schools.

b) Economic Impact

> *Describe the probable economic impact of the proposed rule upon affected classes of persons, including but not limited to providers of services under contracts with the state and affected small businesses, and quantify, to the extent practicable, that impact. Refer to § 2−4405 (2)(b), MCA.*

The OPI surveyed school personnel and stakeholders regarding the probable economic impact of the proposed amendments to ARM Chapter 55. The survey was distributed as described previously and received responses from 47 individuals, including teachers, superintendents, principals, community members, tax payers, and school business clerks. The summary results of the surveys are shown in **Appendix A**.

Comprehensive Economic Impact Report: Removal of Graduation via IEP Goals (ARM 10.55.805(4))

1. Key Points

- **Policy Shift:** The removal of graduation via IEP goals under ARM 10.55.805(4) requires school districts to provide extended secondary transition services for eligible students aged 18 to 21.
- **District-Level Financial Burden:** Annual per-district financial impact ranges from **$10,000 to over $1,200,000** depending on district size, student demographics, and required service intensity.
- **Statewide Net Additional Cost:** Based on an estimated cohort of approximately **300 students** requiring extended 18–22 programming statewide (after accounting for the initial $10,000 per student covered by standard baseline state and federal funding), Montana school districts face substantial additional annual operational and programming costs.
- **High-Cost Student Population:** Approximately **1,739 special education students** statewide require services exceeding $30,000 annually (~1.12% of total MT student enrollment; total SPED enrollment is ~15%).
- **Service Tier Breakdown:** Costs span Low-to-Moderate ($13,000–$27,000/student), High Support In-District ($27,000–$82,000+/student), and Extraordinary Out-of-District Placements ($82,000–$250,000+/student).
- **Inter-Agency Funding Offsets:** Under WIOA, DPHHS dedicates at least 15% of federal vocational rehabilitation funds to Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for youth aged 14–21, partially offsetting district costs.
- **Associated Personnel Rules (ARM 10.55.725):** Special Education Technician standards add **$1,000 to $45,000** per district annually in staffing costs ($25,000–$30,000/year or $20/hr per tech) plus **$5,000 to $10,000** in professional development.

2. Statewide Special Education Enrollment & Baseline Data

Special education child counts across Montana public schools have fluctuated between 19,000 and 21,000 students over the 2021–2026 school years. Statewide, approximately **15%** of all enrolled Montana public school students qualify for special education services under IDEA Part B

- **2021–2022 SPED Count:** 19,243 students
- **2022–2023 SPED Count:** 20,294 students
- **2023–2024 SPED Count:** 21,061 students
- **2024–2025 SPED Count:** 21,128 students
- **2025–2026 SPED Count:** 20,024 students

3. Funding Mechanisms

Because state special education entitlements do not fully cover high-cost transition requirements, local school districts utilize a variety of funding mechanisms to meet legal FAPE obligations:

- **Federal Impact Aid:** Applied where available in eligible federal property or tribal-adjacent districts. Montana districts receive approximately $2,200 of IDEA funding per student with disabilities.
- **District General Fund Allocations:** In Montana about $8300 of general funds are allocated per student.
- **Local Non-Tax Revenues:** Utilization of oil, gas, and other locally generated revenue streams.
- **Permissive Property Tax Levies:** Funded directly by local property taxpayers without voter approval.

4. Economic Impact & Cost Breakdown by Support Tiers

Providing 18–21 transition services and specialized programming requires varying levels of staffing, facility access, and therapeutic resources. Expenses are categorized across three primary service tiers:

Tier 1: Low-to-Moderate Support Tier ($13,000 – $27,000 per student)

This tier serves students who require moderate support, such as part-time job coaching, life-skills instruction, speech/occupational therapy, or community navigation. Montana's standard baseline spending per pupil sits around **$14,500**. When a student enters an 18–21 transition program, added costs for travel to job sites and specialized instruction bump the operational cost into the **$14,500 – $20,000+** range, up to $27,000 per student annually.

Tier 2: High Support In-District Tier ($27,000 – $82,000+ per student)

This tier applies to students requiring intensive daily 1:1 paraprofessional assistance, dedicated nursing support, assistive technology, or specialized local behavioral programs.

Statewide data indicates that among the ~300 high-cost 18–22 transition students:

- **67.4%** incur annual costs between **$30,000 and $45,000**.
- **26.3%** incur annual costs between **$45,000 and $75,000**.

Cost Category (Per Student Annual Cost)	Estimate of number of students per tier	Estimated Additional Statewide Cost	Current Funding Sources (GF + State SpEd + IDEA) $13,000/student	Funding beyond federal and state sources
$13,000 to $27,000	150	$3,000,000	$1,950,000	$1,050,000
$30,000 to $45,000	90	3,375,000	$1,170,000	$2,205,000
$45,000 to $75,000	60	3,600,000	$780,000	$2,820,000
TOTAL ADDITIONAL COST				**$6,075,000**

Comprehensive Economic Impact: ARM 10.55.725 Special Education Technician Duties and Responsibilities

To evaluate the potential financial investment required to transition Special Education Technicians to a higher compensation tier, the table below outlines the economic impact of applying a **25% pay differential** over baseline paraprofessional wage rates in Montana.

Baseline Considerations & Data Points:

- **Standard Paraprofessional Pay:** (Average ~$15.00/hr) across approximately 12,000 special education paraprofessionals statewide.
- **Special Education Technician Wage (25% Differential):** $18.75/hr, representing an hourly wage increase of +$3.75/hr
- **Current vs. Projected Cohorts:** Year 1 active cohort consists of 22 licensed technicians, with projections reaching ~50 licensed technicians over the next 5 years.

Implementation Tier / Scope	Number of Techs	Technician Hourly Wage Range	Hourly Wage Differential per Tech	Estimated Annual Cost Differential per Tech (~1,200 hrs)	Total Estimated Annual Economic Impact
Per Individual Technician	1 Tech	$18.75	+$3.75	$4,500	$4,500
Year 1 Active Cohort	22 Techs	$18.75	+$3.75	$4,500	$99,000
Annual Projected Cohort (over the next 5 years)	50 Techs	$18.75	+$3.75	$4,500	$225,000
Scaled Workforce Transition (5% of MT Paras)	600 Techs	$18.75	+$3.75	$4,500	$2,700,000

Explanatory Notes & Financial Considerations

- **Work Schedule Assumptions:** Figures reflect a standard school year schedule of ~180 days at ~6.67 hours per day (1,200 total working hours). Full calendar-year positions (2,080 hours FTE) would increase annual cost differentials proportionally to $7,800 – $9,880 per technician.
- **Employer Tax & Benefit Load:** Estimates represent direct wage increases. Adding standard employer payroll burden and employee benefit costs (~15%–20% additional cost) increases the total budget impact per technician by approximately $675 – $1,140 annually.

Value Proposition & Return on Investment (ROI): Higher compensation incentivizes specialized skill acquisition and improves retention among high-performing staff. Increased retention reduces costly staff turnover, minimizes reliance on expensive contracted therapy services, and decreases out-of-district placement expenditures through enhanced local intervention capability.

(b) Cost to State Agencies

> *Describe and estimate the probable costs to the agency and any other agency of the implementation and enforcement of the proposed rule and any anticipated effect on state revenue. Refer to § 2-4- 405 (2)(c), MCA*

The OPI, as required by § 20-7-101, MCA, has incurred minimal costs for the Special Education Task Force and negotiated rulemaking process. Task force meetings were hosted virtually and during normal staffing hours. NRC meetings were also hosted virtually, eliminating travel costs. A local facilitator was procured by the OPI at no cost to the agency. Additional expenses for implementing the proposed rule changes, such as creating guidance documents with task force experts and providing professional learning are estimated at $20,000, excluding staff time absorbed through regular duties.

Metric	***Estimated Costs***
Agency Costs for Professional Learning	***$20,000***

Estimated total cost for the Office of Public Instruction: ***$20,000***

The BPE will incur filing fees for public hearing notices and publication fees for adoption and amendment notices with the Secretary of State, estimated at $60 per page. Costs for board member attendance at public hearings will be covered within the BPE's existing budget.

c) Costs and Benefits of the Proposed Rule

> *Analyze and compare the costs and benefits of the proposed rule to the costs and benefits of inaction. Refer to § 2-4-405 (2)(d), MCA.*

The State Superintendent initiated the process of amending the accreditation rules to establish the duties and responsibilities of the recently adopted Special Education Technician License, ARM 10.55.439, and bring Montana into compliance with the federal court settlement around graduation of students with disabilities, as per the established schedule by the BPE.

d) Less Costly or Less Intrusive Methods

> *Are there less costly or less intrusive methods for achieving the purpose of the proposed rule? Refer to § 2-4-405 (2)(e), MCA.*

There is no less costly or less intrusive method for achieving the purpose of the proposed rule changes.

e) Selection of Proposed Rule

> *Analyze any alternative methods for achieving the purpose of the proposed rule that were seriously considered by the agency and the reasons why they were rejected in favor of the proposed rule. Refer to § 2-4-405 (2)(f), MCA.*

ARM 10.55.805(4) is required to be amended, based on the recent federal court settlement regarding graduation of students with disabilities by completion of IEP goals. ARM 10.57.439, effective May 2026, established the Special Education Technician requirements for licensure. The purpose of the technician license is to provide a higher level of support to special education teachers than paraprofessionals are permitted. The duties and responsibilities, as well as who can supervise the technicians, need to be established in conjunction with the establishment of the license. The only option to accomplish either of the proposals is through the rule making process.

f) Efficient Allocation of Public and Private Resources

> *Does the proposed rule represent an efficient allocation of public and private resources? Refer to § 2-4-405 (2)(g), MCA.*

The proposed rule amendments do not involve any specific allocation of public and private resources.

Conclusion

The NRC, through consensus, determined that the rule amendments should be surveyed for economic impact and supported the creation of the survey questions. The ARM Title 10 Chapter 55 Economic Impact Survey provides a comprehensive picture of the financial considerations and operational challenges facing Montana school districts as they navigate the proposed administrative rule changes. Across both proposed amendments, the removal of ARM 10.55.805(4) concerning IEP goal-based graduation and the adoption of ARM 10.55.725 regarding Special Education Technician duties, respondents overwhelmingly anticipate noticeable economic impacts, increased personnel demands, and significant professional

development requirements. Appendix A shows the responses and the demographics of the 47 respondents of the survey.

1. Impact of Removing ARM 10.55.805(4) (IEP Graduation Requirements)

A clear majority of survey participants, 63% regarding personnel costs and 61% regarding available resources, indicated that eliminating graduation based strictly on IEP completion will impose direct financial burdens on local districts. The primary driver of this cost is the extended obligation to provide Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students up to age 22. As impacted students remain enrolled for additional years, districts must scale up both specialized and general education resources.

- **Staffing & High-Cost Cases:** Districts report needing additional certified special education teachers, general education staff, dedicated paraprofessionals, and related service providers. Individual high-needs cases present substantial financial commitments, with specific student support costs cited as high as $40,000 to $110,000 annually for 1-on-1 nursing, paraprofessional, and specialized assistance.
- **District Estimates:** Estimates for total required dollar increases vary widely depending on district size, ranging from $10,000 per year in smaller districts up to $1.2 million annually in larger urban systems. On a per-student basis, resource expansion costs are projected at $10,000 to $20,000 per continuing student.
- **Professional Development:** Half (50%) of all respondents noted that implementation will necessitate new training on 18+ programming, co-teaching, instruction differentiation, and adult transition IEP management. Estimated costs range from $100 per staff member to $30,000 per district to cover substitute coverage and training programs.

****It is important to note that not all non-graduating students 18–21-years-old remain in school. The offer of FAPE is extended, but the individual has the option to choose whether they want to return. Those who do elect to stay remain enrolled students. As such, the districts receive the proportional ANB funds. These students are also included in the child count data that impacts IDEA funding allocations. However, those two funding sources combined generally do not cover the overall cost of educating the students in this category (see Staffing & High-Cost Cases above).****

2. Impact of Adopting ARM 10.55.725 (Special Education Technicians)

The adoption of formalized duties for special education technicians generated even stronger consensus regarding personnel costs, with 80% expecting an economic impact and 57% anticipating impacts on general district resources. While seen by many as a beneficial step toward professionalizing support roles and improving retention, the credentialing framework introduces clear fiscal commitments.

The implementation of special education technicians does not require districts to change their current operations or personnel. Districts are not required to utilize technicians. They can continue to operate with special education paraprofessionals. However, technicians will be able to perform higher level support for the special education teacher.

- **Wage Escalation:** Respondents emphasized that technicians holding specialized licenses should receive higher compensation than entry-level paraprofessionals. Suggestions centered around a minimum target of $20 per hour. Annual district expenditure increases are estimated to be between $25,000 and $30,000 per full-time technician position.
    - Many of the estimates regarding increased salary for technicians referenced what the expected salary would be but did not provide a comparison for how much of an increase it was compared to paraprofessional wages. Through discussions beyond the survey, some districts have already started addressing a pay increase in their collective bargaining agreement, with some interesting approaches: adding a new column to the classified pay matrix, adding a specific dollar amount per hour increase to the paraprofessional wage for someone who obtains their technician license. One innovative approach looked at a small increase for completing Level 1 (completion of the online modules) and another increase when Level 2 (technician license) is achieved.
- **Professional Development Demands:** A substantial 79% of respondents highlighted the need for dedicated professional development. Training must address role boundary lines between technicians, paraprofessionals, and certified teachers, as well as instructing administrators and teachers on how to effectively supervise and deploy technicians. Financial estimates for this training range from minimal PIR hour adjustments to $10,000 annually.

Many of the estimates regarding an increased salary for technicians referenced what the expected salary would be but did not provide a comparison for how much of an increase it was compared to their paraprofessional wages. Some districts have already started addressing the increase in their collective bargaining agreements, with a few different approaches: adding a new column to the classified pay matrix, adding a specific dollar amount per hour increase to the paraprofessional wage for someone who obtains their technician license. One innovative approach looked at a small increase for completing Level 1 (completion of the online modules) and another increase when the technician license is achieved.

3. Strategic Recommendations & Summary

Overall, survey feedback underscores that rule changes cannot be successfully executed without a corresponding state-level funding strategy. To prevent local school

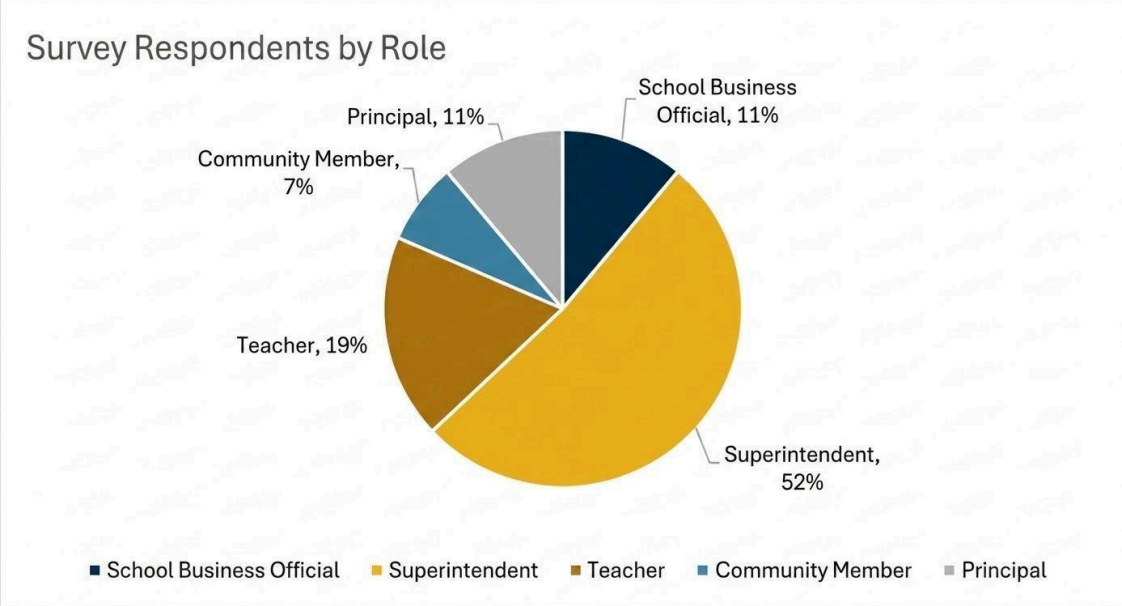
districts from overextending current general education budgets or spreading existing special education staff too thin, respondents highlighted several critical needs:

- **Inter-Agency Funding Coordination:** A key suggestion was for the OPI and the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) to braid funding streams and coordinate services for students aged 18–22.
- **Extraordinary Cost Relief:** Targeted assistance mechanisms are needed for districts absorbing high-cost individual cases, rather than relying solely on AnB funds and IDEA allocations.
- **Clear Implementation Guidance:** School leaders, special education teachers, service providers, technicians, general education teachers, and related school staff require definitive statewide guidance on 18+ programming standards and special education technician job parameters to maintain clarity, ensure legal compliance, and maximize resource efficiency.

Appendix A – Economic Impact Survey Responses

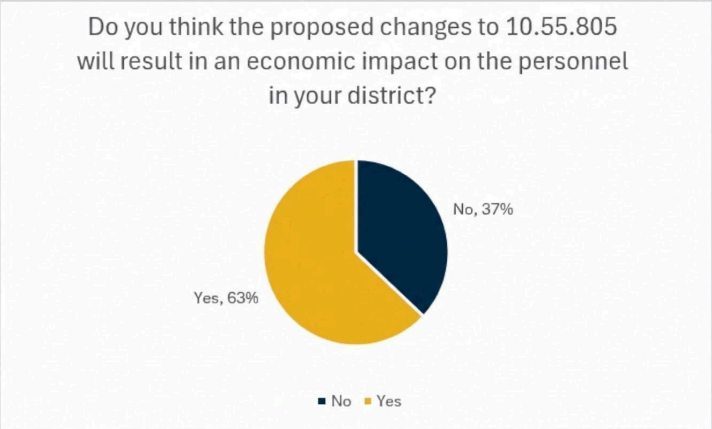
ARM Title 10 Chapter 55 Economic Impact Survey

The ARM 10.55 Economic Impact Survey included questions seeking to understand how the two proposed rule changes, removal of 10.55.805(4) and adoption of 10.55.725, would affect Montana's school districts financially and help determine the need for funding support. The OPI collected 47 responses from Superintendents, School Business Officials, Principals, Teachers, and Community Members. The table below shows the percentage of responses that came from each group.



Issue #1: Removal of 10.55.805 (4)
Graduating students based on completion of IEP goals.

Do you believe that this amended rule will have an economic impact (either receive benefit or bear cost) on the personnel in your district?



- 63% of respondents who answered the question believed the rule changes *would have an economic impact*.

Reasons respondents cited for economic impact:

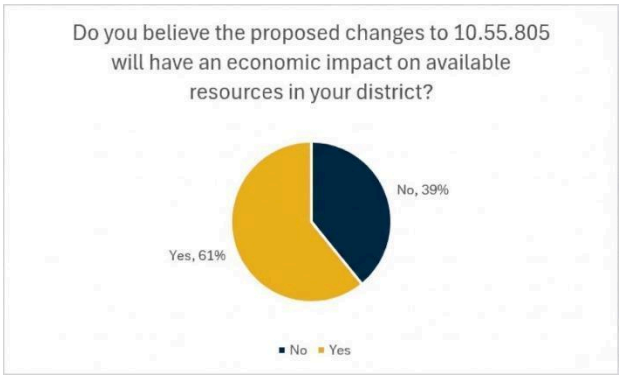
- Many stated that removing the rule allowing a student to graduate off of IEP goals, requiring the offer of FAPE, and a continued education would have a direct impact on increased costs. More students staying in school means more instructional and staffing resources are needed to support the increase in students. Statements included a need for increase in special education and general education teachers, as well as paraprofessionals.
    - The sentiment was shared by respondents who represented both small and large districts. Here is one response from a superintendent: “This change in graduation requirements has extended the number of years we will be required to provide FAPE for some of our most impacted students. For example, one of the students who was no longer eligible for a diploma based on goals will continue with us for 3 more years. This student requires a full time nurse per doctor's orders and a full time para. This student alone is an additional $110k. We are anticipating around 20 additional students in our FAPE to 22 programming this year and in three years we anticipate 60+ students in addition to our current special education programming. This will require as many as 6 teachers per our contracted case load limits and upwards of 12 additional paraprofessionals. This does not account for the additional related service provider FTE that will be needed to serve this new population.”

What increase (in actual dollars) would be required to cover the cost of the economic impact on personnel?

- Responses ranged from $10,000/year to $1,200,000/year in additional needs.
- One response highlighted the cost to just add one paraprofessional to support the additional caseload. “If you hire a fulltime special education para at $18 per hour for 6 hours per day and a 4 day week of school that would add up to: $432 per week times

4-5 weeks in a month That's $1,728 per month times 10 months in one year: $17,280 for just one full-time special education para."

- Other responses mentioned high cost students. One superintendent cited an example of one student requiring $40,000 worth of staffing and services per year.



Do you believe that this amended rule will have an economic impact on available resources in your district?

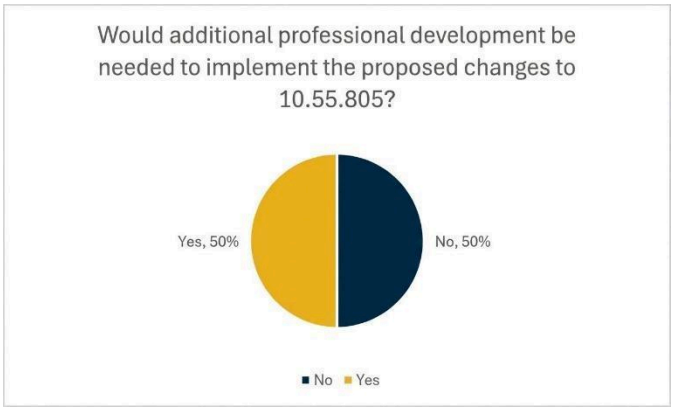
- 61% of respondents who answered the question believed the rule changes *would have an economic impact on available resources*.

Reasons respondents cited for economic impact:

- Increasing the number of students being served (students continuing beyond age 18), without increasing funding (staffing, facilities, programming) to support the education of these students, will result in current services and staff being spread too thin.

What increase (in actual dollars) would be required to cover the economic impact to available resources?

- One estimated $10,000 - $20,000 per student.
- A larger district stated $150,000 would be required.
- Smaller districts discussed the depth of need and whether or not they would be able to hire someone vs having to contract for a service.



Would additional professional development be needed to implement the proposed amendment?

- 50% of respondents who answered the question stated additional PD would be needed.

Respondents shared the following possible professional development needs:

- Special education and general education teachers, paraprofessionals, and intervention staff.
- This is new for Montana. What are the requirements for educating students 18+?
    - How does it look different?
    - IEPs for 18+
- Co-teaching
- Differentiation

What increase (in actual dollars) would be required to cover the cost of additional professional development?

- $100/staff member impacted
- $180/teacher/day for substitutes
- $15,000
- $5-30k
- 2-3 PIR days/year

The respondents were asked to share any other considerations they had with the superintendent.

- This is an excellent opportunity for OPI and DPHHS to coordinate and braid funding to serve this student population. Given the wait time many families face for the 0208 waiver, this has been a population that has been historically underserved. As this change in FAPE requirements has been rolled out this year, it has felt like the school system's problem to solve, when in practice it could be an opportunity for the agencies to work together, leverage funding and resources from both agencies, and create a model state transition system families can count on.
- Districts that serve or who receive an IDEA student with high cost needs present a concern for districts. Treating IDEA students as being the same cost wise is the presenting problem. Need a discussion on how to help districts with extraordinary costs rather than relying on the tuition fund.
- Impact on student learning: If we do not honor students' individualized needs as outlined in their IEPs, are we truly following IDEA? Graduating students based on IEP goals allows students to receive a diploma based on the supports that they need to level the learning environment. In Montana, we teach to standards; however, there are no exit exams to show that students have met the standards for each course of study required to graduate. If there were exit exams that demonstrated that all students met the curriculum goals, then we could possibly have students with IEP meet a minimum set of exit skills to show that they have mastered the standards. Parent trust: parents entrust that their child will graduate from high school with competencies to move forward into college, the job market, etc. If we do not provide diplomas to students with IEPs, they may begin to question the effectiveness of our supports in helping them earn a diploma.
- I would imagine economic impact will vary based on resources available in the community and/or surrounding communities. I don't think this can be one size fits all and schools will need guidance on how this changes what they do and how they do it.
- Will there be other programs, possibly through the Department of Labor that would also benefit this group of students?

Issue #2: Adoption of ARM 10.55.725
Special Education Technician Duties and Responsibilities

Do you believe that this amended rule will have an economic impact (either receive benefit or bear cost) on the personnel in your district?

- 80% of those that responded stated that it would have an economic impact.

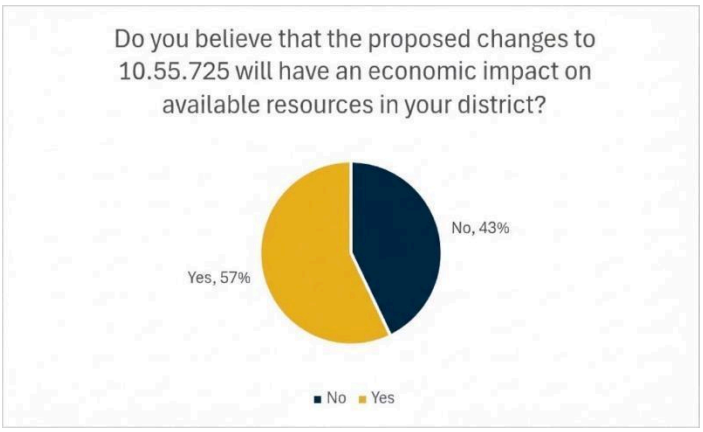


Reasons respondents cited for economic impact:

- More training required for staff in this position.
- A community member stated, “Because there is credentialing to hire individuals with more training and this particular license, schools absolutely should be awarding the staff that goes through the work to get this license. Schools should be paying these individuals higher wages than a standard paraprofessional”.
- A business clerk mentioned their district has been in discussions with their union regarding a pay increase for special education technicians.
- A superintendent proposed, “ It is likely that more qualified para-educators will receive greater compensation from the district. In larger districts their additional competencies may mean less demand on special education teachers so the increased cost may be less than in smaller districts.

What increase (in actual dollars) would be required to cover the cost of the economic impact on personnel?

- A community member stated, “The minimum wage for this should be $20/hour - in some districts that means an increase of $9 per hour as they are paying paras minimum wage.”
- A superintendent predicted their district cost to be $30,000 for a full-time specialist.
- Another superintendent forecasted $25,000/year for the cost to their district.
- A school business official also estimated a cost of $25,000.
- There were several sentiments from superintendents about the size of the district creating a lot of variance in cost.
- Others mentioned variability regarding local bargaining agreements.



Do you believe that this amended rule will have an economic impact on available resources in your district?

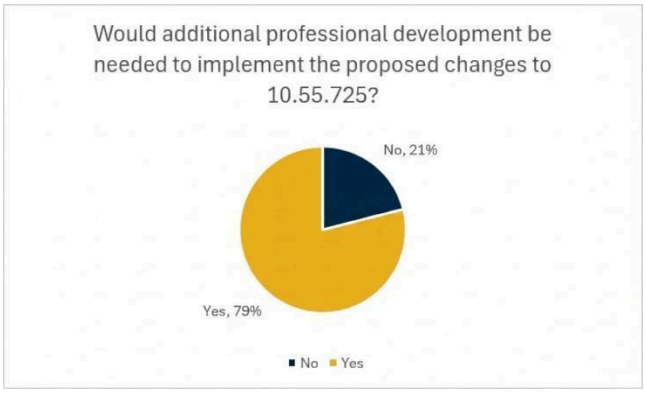
- 57% of those that responded stated that it would have an economic impact.

Reasons respondents cited for economic impact:

- The majority of the reasons cited centered around pay for the position.
- One superintendent offered, “I anticipate that if districts offer greater pay for technicians, there may be more people interested in working as paras so the impact could be positive in terms of recruitment and retention.”
- From a community member’s perspective, “Because there is credentialing to hire individuals with more training and this particular license, schools absolutely should be awarding the staff that goes through the work to get this license. Schools should be paying these individuals higher wages than a standard paraprofessional.”

What increase (in actual dollars) would be required to cover the economic impact to available resources?

- A community member suggested a salary of $20/hour based on scope of duties.
- One superintendent estimated $1,000 to $45,000 depending on size and scope of the district and number of positions.
- Another superintendent projected $25,000 per year.
- Yet another superintendent calculated $30,000 per year.



Would additional professional development be needed to implement the proposed amendment?

- 79% of respondents who answered the question stated additional PD would be needed.

Respondents shared the following possible professional development needs:

- A community member mentioned, “Supporting those that hold this license with on-going professional learning is pertinent - just like we need to for classroom educators.”
- A teacher provided input that teachers would need professional development on how to support and utilize the new position of special education technician.
- A similar statement was made by a superintendent, “Special education teachers and administrators could benefit from PD around the expanded privileges and responsibilities of technicians.
- Another superintendent mentioned, “I would need to train related service providers regarding the different boundary of job duties of a SPED Tech vs. a paraprofessional or a teacher.”

What increase (in actual dollars) would be required to cover the cost of additional professional development?

- A superintendent stated, “This should be able to be done in about 1-2 hours of PIR and likely cost nothing to minimal.”
- Other superintendents estimated amounts in the $5000 - $10,000 range.

The respondents were asked to share any other considerations they had with the superintendent.

- Community members largely supported funding for the implementation of the special education technician position. One community member discussed how imperative it is to invest in our educators and fund professional learning. Another member stated, “How would this change be funded? Seems we often make changes but fail to fund fully.”
- More thoughts around professional development and helping our education community understand the roles, responsibilities, and limitations of how special education technicians can be utilized.
- A superintendent emphasized the need to ensure special education technicians are highly qualified, like we do our teachers.
- There were a few statements, one from a teacher and one from a superintendent, questioning the need for the license. However, the licensure rule has already been adopted. This rule is regarding the roles and responsibilities the license holder is allowed to operate under.

Appendix B: Negotiated Rulemaking Committee Members CH 55 Special Education Technician License job duties and special education graduation updates

Appointed Member	NRC Role	Location
Kristen Ketola	K-12 Teacher	Laurel
Kristie Matule	Parent	Butte
Brittani Brence	School District Business Official	Ekalaka
Dixie Seleg	School Administrator	Forsyth
Paul Furthmyre	School Administrator	Great Falls
Rickielynn Hughes	Montana Tribe Representative	Brockton
Krystal Zentner	School District Trustee	Bridger
Kathy Gilboy	Higher Education	Helena
Mary DiBiase	Taxpayer	Conrad
Patrick Cates	OPI	Belgrade
Julie Murgel	OPI	Helena
McCall Flynn	BPE	Helena

ITEM 19

STUDENT ATTENDANCE OVERVIEW

Dr. Julie Murgel
Krystal Smith

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date: November 18-20, 2026

Presentation	Student Attendance Overview
Presenter	Dr. Julie Murgel Krystal Smith
Position Title	Chief Program Officer Opportunities & Innovative Learning Senior Manager
Overview	This presentation reviews student attendance rates in many areas such as by subgroup and daily attendance rates. Additionally, the presentation outlines attendance requirements in state accreditation and federal accountability systems. The presentation also provides an overview of resources and initiatives at the Office of Public Instruction
Requested Decision(s)	
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	

Student Attendance Overview

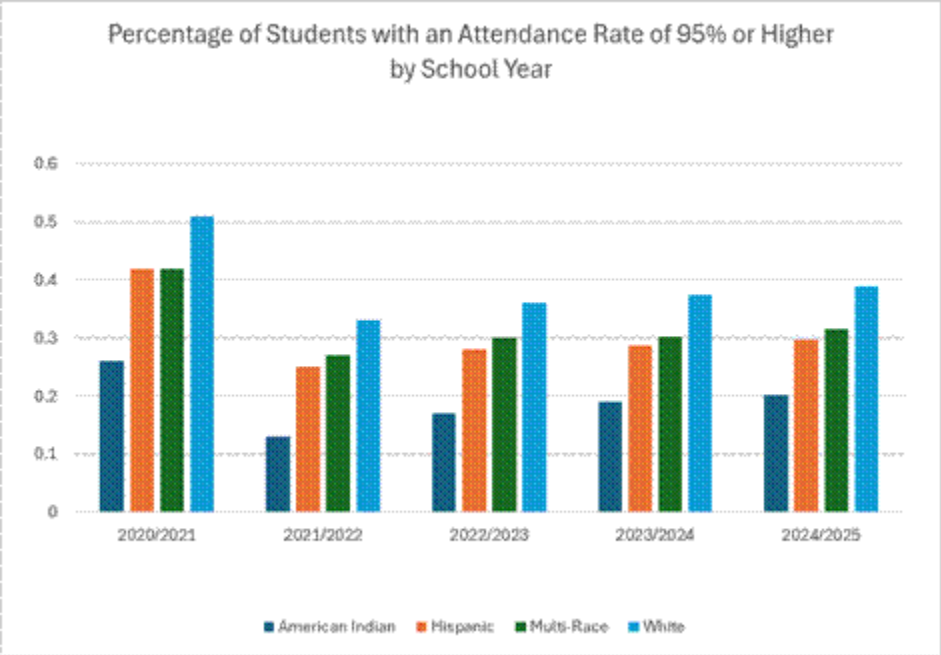
What are the student attendance rates in Montana schools?

Attendance Rates: Percentage of Students with an Attendance Rate of 95% or Higher Per School Year:

Race/Ethnicity	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Total of All Students	47%	30%	33%	34%	36%
American Indian	26%	13%	17%	19%	20%
Hispanic	42%	25%	28%	29%	30%
Multi-Race	42%	27%	30%	30%	31%
White	51%	33%	36%	37%	39%

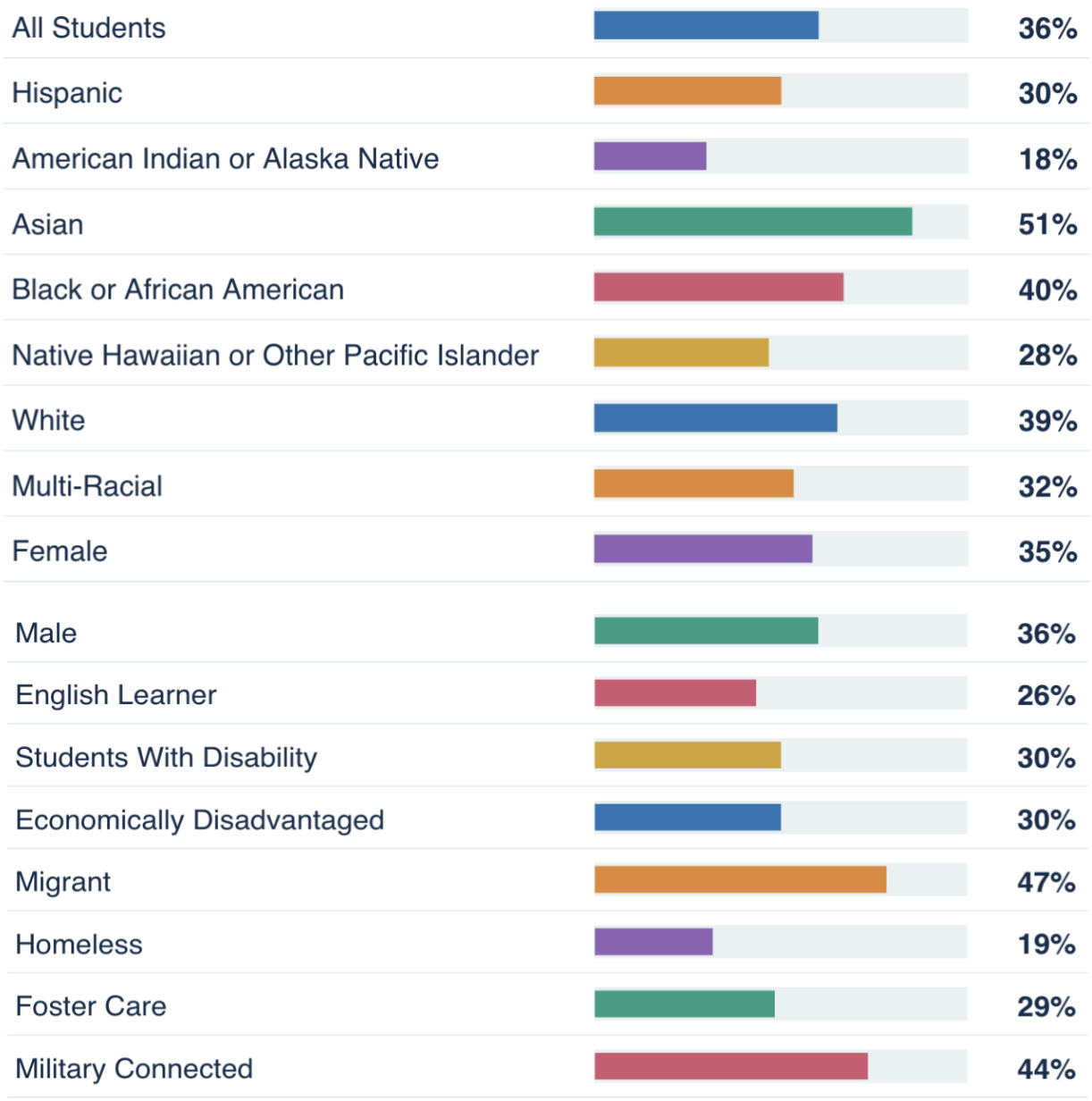
The table shows the percentage of students attending 95% or more days of school per school year by race/ethnicity. The graph below shows the same data for four racial/ethnic groups. All racial/ethnic groups saw a drop in attendance from 2020/2021 to 2021/2022 and then a slight increase from 2021/2022 to 2022/2023. Though attendance rates for AI students increased from 13% in 2021/2022 to 20% in 2024/2025, AI students continue to have the lowest rate of students attending school 95% or more days during a school year.

Percentage of Students with an Attendance Rate of 95% or Higher Per School Year



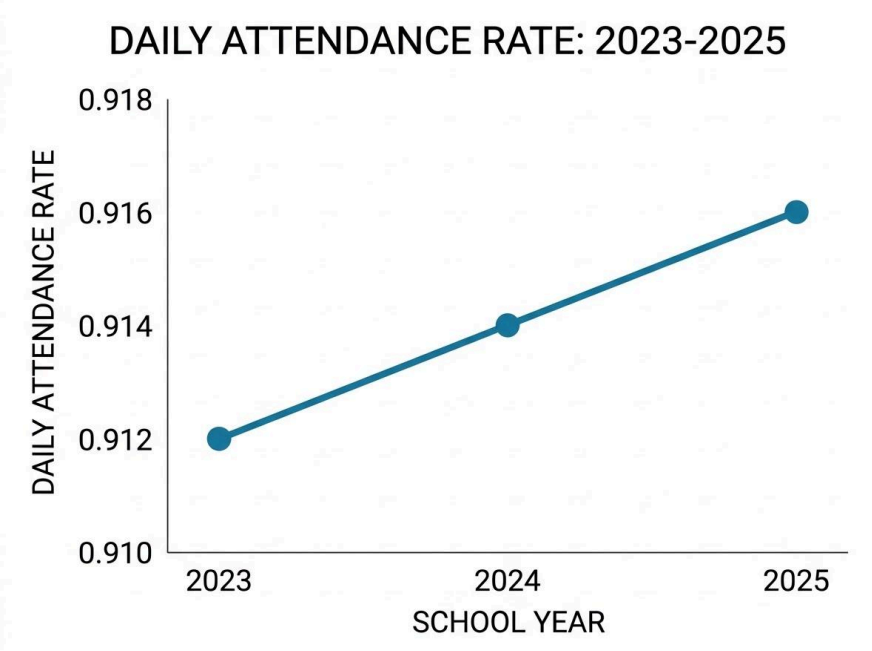
The graph shows the percentage of students with an attendance rate of 95% or higher for the past five school years by race/ethnicity. Since the 2021/2022 school year, attendance has been increasing for all groups. For all years shown, AI students have the lowest attendance rate when compared to other racial/ethnic groups. In the 2024/2025 school year, 20% of AI students attended 95%+ of school days compared to 39% of white students.

Student Attendance Data By Subgroup: Percentage overview across student groups

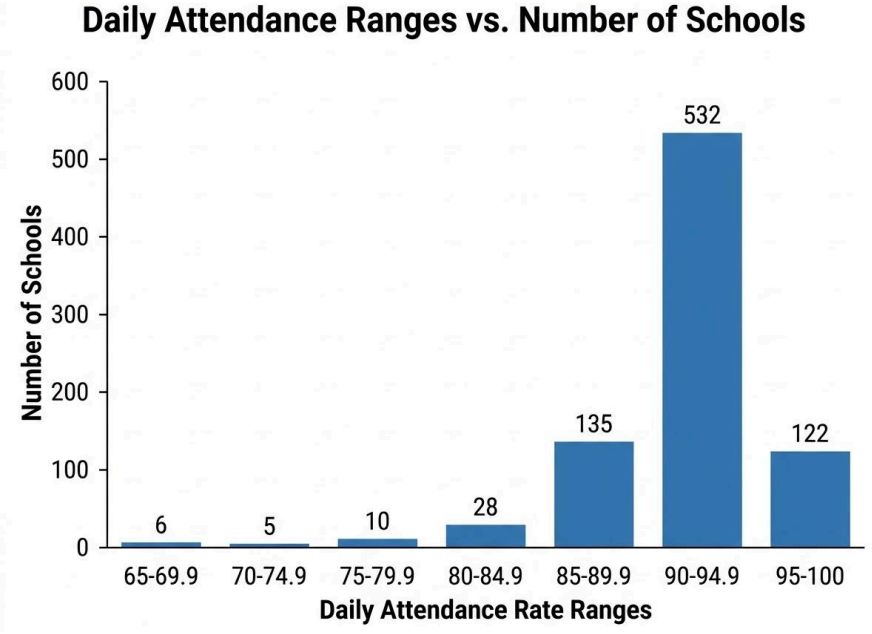


Note: Bars use a 0–60% scale. (Data Year 2025-26)

Daily Attendance:



Daily Attendance for 2024-2025



How is student attendance measured and used for school accountability?

State Accreditation

In the state accreditation system, attendance is measured using an average daily attendance rate. School daily attendance is measured by recording whether each student is present for the day, then aggregating those records into an average daily attendance rate. Elementary schools often take attendance once in the morning. Middle and high schools record attendance in each class or period. For calculation of average daily attendance, a school district will report the number of enrolled students who are present and the number of enrolled students who are absent on the official fall and spring disaggregated enrollment and attendance data collection days.

The rubric below shows how the daily attendance rate is evaluated for state accreditation. A regular rating is 90% or above. Attendance is one of four student performance indicators used for Elementary and Middle School.

3. Student Learning Outcomes - Attendance *Guiding Question:* How is the school ensuring students are attending school on a regular basis? 10.55.606(3) ***(Elementary and Middle Grade Schools)***	**Deficiency (0)**	**Advice (1)**	**Regular MD (2)**	**Regular (3)**
	☐ School's average daily attendance rate is **less than 82%**	**The school provided evidence of:** ☐ The average daily attendance rate is between **82% -86.99%**	**The school provided evidence of:** ☐ The average daily attendance rate is between **87% -89.99%**	**The school provided evidence of:** ☐ The average daily attendance rate is **90% or above**
GUIDANCE OPI will select the school's highest overall average daily attendance rate from the 3 years prior to the accreditation cycle. **Schools with less than 10 students' data will not be published.**				
The following information will be gathered from Infinite Campus by OPI; do not submit any data for this indicator.				

Federal Accountability

Satisfactory attendance is the percentage of students who attend school 95% of time. Satisfactory attendance is one component for the federal Flex indicator used for elementary, middle, and high school. In the federal accountability system, attendance accounts for 20 out of 95 points possible for K-8 schools and 15 out of 95 points possible for high school.

What initiatives is OPI implementing to help schools boost student attendance?

Attendance is a School Improvement Priority:

- Established attendance as a key component of Montana's school improvement efforts.
- Increased emphasis on attendance within Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and school improvement processes.
- Integrated attendance into accountability discussions with CSI schools.

Statewide Attendance Task Force

- Analysis of statewide attendance and chronic absenteeism data.
- Review of attendance policies and practices.
- Identification of evidence-based attendance practices.
- Development of statewide guidance and resources.

State Superintendent Hedalen's Initiative: Present Today, Prepared for Tomorrow

- Creation of consistent statewide attendance messaging.
- Development of Montana's attendance website.
- Creation of centralized attendance resources for schools, families, and communities.
- Publication of attendance tools and guidance documents.
- Development of attendance communications and awareness materials.

PEAK Attendance Research Project

PEAK Attendance Study-The PEAK Research Project is a three-year statewide study focused on improving student attendance in Montana's CSI (Comprehensive Support & Improvement) schools. Led by the UM's PJW College of Education and Montana Safe Schools Center in collaboration with the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), PEAK works directly with schools, students and caregivers to uncover local successes, deepen understanding, and implement meaningful, community-chosen strategies to promote stronger student engagement.

Year 1-Development, tribal approval, consultation
Year 2- Surveys, focus groups, initial report Summer 2026
Year 3- Interventions, final report summer 2027

CSI Attendance Impact Grant

- Launch of the CSI Attendance Impact Grant.
- Competitive funding opportunity for CSI schools:
    - Up to $200,000
    - Up to $125,000
    - Up to $75,000 depending on school size

Cross-Sector Attendance Collaboration

State-led collaboration efforts with:

- University of Montana Safe Schools Center
- Attendance Works
- Stay in the Game (national program)
- Montana Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE)
- Montana School Counselors

Statewide Attendance Resource Development

Creation of statewide resources including:

- Attendance Matters series
- Family engagement resources
- Student engagement resources
- Staff engagement resources
- Montana Attendance Facts
- Attendance Achievement Infographics
- Community engagement resources
- Social media campaigns
- Attendance newsletters and communication templates.

ITEM 20

ACTION ON THE REQUEST TO REVISE TITLE 10, CHAPTER 55, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND RELATED RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

Dr. Hannah Nieskens

State of Montana

PO Box 200601
Helena, Montana 59620-0601
(406) 444-6576
www.bpe.mt.gov

Board of Public Education

Professional Development Standards
ARM Title 10, Chapter 55 Accreditation Standards

10.55.714 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

(1) Professional development:

(a) shall be aligned with the district graduate profile and educational goals outlined in the district integrated strategic action plan described in ARM 10.55.601;

(b) shall be provided to address safety, well-being, and mental health of students and staff;

(c) focuses on teachers as central to student learning and includes all other members of the school community;

(d) focuses on individual, collegial, and organizational learning, reflection, and growth;

(e) respects and nurtures the intellectual and leadership capacity of teachers, principals, and others in the school community by incorporating active learning and adult learning theory;

(f) reflects research and demonstrates models of effective practice in teaching, learning, and leadership;

(g) enables teachers to develop further experience in subject content, teaching strategies, uses of technologies, and other essential elements in teaching to high standards;

(h) offers opportunities for feedback and reflection;

(i) is ongoing and sustained;

(j) is planned collaboratively by those who will participate in and facilitate that development;

(k) requires substantial time, other resources, and where practical provides coaching and expert support;

(l) is job-embedded to encourage teachers to meet, share, collaborate, and grow their practice;

(m) is driven by a coherent long-term plan; **and**

(n) is evaluated on the impact of professional development on teacher effectiveness and student learning, and the results of this assessment guides subsequent professional development.

(2) Teachers and specialists shall annually complete professional development pursuant to the requirements of 20-1-304 and 20-4-304, MCA, including a minimum of three pupil instruction related (PIR) days dedicated exclusively to professional development.

(a) A professional development PIR day shall constitute six hours of contact time.

(b) A school district may divide a professional development PIR day into no fewer than two-hour blocks of contact time.

(c) A professional development block may be held on the same day as a pupil instruction day, but a school district shall not schedule a professional development PIR day to convene simultaneously with a pupil instruction day.

(3) The local board of trustees shall establish an advisory committee to evaluate the school district's current school year professional development plan; and develop and recommend a plan for the subsequent school year, which is a required component of the integrated action plan outlined in ARM 10.55.601.

(a) The advisory committee shall include, but not be limited to, trustees, administrators, and teachers. A majority of the committee shall be teachers.

(b) Each school year the local board of trustees shall adopt a professional development plan embedded in the district integrated strategic action plan for the subsequent school year based on the recommendation of the advisory committee.

(c) The plan recommended by the advisory committee and adopted by the local board of trustees shall outline how, when, and from whom teachers and specialists shall meet their professional development PIR day expectations.

(d) The plan adopted by the local board of trustees must take into consideration the advisory committee's recommendations and include two professional development PIR days in October during which schools must close in order to permit teachers and specialists to attend the annual professional development meetings of state professional associations.

(e) The adopted plan may include alternatives but shall not interfere with or prohibit teacher and specialist attendance at the annual October professional development meetings of state professional associations.

(f) Teachers and specialists who do not attend the annual professional development October meetings of state professional associations or school district plan approved alternative professional development PIR days shall not be paid for the days they are absent.

(g) Teachers, specialists, administrators, and school districts shall not substitute for professional development PIR day purposes professional development opportunities not specifically outlined in the school district's adopted professional development plan.

(h) The local board of trustees shall make their plan available to employees and the public.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-2-121, 20-7-101, MCA
Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-121, 20-3-106, 20-7-101, MCA

History: NEW, 1989 MAR p. 342, Eff. 7/1/89; AMD, 2000 MAR p. 3340, Eff. 12/8/00; AMD, 2012 MAR p. 2042, Eff. 7/1/13; AMD, 2023 MAR p. 255, Eff. 7/1/23.

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – (Item 21)**

Dr. Tim Tharp

ITEM 21

ACTION ON AND RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 64, TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS

Dr. Tim Tharp

Friday, November 20, 2026

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION VISITS

8:30AM **COFFEE WITH SUPERINTENDENT BERTRAM**
Bozeman High School

8:45AM **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER PIR**
Bozeman High School

**************RECONVENE AT 10:00AM**************

CALL TO ORDER

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

❖ CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE – (Items 22-25)

Lisa Schmidt

ITEM 22

UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CHOICE SCHOOLS COMMISSION

Cathy Kincheloe

MONTANA COMMUNITY CHOICE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Design to Launch Deliverables Timeline
From Ready to Open Checklist
Begins June Post Contracting to August Prior to Opening

MONTANA COMMUNITY CHOICE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

June - August	
Governance	Certificate of Final Approval for Board 501(c)(3) Registration & Tax ID#
	Board Articles of Incorporation
	Board Bylaws
	Board Member Background Checks Submitted to Commission for Approval
	Board Officers & Committees Assigned
	Board Contact List
	Board Conflict of Interest Statements
	Board Meeting Dates
	Board Development Plan
	Board Established as Agency to Provide Background Checks
	Background Check Policy
	Bank Account Established
	Signatory Assigned to Bank Account
	Legal Counsel Retained
	Educational Service Provider Agreement (as applicable)
	Designation of Individual Responsible for Communicating with Media
	School Leader Hired

September - November 1	
Design to Launch Program Begins	Initial Orientation Session for Governing Board Members and School Leaders
Environment	Staff Recruitment & Retention Plan
Finance	Draft Budgets (Start-Up & Year 1)
	Procurement & Contracting Plan
	Financial Policies & Procedures Manual
Governance	School Leader Performance Review Process
	Start-up Plan: Ready to Open Checklist Duties Assigned
Operations	Student Recruitment Plan
	Student Enrollment Plan
	Job Descriptions

December - April 1	
Finance	Enrollment Tracker (submit weekly beginning March 1)
Academics	SPED Policy/IDEA & Sec 504 Implementation Plan
	ELL Implementation Plan
	Indian Education for All Implementation Plan
	Final Graduation Requirements
	Academic Standards
	Staff Professional Development Plan
Environment	School Community Engagement Plan
Facility	Lease/Warranty Deed
	Facility Financing Terms
Governance	Board Strategic Plan
	Designation of Individual Responsible for FOIA Requests
	Designation of Individual Responsible for McKinney Vento Act
Mission	Draft Strategic Plan
Operations	Insurance Policy
	Final School Year Calendar
	Transportation Plan
	Food Service Plan
	Human Resources Manual

June 1	
Finance	Roster of Enrolled Students (>50%)
July 1	
Finance	Final Approved Budget
Academics	Assessment Administration Plan
Facility	Certificate of Occupancy
Operations	Student & Family Handbook
August 1	
Academics	Student Master Schedule
Environment	Student Engagement & Discipline Plan
	Extracurricular Programs
	Promotion of Student and Staff Wellbeing
Facility	Schedule Final Facility Site Visit
	Final Site Visit Checklist Walk-through
Finance	Roster of Enrolled Students (>80% 1 month prior to opening)
Mission	Final Strategic Plan
Operations	Staff Performance Review Plan
	School Safety Plan
	Organizational Chart

ITEM 23

UPDATE ON PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

- **New Applicants and Interviews**
- **Application and Evaluation Criteria Review**

McCall Flynn

ITEM 24

ACTION ON BITTERROOT POLYTECH AMENDMENT REQUEST

McCall Flynn

Montana Board of Public Education
Public Charter School Amendment Request

Purpose
This form is used to request approval from the Montana Board of Public Education for amendments to an approved public charter school application or charter contract pursuant to 20-6-809, MCA.

1. **School Information**
   Public Charter School Name: Bitterroot Polytech High School
   District: Hamilton School District No. 3
   Primary Contact: Ryan Wells
   Date of Request: October 13, 2026

2. **Amendment Summary**
   Type of Amendment: Financial
   Description of Proposed Change: We would like to change our recurrent enrollment from a projected total of 80 students per year to a projected total of 41 students per year.

3. **Rationale**
   Reason for Amendment: Now that we are in our third year of running the charter school, we have a much better understanding of the population we serve and the demand in our community for academic offerings and programs provided by the Bitterroot Polytech.
   What has changed since your Public Charter School application was approved? Bitterroot Polytech enrollment is lower than initially anticipated. After our first year, we narrowed our focus in an effort to decouple the charter school and the high school. We no longer count in person dual enrollment courses offered through Hamilton High School as charter school classes. This change significantly impacted our enrollment numbers, but allows us to focus on building new innovative learning opportunities at the Washington School building, our Bitterroot Polytech High School location, that are not already available within the existing system.

4. **Impact on Performance Framework**
   Does this change how the school is evaluated? ☒Yes ☐ No
   Affected Areas: Recurrent Enrollment from year to year
   Description of Changes: Lower recurrent enrollment from 80 to 41 for remainder of contract.
   Updated Measures: Academic years 26-27, 27-28, 28-29

5. **Enrollment and Financial Impact**
   Current Enrollment:

K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total

									1	9	22	26	58

Revised Enrollment (if applicable):

K	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**Total**
									5	5	15	16	41

Please explain how this will impact your ANB: This will not have an impact on our ANB.

Additional Operational Impacts: Check all that apply:

☐ Staffing changes
☐ Budget revision required
☐ Student transportation changes
☐ Facility changes
☐ Other (describe below)

Click or tap here to enter text.

☒ No additional operational impacts

Describe the operational impacts of the proposed amendment, including any anticipated effects on staffing, budget, transportation, facilities, or other school operations. NA

6. **Alignment to Charter Contract**
   Does this change the mission, model, or scope? ☐ Yes ☒ No
   Explanation: NA

7. **Implementation**
   Proposed Effective Date: August 20, 2026
   Implementation Timeline: School year 26-27

8. **Communication Plan**
   Describe how the school will communicate the proposed amendment and, if approved, its implementation to affected students, families, staff, the district, and other stakeholders, as applicable.
   This information has been communicated to the board of trustees

9. **Charter Governing Board Approval** Link to Trustee Minutes
   Date Approved: October 13, 2026
   Board Minutes Attached: ☒Yes ☐ No

10. **Other**
    If the proposed amendment does not fall within the categories listed above, please describe the requested change in detail below. This may include, but is not limited to, changes such as the Public Charter School's name or other charter amendments not otherwise specified.
    Description of Request: NA



10/13/2026

Charter Governing Board Chair — Date

Board of Public Education Chair — Date

Board of Public Education Determination: ☐ Approved ☐ Denied

Hamilton Public Schools District 3	**Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda** **Tuesday, October 13, 2026** **Conference Room – District Office** **6:30 PM**	

Copies of attachments and documents contained in the Board packet are available at www.hsd3.org

Board Meeting: *At this meeting the Board takes official action on agenda items. Items of information and discussion may also be placed on the agenda. Comments are solicited from the audience throughout the meeting.*

Comments which may be construed as evaluative of the performance of a district employee are not allowed in an open meeting.

Welcome

1. *Call to Order and Roll Call*
2. *Pledge of Allegiance*
3. *Review, Revise & Approve Agenda*

Public Comment on Matters Not on the Agenda

This is an opportunity for any member of the audience to bring to the attention of the board questions or relevant comments concerning school district matters not on the agenda. The Board is not permitted to take any action on matters brought to the attention of the Board unless specific notice of the matter is included in a properly noticed agenda.

Reports

1. *Special Presentations – Mr. Roger Farley with the U.S. Department of Administration – Innovative Readiness Training through a partnership with the Department of Defense*
2. *Student Council*
3. *Food Service*
4. *Technology*
5. *Finance Information*
6. *Maintenance/Custodial*
7. *Transportation/Grounds*
8. *Legal/Human Resources*
9. *Website/Communication*
10. *Principals/Athletic Directors*
11. *Director of Student Services*
12. *Bitterroot Polytech Lead*
13. *Superintendent*
14. *Board Committees*

Consent Agenda

1. *Personnel Report*
2. *Minutes of Previous Regular and Special Board Meetings*
3. *Claims, Warrants and Financial Reports*
4. *Out of District Students*
   - *Approval for School Year 2026-2027*

Items of Old Business

1. Update on FY23/FY24 Audit **(Information)**

Items of New Business

1. Request Approval of a Rental Agreement with Bitterroot College/UM for the use of Westview for 2026-2027 **(Action)**
2. Request Approval for Out-of-State Travel by Mrs. Haflich and the students from the Classroom Without Walls to Yellowstone National Park, 05/01/27 – 05/03/27 **(Action)**
3. Recommendation to Approve a Memorandum of Understanding for Advertising on the HHS Scoreboard in the High School Gym with Bitterroot Turf and Tree Farm for the Three Year Period July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029 **(Action)**
4. Consideration to Approve the Installation of a Controlled Access Entry at the Hamilton Middle School to Improve Student and Staff Safety **(Action)**
5. Consideration to Approve an Additional 1.0 FTE Special Education Instructor for the District **(Action)**
6. Recommendation to Approve a Contract for Orientation and Mobility/Vision Services with Mobility Solutions, Inc., From October 1, 2026 through June 1, 2027 **(Action)**
7. Request Approval to Transport the Stevensville Music Director and a Student with the HHS Team for the All-State Music Festival October 14–17, 2026 in Bozeman, MT **(Action)**
8. Request Approval for the Out-of-State Travel by Marlin Lewis and Ryan Wells as Representatives for the Roots to Rise Collective to Attend the Civics Lab Conference in Madison, Wisconsin November 17-20, 2026 **(Action)**

Please see the next page for additional agenda items

Charter School – Bitterroot Polytech

1. Update on the Charter School **(Information)**
2. Request Approval of the Public Charter School Amendment Request Form **(Action)**

Board Policy

1. Second Reading – Policy Revisions:
   a. Board of Trustees – Policy #1700 – Uniform Complaint Procedure
   b. Instruction – Policy #2333 – Graduation Ceremonies

Closing

The next Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 10, 2026 in the District Office Conference Room.

TO: Hamilton School District Board of Trustees
FROM: Mr. Dave Thennis, Superintendent
SUBJECT: Personnel Report
DATE: October 13, 2026

NOTE: All appointments are conditional upon successful completion of the pre-employment process and verification of appropriate licensing.

- - - District Office Staff - - -

Resignation:
Chad DeLong, Career Readiness Coordinator

Appointment:
Jennifer Burdette, Lead Secretary
Carla Hanson, Concessions Manager
Jeannette Gray, Concessions Manager
Jerry Davey, Maintenance

- - - Certified Staff - - -

Retirement:
Shawn Thacker, Teacher – HHS (at end of school year)

Additional Work Time:
Amanda Mullan – Daly Racers Coach

- - - Classified Staff - - -

Resignation:
Jennifer Tustin, Paraprofessional - HMS
Stephanie Turley, Paraprofessional - HMS

Appointment:
Melissa Konen, High School Secretary
Jeanine New, Paraprofessional – Daly Elementary

2026-27 Renewal:
Don Urrutia – Activity Bus Driver

Additional Hours:
Debbie Wiedeger, Kari Goligoski, Stacey Allen, Sarah Martin and Carolyn Buckalew – Up to 8 hours for a Special Education Project at the Middle School

Failure to Complete Pre-Employment Requirements:
Jacob Hawes - Custodian
Matthew McClune - Custodian

- - - Keystone – Afterschool Program - - -

Appointment:
DeeDee Rogers – Keystone Assistant
Caroline Grimm – Keystone Assistant

- - - Middle School Activities - - -

Resignation:
John Walker, Boys' and Girls' Basketball Coach

Appointment:
Mary Roberts - .5 FTE Science Fair Advisor
Jeremy Barcus - .5 FTE Science Fair Advisor
Mary Roberts – BRASS Advisor
Mary Roberts – Science Olympiad Advisor
Jeremy Barcus – Science Olympiad Advisor
Stephanie DeBiasio – Science Olympiad Advisor
Mary Roberts - .5 FTE Student Council Advisor
Lilly Schoenleben - 5 FTE Student Council Advisor
Jessica Beisel – Yearbook Advisor
Lacy Burruss – Tickets/Bench Worker
Angela Dondero – HMS Game Official
Brittany Geher – HMS Game Official
Chase Tucker – Tickets/Bench Worker
Clara Hahn – Tickets/Bench Worker

NOTE: All appointments are conditional upon successful completion of the pre-employment process and verification of appropriate licensing.

- - - High School Activities - - -

Appointment:

Clara Hahn – HHS Musical Co-Advisor
Dana Hamilton – HHS Musical Co-Advisor
Dana Hamilton – HHS Play Productions
Bill Fulbright – Boys' Basketball Assistant Coach
John Walker – Girls' Basketball Assistant Coach
Robert Saltzman – Wrestling Volunteer Coach

- - - Temporary - - -

Appointment:

Logan Elliott – District Lighting Tech
Scott Hargrove – Substitute Custodian
Donavan Mason – Substitute Drivers' Ed Instructor
Todd Higgins - Substitute

ITEM 25

ACTION ON BILLINGS MULTILINGUAL ACADEMY AMENDMENT REQUEST

McCall Flynn

Montana Board of Public Education
Public Charter School Amendment Request

Purpose
This form is used to request approval from the Montana Board of Public Education for amendments to an approved public charter school application or charter contract pursuant to 20-6-809, MCA.

1. **School Information**
   Public Charter School Name: Billings Multilingual Academy
   District: Billings Public Schools
   Primary Contact: Coul Hill
   Date of Request: 2026-27 School Year

2. **Amendment Summary**
   Type of Amendment: Financial
   Description of Proposed Change: Revised Enrollment

3. **Rationale**
   Reason for Amendment: Proposed enrollment in application versus current enrollment environment necessitates a change

   What has changed since your Public Charter School application was approved? Since the approval of the original Public Charter School application, there has been a temporary pause in the relocation and resettlement of refugee and asylum-seeking families. This change has directly impacted the number of students entering our community and has contributed to lower-than-anticipated enrollment. As a result, an adjustment to the original enrollment projections is necessary to reflect current circumstances.

4. **Impact on Performance Framework**
   Does this change how the school is evaluated? ☐Yes X No
   Affected Areas: Middle School and High School
   Description of Changes: Revised enrollment
   Updated Measures: Recurrent enrollment

5. **Enrollment and Financial Impact**

Current Enrollment:

K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
						10	14	14	18	15	13	10	94

Revised Enrollment (if applicable):

K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
						10	10	11	11	10	10	10	72

Please explain how this will impact your ANB: this will not impact ANB

Additional Operational Impacts: Check all that apply:

- ☐ Staffing changes
- ☐ Budget revision required
- ☐ Student transportation changes
- ☐ Facility changes
- ☐ Other (describe below)

Click or tap here to enter text.

X No additional operational impacts

Describe the operational impacts of the proposed amendment, including any anticipated effects on staffing, budget, transportation, facilities, or other school operations. n/a

6. **Alignment to Charter Contract**
   Does this change the mission, model, or scope? ☐ Yes X No Explanation: n/a

7. **Implementation**
   Proposed Effective Date: 2026-27 school year
   Implementation Timeline: Immediate

8. **Communication Plan**
   Describe how the school will communicate the proposed amendment and, if approved, its implementation to affected students, families, staff, the district, and other stakeholders, as applicable.

   September 8, 2026: Advisory Board notification and discussion.

   September 21, 2026: Governing board notified in open public meeting that the amendment request was forthcoming.

   October 19, 2026: Governing Board discussion and approval during open public meeting.

9. **Charter Governing Board Approval**
   Date Approved: October 19, 2026
   Board Minutes Attached: XYes ☐ No

10. **Other**
    If the proposed amendment does not fall within the categories listed above, please describe the requested change in detail below. This may include, but is not limited to, changes such as the Public Charter School's name or other charter amendments not otherwise specified.
    Description of Request: The enrollment change is for recurrent enrollment to be the same in years 3, 4, and 5 as listed above in the "Revised Enrollment" portion of Section 5.

Signatures

Joana Hafer 11-4-26

Charter Governing Board Chair Date

Board of Public Education Chair Date

Board of Public Education Determination: ☐ Approved ☐ Denied

PROCEEDINGS OF
BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2
and
BILLINGS HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2

REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Monday, October 19, 2026 **5:30 p.m.**

Lincoln Education Center **Board Room** **415 North 30th Street**

MEETING MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND ORIENTATION TO THE MEETING

Trustee Janna Hafer welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trustees in attendance: Janna Hafer, Zack Terakedis, Tanya Ludwig, Jourdan Guidice, Teresa Larsen, Jennifer Hoffman, Brooke Wagner, Andrea Nemitz, and Luke Ashmore.

Staff in attendance: Dr. Erwin Garcia, Dr. Chris Olszewski, Daniela Walsh (Board Clerk), and Laurie Kvamme (CFO), along with many others.

Trustee Hafer asked the audience to take a moment of silence on behalf of our student, Chase Lantz from Will James MS, who passed away recently.

Welcome to the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Billings Elementary and High School Districts. The agendas and information about public participation in this meeting are available on the District's website.

2. GIFTS, DONATIONS & RECOGNITIONS

Donations:

1. Paulette Laszlo - donation of $500 to Orchard Elementary School.
2. The Education Foundation raised $217,350 in September, which included donations for Book Vending Machines (going to two middle schools already), Daylis, Spark Awards (formerly Classroom Grants), angel funds, and food insecurity programs. Funds are being raised for our schools through the SUV Raffle and Saturday Live dispersements will be reported next month. As of today, 10/13/2026, we're holding $2,455,444.45 for Daylis Stadium.

Recognitions:

1. Principal Shelli Strouf introduced Coach Jon Kelly, who recognized the Senior HS Girls 2026 State AA State Champion Golf team who recently secured the Class AA state title at Meadow Lark Country Club in Great Falls, marking their first championship since 2023 and the seventh in program history.
2. Joe Halligan, Coordinator for Safety with Billings Public Schools, introduced Sheri Pope and son Michael with his wife Ashlee Pope from "Carey it Forward", a non-profit organization created after Sheri's late husband Carey Pope, donated "Sammy" signs to all Billings Public Schools elementary and middle schools. The signs were delivered to schools on Monday, October 12th. The signs will be displayed in student drop off areas, or near driveways, where they will help increase driver awareness, and be a visible signal that students walking to and from school, and all other foot/scooter traffic need to be watched out for.
3. Joe Halligan introduced the Crisis Counseling Team: Jennifer Moore, Jane Lee, Andrea Hosking, Tami Radokovich, and MacKenzie Umemoto. They bring empathy, support, and calm to provide a space where healing can begin.

4. Melanie Willardson, Director of Community Relations, introduced the North Star Teacher Awards — Rory Jetmore, Will Newman, and Sarah Lord. The work of these teachers aligns with the Strategic Priorities and the Graduate Profile of the district.
5. The following awards were presented by Kaitlin Elliott, Principal of Poly Drive Elementary:
    - Montana PTA - Volunteer of the Year — Leah Frederick (Poly Drive Elementary)
    - Montana PTA - Volunteer of the Year — Jourdan Guidice (Poly Drive Elementary)
    - Montana PTA - Educator of the Year — Nicholas Ottoy (Poly Drive Elementary)
    - Montana PTA - Leadership Award - Poly Drive PTA
    - Montana PTA - PTA Proud Grant - Poly Drive PTA

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to recognize the people/groups as listed, and accepted these gifts and donations with gratitude. Trustee Andrea Nemitz seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Board Clerk, Daniela Walsh, asked to remove Item 14 h. from the agenda.

Trustee Zack Terakedis moved first to approve the agenda for this evening, removing Item 14 h. Trustee Jennifer Hoffman seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

4. BUDGET DISCUSSION

1. Bravera Bank Statement — Laurie Kvamme presented the statement with interest to date.
2. General Fund Financials — Laurie Kvamme presented the general fund financials for both elementary and high school. The district is still within the acceptable range.

5. COMMUNICATION FROM THE PUBLIC

The Board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of listening to members of the public in its meetings. The Board also recognizes the statutory and constitutional right of the public to participate in governmental operations. The Board encourages members of the public to participate in and express opinions about issues important to the District. This part of the Board's meeting is dedicated to public comment on any public matter that is not on the agenda of this meeting and is within the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees. Members of the public may also address particular items on this agenda either now or at the time the Board considers the particular item.

Please note that, pursuant to Board policy, the Chair may direct public commentary to ensure an orderly progression of the meeting. This direction may include setting a time limit for public commentary on any particular item. The Chair may also interrupt or terminate an individual's statements when necessary, including when statements are out of order, too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant. The Board as a whole shall have the final decision in determining the appropriateness of all such rulings by the Chair.

If you have not already done so, please fill out the public comment form available at the back of the room. This will allow the Chair to recognize you before you address the Board. In addition, the Board will receive any written communication at this time.

Public Comments:

1. Jennifer Leligdowicz, President of the Billings Classified Employee Association (BCEA), asking for RESPECT for support staff. Spoke about the average amount a BCEA worker makes at approximately $35,000/year. Asked for the board of trustees to consider support staff, to help these people earn a better income.
2. Beth Verlanic — Administrative Assistant at Burlington Elementary — She is fortunate enough to be able to live on what a secretary makes, because her husband is a retired teacher. Using the 1.5% raise in an example, with one of her custodians in their building. The raise totaled $10/week. Not enough for a tank of gas. Supporting the RESPECT campaign to help fund education better.
3. Jack Hanson — asked for change to district policy Item 14 S. - Policy 8560 — Display of Flags on District Property. This policy reflects state legislatures' ongoing attempt to wage a culture war. It represents a political viewpoint. It prohibits these flags on district property. Somehow, the Gadsden flag (closely associated with the Libertarian Party) and the thin blue line flag (bigoted groups promoting anti-democracy views) are allowed.

6. BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT

1. Urban Renewal Districts Update — Jourdan Guidice discussed the expansion of the new Energy Laboratories building. Additional parking is needed at the ARC center on the Southside. Looking at another parking lot, and the committee is in discussion. Zack Terakedis spoke about the EBURD and the affordable housing units being built. Member of council Mike Boyett said that each TIF district will now be combined into one review committee to review all applications from all 3 TIF districts. Janna Hafer attended the Downtown District meeting, where the Edward Jones building was discussed to be historically renewed. Additionally, the district is working with the Railroad along with 11 properties on Montana Ave to purchase the land, and to sell it to the building owners. All has been favorable so far.
2. AI Questions — this topic will be on hold until next month's meeting.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. Latest Data Points — Dr. Erwin Garcia presented the Reading and Math Benchmarking Data for the District. This is not about increasing student scores, but trying to ensure that our students are proficient and at the mastery level in both reading and math. They will be able to better project forward as learners toward graduation. If a student can read at grade level, their attitude toward school changes, and they will be better able to work toward graduation.
2. Expectations of the Leadership Team — presented by Kyra Gaskill and Kim Anthony. This presentation focused on instructional leadership. This empowers teachers and principals. Kim Anthony used the help of a student named Sammy Platt. He talked about self-managing, controlling emotions, working together, and never giving up. Teachers who give continuous feedback about where the student needs to go next with their learning, show the success of the visible learning journey. All elementary and middle schools are now engaged in visible learning.

8. BOARD CLERK'S REPORT

1. Number of Lawsuits — Currently the district has zero lawsuits.
2. Number of Complaints — There are 6 complaints — 3 from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), 1 from the Office of Public Instructions (OPI) - for our District, 1 Unfair Labor Practice, and 1 from the Human Rights Bureau.

9. BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

1. City/County/School Meeting Report — Trustee Teresa Larsen spoke about attending this meeting. Zack Terakedis discussed safety around middle schools and high schools not having speed zones. Dr. Garcia stated that the City has a three-phase plan for addressing this issue. The meeting with the State Department of Transportation will happen in December. The District will continue working with the City on the Safe Routes to School program. At this time, we are monitoring the various task forces to weigh in on this community need. Trustee Ludwig asked how we could get the kids not to cross the roads that they aren't supposed to cross. They are crossing between buses, and it's not safe. Administrators have been out talking to and telling the kids to go to the light while the kids are crossing the road down the street. The SROs have tried telling them as well. A school zone light will be very helpful. Trustee Larsen spoke about this issue, as well as Domestic Violence among the community. There was a lot of good discussion among the three entities about these topics. We were able to share how we are seeing how this affects kids in our schools. We are on a good road to a partnership. Trustee Janna Hafer asked about motorized scooters. Dr. Garcia stated that is also at the top of the list.
2. Montana Conference of Educational Leadership (MCEL) Report — Trustee Tanya Ludwig spoke about attending the MCEL meetings. She enjoyed the opening speaker, Mickey Smith, Jr. He brought energy to the room by playing the saxophone. He was funny and engaging. Jennifer Hoffman really enjoyed the speaker as well. There were a lot of people in attendance. The SRO breakout session spoke about foundations that the officers utilize for the reunification process. This is the number one process for schools to figure out. It needs to be addressed by all of our schools. Perhaps some practices would be good. A foundation called "I Love you Guys" was interesting to hear about. The delegate assembly was great. Trustee Teresa Larsen spoke about her breakout sessions concerning school budgets and advocacy. The suggestion was to support the CAMPS proposal, and offered some language about doing that. As far as the Budget, it was interesting to learn about ways to explain school finance to the public. Zack Terakedis spoke about the challenges of making decisions for school districts.

10. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

- Sam McDonald Stadium at Daylis Update
  - East Side Press Box — Dick Anderson Construction and A & E Design are offering to refresh and update the other press box, free of charge.
  - Stadium Dedication Plaque — Janna Hafer used the attached example of the plaque, asking the board for feedback. Suggested names with revised titles. Chair Hafer will ask Mark Sulser how he feels about his title.
- Riverside Water Issue Discussion
- School Zones Discussion — Trustee Luke Ashmore spoke about City/County/School issues being discussed during that meeting.
- Riverside Middle School Water Issues — Dr. Garcia explained the flooding and water standing in the area. Scott Reiter met with Staley Engineering about the water problems. They are considering French drains that are already in place. By taking away water, it could cause settling in the building. The water floods the parking lot and enters the building through the foundation. This item will be added to this agenda going forward, until the issues are taken care of.
- Potential High School Bond Discussion — Luke Ashmore discussed that next month at board meeting this topic will be brought back for discussion.

11. STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

- The Stakeholders' committee requests that the full Board have the opportunity to review the boundary map, transportation routes and costs, the number of properties and students potentially affected, Policy 2050 and P-1, and any administrative considerations regarding the parental request to change the school boundaries from Meadowlark Elementary to Boulder Elementary. Kyra Gaskill discussed the current bus routes for Meadowlark Elementary. The pink areas are not included in busing at this time. The new proposed stop and route would be at Rimrock and 66th Street West. The boundaries of Boulder and Meadowlark are displayed as requested. Lindsay Gran, Executive Director of Transportation, had additional comments in the presentation. Trustee Zack Terakedis discussed adding another route, if students can actually walk to the bus stop already. Everything is put into a program, for how many stops you should have to get kids to school on time. If more stops are added, the bus would be late, or an additional route would need to be added. This is affecting 4 students. Currently, there is not a need for an additional route. The concern is that there are other areas around town that are the same as this one, and it would require changes for all of them if we do this one. Dr. Garcia stated that in 4 years, he has never had anyone request a change in boundary. Zack Terakedis stated that there are requests for additional bus stops all over the district. The reality is that these students are going to the wrong school. There are different ways we have made accommodations. We can redistrict and send them to Boulder. This isn't setting a precedent, we are only responding to a precedent that was set years ago. We have a lot of students going to the wrong school. His opinion is that this is a response to a simple problem. We should stick with what we have in place. Dr. Garcia stated that changing boundary lines is a huge issue. If we grant in-district transfers, that generates more issues. We just need to adjust the boundary lines, as we consider fair.

Trustee Brooke Wagner echoed what Zack said. Trustee Larsen said they are creating a permanent boundary for a temporary situation — these kids will move on to high school in a few years. Trustee Hafer stated that she understood there was an entrance and exit issue. That was why they couldn't get through in another direction. Dr. Garcia said that for the families who were given the opportunity to go to Boulder, the administration felt that was the most logical action at that time. The decision to provide in-district transportation is very complex to make. It will impact a lot of other families. If the board chooses to make an adjustment, that is their right, then the cleanest option is for the district to rezone or restructure that boundary. If the board wants to see that as a logical argument, then the rezone will need to happen. We don't have the capacity to allow this for all other families in this situation. Kyra Gaskill stated that there is no transportation provided if you choose not to attend the school that is in your area. Trustee Brooke Wagner stated that in this case, we can't say what will happen in the future. I'm in support of encompassing the boundary where the kids are already in school, where the kids have already made friends. Kyra Gaskill said that originally there was a bus provided because they needed a ride to Meadowlark. Emails were sent a year ago in September, and another in December 2025 stating that there would be no more changes to the bus routes. Trustee Hafer is concerned that we have already set this in motion, and that the kids need their friendships. Tanya Ludwig stated that these kids have already established friendships for 4–5 years at Boulder. Adding a bus to that area is not that difficult. When she drove the bus, kids were added every day. Kyra Gaskill stated that no one is denying them to attend the school they are choosing. We don't want kids to have to move to a different school.

Trustee Zack Terakedis discussed redistricting (by tax code with potentially 20 families) versus attending Meadowlark, but being allowed to attend at Boulder. Kyra Gaskill stated that providing transportation for 300 additional students could be very problematic. This is the only situation, as far as we are aware.

Trustee Teresa Larsen moved first to follow the administration's suggestion. Families who live outside their school area will have to provide their own transportation if they request to attend an out-of-area school. Trustee Jourdan Guidice seconded the motion. Discussion: Trustee Luke Ashmore asked if action was needed tonight. Trustee Nemitz asked how the family was getting her kids to school at this time. Trustee Wagner stated that these kids have formed relationships at a school, and it's only a simple boundary change that costs the district no additional money. Why can't we make this accommodation? Trustee Terakedis said that we should be able to make an administrative adjustment at any time. The decision at the time the decision was made, puts the board in a position to redistrict. If the demographics were different, the decision might not be the same. This seems like common sense. Brooke Wagner stated that she will take full responsibility for bringing this to the board. It was again stated that the motion being voted on is to follow the administration's suggestion that families who live outside their school area will have to provide their own transportation if they request to attend an out-of-area school.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ashmore — No; Trustee Nemitz — Yes; Trustee Hafer — No; Trustee Terakedis — Yes; Trustee Ludwig — No; Trustee Guidice — Yes; Trustee Larsen — Yes; As an elementary school vote only, as stated the motion passed with a 4 Yes to 3 no vote. The motion passed.

12. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Performance Monitoring Committee was scheduled to meet on October 5th, 2026 to discuss the following:

- Review elementary and middle school district benchmarking data from the fall 2026 testing term.
- Hold open discussion on various topics related to student achievement.

Roger Dereszynski stated that the trends over the past four years, to begin this year, we are higher in both math and reading. He asked for questions regarding the attached presentation. Trustee Larsen asked about the KinderREADy screening process. Is potty training part of that? No, most of those scores are pretty low in the screening, but they advance greatly before the next spring.

13. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

a. Advisory Committee For Professional Development

1. The committee reviewed Professional Development Updates for recommendations to the board.
2. The committee reviewed PIR Special Requests and any New MIDAS Requests since the last meeting.
3. The Director of Professional Learning provided an update on the Professional Learning Steering Committee.

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve the attached Special Requests and Course Proposals as reviewed by the Advisory Committee for Professional Development and recommended to the board. Trustee Luke Ashmore seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

b. Charter Schools Update

i. Billings Multilingual Academy Charter Amendment Request

Since the approval of the original Public Charter School application, there has been a temporary pause in the relocation and resettlement of refugee and asylum-seeking families. This change has directly impacted the number of students entering our community and has contributed to lower-than-anticipated enrollment in the Billings Multilingual Academy. As a result, an adjustment to the original enrollment projections is necessary to reflect current circumstances.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve the proposed amendment request to revise enrollment projects for the Billings Multilingual Academy. Trustee Tanya Ludwig seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

ii. Billings Health Science Academy

HB 549 (2023) authorized the establishment of public charter schools in Montana and tasked the Montana Board of Public Education as the sole entity authorized to enter into public charter contracts with a governing board. There are two types of public charter schools – those operating under an existing local school board and those operating as a new school district under a separate governing board.

Billings Public Schools brings forth the recommendation of a high school health science charter school – Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA) which will operate under the existing Billings Public School Board.

The locations of this charter school are still up in the air. There is a possible private facility being offered with space. Some classes will also be held at the Career Center. This will be for grades 11–12. The cost of years 1–5 are only projected costs. The Future Ready funds received during the 2027–2028 year will be used to help fund this program as well. The first payment will be from last year's graduates based on AP and Dual Credit students. CNA and EMT certifications also count toward this funding. Every class available at the new charter school will also count toward this funding. Staffing needs for the district will increase, as the program expands. The hope is for students to be ready to work, or support themselves through college after graduation from high school.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve district personnel to pursue approval of the Billings Health Science Academy by the Montana Board of Public Education and authorize the Board Chair to sign the completed application. Trustee Brooke Wagner seconded the motion. Trustee Jourdan Guidice asked again about the staffing being low right now. The classroom capacity is a minimum of 18 students per 3 classrooms. As the program grows, this will expand. The instruction needs to have a low class size, based on the information and work the students will do. The district will hire three teachers. If we have more students applying, we may have to use a lottery system. There will be 45 in the AM and 45 in the PM. We expect a lot more than that. The minimum is 41. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

14. POLICY UPDATES

Policies 1441 (Public Participation), 2320 (Field Trips and Out-of-State Student Travel), and 3255 (Bomb Threats and Threats of Hazardous Substances) are being reviewed by Legal counsel and will be discussed again at the November board meeting. Daniela Walsh stated these policies will be brought to Board Operations Committee in November.

a. Policy 1017, Authorization of SignaturesTrustee Larsen requested a review of this policy due to concerns regarding the use of signature stamps on contracts. With electronic signatures now widely available, the use of signature stamps may create unnecessary confusion and liability. The review will also consider identifying, through procedure, which documents require the Board Chair's signature by law or policy.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Teresa Larsen moved to approve Policy 1017 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Jourdan Guidice seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

b. Policy 2335, HIV/AIDS Education and Prevention

HB471: This bill amends the requirements for mandatory notices to parents regarding human sexuality instruction and adds requirements related to identity instruction. In order to comply with the bill, we are recommending an amendment of Policy 2335.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 2335 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Teresa Larsen seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

c. Policy 3120 — Attendance; Procedure 3120-P2

Policy 3120 and Procedure 3120-P2 were reviewed by legal counsel. The attached redlined documents reflect legal counsel's recommended changes for Board review and consideration.

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve Policy 3120 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Jennifer Hoffman seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

Updated Procedure 3120-P2 is being presented, For Information Only.

d. Policy 3240, Tobacco Free Schools

The attached redlined policy is part of the second set of 3000-series policy reviews. During the committee review, language for vaping was added. Additional language addressing Nicotine was added.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 3240 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Brooke Wagner seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

e. Policy 3310, Student Discipline—Consequences for Violations of Student Code of Conduct

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Language was added to better support building administrators with all redline changes coming from MTSBA.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 3310 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Tanya Ludwig seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

f. Policy 3350, Student Discipline - Due Process

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Discussed to merge this policy into Policy 3310. Procedures need to be reviewed by legal before finalizing.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve the repeal of Policy 3350 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Tanya Ludwig seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

g. Policy 3410, Student Health

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. This policy was reviewed several times by our SPED executive director.

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve Policy 3410 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Andrea Nemitz seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

h. Policy 3416, Administrating Medicine to Students

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Additional redline change "to" for "by"

This item was removed from the agenda for this meeting. ~~Approve Policy 3416 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting~~.

i. Policy 3417, Communicable Diseases

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Concerns about the financial burden on nurses. Language cleanup.

Trustee Andrea Nemitz moved first to approve Policy 3417 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Jourdan Guidice seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

j. Policy 3431, Emergency Treatment

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Changes are based on MTSBA wording.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 3431 for first reading, and move forward for the second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Teresa Larsen seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

k. Policy 3520, Student Fees, Fines, and Charges

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel.

Two concerns related to our policy compared to MTSBA. One, the redlined portion, deleted the "excessive" supplies. The district cannot withhold a student's diploma — it is not legal to do this. The fees related to school district industrial arts, science, etc. should be the same as MTSBA. We will put in place, as a procedure, a fee schedule to have the 3 high schools work together to decide a maximum cost for each class. This will be added to the Policy as a Procedure. All the fees that are charged to the students, there are ways for every child to receive help to pay, if needed.

Discussion: A question was asked about the range of fees for different high schools. Who will audit these fees going forward? The district financial policies might contain information about auditing these fees. They are also reviewed by the building principal. The Angel Fund and Title I also cover any scholarship fees needed. Trustee Hoffman had a concern that classes offered, related to educational goals, should not have fees charged. She doesn't feel fees should be charged when related to educational goals (required classes). Also, she doesn't like that it says it's aligned with MTSBA, when changes have been made to the wording. "Excessive" might be different to a different family. The law MCA 20-9-214 states: Trustees may require pupils in (extracurricular classes) to be required to pay fees. Fees may be waived for financial hardship. Fees should not go into a building fund. This policy, as the district currently has it written, contradicts the law. Trustee Wagner discussed the difference between fees for "breakage" and supplies used for required classes. Trustee Hoffman stated that a class that is required for graduation should not require fees. This is contradictory to the law. Kyra Gaskill asked how the administration can best prepare this policy for the next review. Trustee Hoffman stated that they should just keep it under the MTSBA policy. Kyra Gaskill asked about deposits to the general fund. Laurie Kvamme stated that it would decrease the amount received from the state. Trustee Hoffman stated that these fees must be deposited into a non-budgeted fund. Trustee Larsen stated that the building budgets come from the general fund.

Policy 3520 was not approved for first reading. Kyra Gaskill and Gordon Klasna will be reviewing the policy based on discussion by the board. The policy will be tabled and re-worked. Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to table Policy 3520 until it can be reworked, reviewed, and brought back for discussion. Trustee Zack Terakedis seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

l. Policy 3550, Student Clubs (change made to "School Approved Activities")

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel.

Addition of extracurricular activities. Our attorney reviewed this and stated that we needed to have all 6 lines versus the MTSBA policy. Non-Curricular Student Groups must be supervised by a district employee.

Discussion: Trustee Terakedis asked about the audit for the ECA accounts related to extracurricular activities. If a school has a club, then how do we audit the existence of these clubs, and where the money goes when the club ends for a few years? We have a lot of homeschool students participating in these clubs. If these students aren't enrolled, who is liable for these kids? Are they required to carry an insurance policy in order to participate? If public schools have to take on the liability of these students, that is not fair to our district. Typically, school liability insurance picks up as secondary insurance to the family primary insurance. The language on the signup form for a sport has the parent release the school of liability. If we take on a student that we have no relationship with, it makes it more difficult for the district. Dr. Garcia called Laurie Kvamme to the podium. He asked about students who are only participating in partial areas of public school. She stated that we receive about 1/8 of ANB funding for a student coming to participate as a homeschool student. They are protected by our liability insurance. This coverage also covers volunteers, as a blanket coverage for the district.

Policy 3550 was not approved for first reading. Gordon Klasna will be reviewing the policy based on discussion by the board. The policy will be tabled and re-worked. Trustee Andrea Nemitz moved first to table Policy 3550 until it can be reworked, reviewed, and brought back for discussion. Trustee Zack Terakedis seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

m. Policy 3600, Student Records

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Cross-references reviewed.

Trustee Andrea Nemitz moved first to approve Policy 3600 for first reading, and move forward for the second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Zack Terakedis seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

n. Policy 3606, Transfer of Student Records

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Added some cross-references.

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve Policy 3606 for first reading, and move forward for the second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Luke Ashmore seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

o. Policy 3608, Receipt of Confidential Records

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Added some cross-references — NF-1 student records — BPS 3600 P

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve Policy 3608 for first reading, and move forward for the second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Brooke Wagner seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

p. Policy 5021, Fingerprints and Criminal Background Investigations

HB745: This bill requires adoption by school districts of a student safety policy requiring a fingerprint criminal history check prior to any individual (employees, volunteers, chaperones, etc.) having unsupervised contact with students. In order to comply with the bill, we are recommending making changes to our current Policy 5021.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 5021 for first reading, and move forward for a second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Tanya Ludwig seconded the motion. Discussion: This policy is being updated to include fingerprinting for anyone who comes into the building to volunteer. There was a period of time when we were unclear about the stipulations. Repeat activities must be fingerprinted. Anyone who comes in without the constant supervision of a staff member. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

q. Policy 5255, Disciplinary Action (Changed to "Free to Speak Act")

HB400: This bill prohibits adverse employment action or student disciplinary action against an individual that declines to provide their own pronouns or declines to address another person by a name other than their legal name or by using a pronoun inconsistent with the person's sex. In order to comply with this bill, we are recommending new Policy 5255.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 5255 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Teresa Larsen seconded the motion. Trustees Larsen, Hafer, Hoffman, Wagner, Nemitz and Ashmore voted unanimously in the affirmative. Trustees Ludwig, Guidice, and Terakedis voted no on this change. The motion passed.

r. Policy 8410, Records Management

This policy was reviewed against MTSBA's model policy to simplify the language and make the appropriate updates.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 8410 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Zack Terakedis seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

s. Policy 8560, Display of Flags and Banners on District Property

HB819: This bill prohibits the display of flags or banners on District property other than specific types of flags identified in the bill. In order to comply with the bill, we are recommending adoption of a new Policy 8560.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Discussion: Trustee Zack Terakedis discussed this law being poorly written. What is a historical flag? If you look online, you get 70 different flags. It can be state law, but the district does not need to alter our policy. He stated that he would not vote for something in our policy. Trustee Luke Ashmore also expressed his disappointment with this law by the state. He feels it's a very bad law.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 8560 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Brooke Wagner seconded the motion.

Role Call Vote: Trustee Ashmore - No; Trustee Nemitz - Yes; Trustee Wagner - Yes; Trustee Hoffman - Yes; Trustee Hafer - No; Trustee Terakedis - No; Trustee Ludwig - No; Trustee Guidice - No; Trustee Larsen - Yes. The vote had 5 "No" votes, and 4 "Yes" votes. The motion failed.

15. TRUSTEE SCHOOL VISITS

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman reported having visited the Washington Innovation Center. Principal Ali Zent toured with her, and they discussed the Early College High School.

Trustee Tanya Ludwig toured two schools — Bitterroot and Broadwater. The KinderREADy program at Bitterroot was adorable. They were learning sign language. She learned about the walking school bus, talking about safer ways to get to school. At Broadwater, it was sad to see the kids playing in the back of the school in a chain-linked area. They really need to be able to play in their playground again. It's just sad. The parents are united to help make this situation better. It's just not normal.

Trustee Brooke Wagner visited Skyview High School. She had a great visit with the principal.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman spoke about the district's social media posts. The attendance incentive days have been fun to see. Such a great idea!

16. CONSENT AGENDA

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve the Consent Agenda. Trustee Andrea Nemitz seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

a. Resolution to Sell/Dispose of District Personal Property

School District #2 personal property, in the form of library books, has fully depreciated and has become undesirable and unsuitable for School District purposes.

Per Mont. Code Ann. Sec. 20-6-604(1), the Board of Trustees may sell or otherwise dispose of personal property upon a finding that the personal property has or is about to become abandoned, obsolete, undesirable, or unsuitable for school purposes. The Board of Trustees must adopt a resolution to sell or otherwise dispose of the personal property because it is or is about to become abandoned, obsolete, undesirable, or unsuitable for the school purposes of the district. Upon approval of the resolution, public notice must be provided pursuant to the requirements of Mont. Code Ann. Sec. 20-20-204, followed by a waiting period of 14 days to allow for taxpayer appeal. Per District Policy 7251, the trustees shall sell or dispose of the real or personal property in a reasonable manner determined to be in the best interest of the District.

The board approved to adopt the proposed Resolution regarding personal property that is abandoned, obsolete, undesirable, or unsuitable for the school purposes of Billings School District No. 2 and acknowledge that library books, as specified in the document attached to the Resolution, may be otherwise disposed of by the Superintendent.

b. reACT Agreement with Riverstone Health

The Board is asked to approve entering into an Agreement with RiverStone Health regarding implementing the reACT program in the middle schools for the 2026-2027 school year.

The board approved the reACT Agreement with Riverstone Health.

c. Personnel Report

Pursuant to Montana law, the Board of Trustees employs and dismisses District employees. MCA § 20-3-324. Each month, the Superintendent and our Human Resource Services staff present to the Board a personnel report that includes recommended hiring. The report also includes extracurricular activities, retirements, resignations, leaves of absence of one semester or longer, and, infrequently, recommended dismissals. The Board acts upon the Superintendent's employment recommendations by accepting the personnel report. The attached personnel report includes the Superintendent's current employment recommendations.

The board approved the Personnel Report.

d. Expenditures of Money - September 2026

The Expenditures of Money for the month of September were reviewed and authorized in accordance with district regulations and financial controls that have been established to ensure that all expenditures are in compliance with school, state, and federal laws, policies, and procedures.

These procedures include authorization of expenditures by the appropriate supervisor and review by the finance department to ensure the expenditure has been authorized by budget and charged to the correct program. Attached are the detailed warrants for the month of September. In line with our unwavering dedication to transparency and responsibility, we place a strong emphasis on granting the community access to pertinent financial data.

We are pleased to outline the following avenues through which the public can obtain more detailed expenditure information:

1. District Clerk's Office at Lincoln Center: Starting every Friday afternoon before a Monday Board meeting, employee gross pay information will be made available for public review at the District Clerk's office located at Lincoln Center.
2. Board Meetings and Records Requests: Should you wish to access this data outside the regular schedule, you may do so by submitting a records request. For your convenience, a Chromebook will be provided to facilitate viewing information stored on a USB drive during Board meetings.
3. Minutes Approval and Documentation: To ensure clarity and accuracy, the approved meeting minutes will comprehensively document the options available for reviewing employee gross pay information.

Our primary objective is to foster a deeper understanding and trust within the community regarding our organizational operations, all while adhering strictly to relevant privacy laws and regulations. See § 20-3-323 (2) MCA & § 20-9-213 (2) MCA.

Executive Summary:		
Claims (Paper Checks)	$	10,082,955.14
Procurement Card	$	615,173.03
Wells Fargo	$	450,921.66
First Interstate Bank	$	164,251.37
Arbiter Financial Payments (Referee Fees)	$	35,783.52
EBMS ACH Payments (Third Party Admin for Health Plan)	$	144,255.88
MiCare Building Rental Monthly Payment	$	1,400.00
Total	**$**	**10,879,567.57**
Federal	**$**	**801,279.55**
Medicare	$	*153,823.62*
FICA	$	*657,726.58*
State	$	*337,530.77*
Payroll Tax Deposit	**$**	**1,950,360.52**
Payroll Warrants & Direct Deposits	$	*7,587,263.28*
Health Plan	$	*318,988.37*
125 Plan (Medical & Childcare FLEX)	$	*158,502.25*
AFLAC	$	-
Legal Services	$	*296.85*
Supplemental Life	$	*40,115.15*
PERS Payments	$	*118,720.33*
TRS Payments	$	*759,583.76*
Union Dues	$	*27,789.65*
457 Plan	$	*15,440.50*
Tax Sheltered Annuity Plan	$	*101,815.83*
Education Foundation/United Way Donation	$	*1,296.00*
Child Support Processing Fee	$	*40.00*
Garnishments	$	*17,779.60*
Child Support Enforcement Division Garnishment	$	*2,739.73*
District Employee Cell Phone Stipends	$	*11,551.87*
Total Gross Employee Pay	**$**	**11,112,283.69**

The board approved the Expenditures of Money for September 2026.

e. Financial & Investment Reports - September 2026 - Unaudited Financial & Investment Reports

Billings Public Schools

The attached financial and investment reports are for the month of September 2026. They are unaudited.

The following procedures have not been completed for September 2026:

1. Reconciliation of cash/investments and warrants payable to the Yellowstone County Treasurer balances at month-end.
2. The recording of revenue collected by the Yellowstone County Treasurer during the month of September 2026.
3. CS101/CS201 Account Expenditures by Fund – September 2026.
4. CS101/CS201 Account Revenues by Fund – September 2026.
5. Investment Reports – September 2026 — Unaudited.

The board approved Financial Reports – September 2026— Unaudited.
The board approved Investment Reports — September 2026 — Unaudited.

f. Minutes of Board Meetings

The board approved the following Board Meeting minutes:

- Monday, September 21, 2026 – Regular Board of Trustees Meeting – 5:30 PM, Lincoln, Boardroom
- Wednesday, October 14, 2026 – Special Board Meeting (City/County/School) – 12:00 PM, City of Billings — Chamber

g. Minutes of Committee Meetings

The board approved the following board committee minutes:

- Tuesday, October 6, 2026 – Stakeholder Relations Committee – 10:30 AM, Lincoln, Boardroom
- Tuesday, October 6, 2026 – Planning & Development Committee – 11:00 AM, Lincoln, Boardroom
- Tuesday, October 6, 2026 – Board Operations Committee – 12:00 Noon, Lincoln, Boardroom
- Tuesday, October 6, 2026 – Advisory Committee for Professional Development – 4:00 PM, Room 219

17. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, and no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Janna Hafer, Chair

Karen Yose, Recorder

❖ **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – (Item 26)**

Dr. Ron Slinger

ITEM 26

ACTION ON THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHERN EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Dr. Ron Slinger

Montana Board of Public Education
Executive Summary

Date: November 20, 2026

Presentation	Recommend Approval of the State Accreditation Program Report for Montana State University-Northern's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in the College of Arts, Sciences, & Education.
Presenter	Crystal Andrews
Position Title	Senior Manager, School and Educator Effectiveness Office of Public Instruction
Overview	The State Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends the approval of the State Accreditation Program Report for Montana State University-Northern's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in the College of Arts, Sciences, & Education and the recommended Corrective Action Plan as found in the report. The Comprehensive Corrective Action Plan is included in the BPE Agenda Packet. Dr. Curtis Smeby, Interim Dean will be available to provide final comments and respond to questions from the BPE.
Requested Decision(s)	Action Item
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	Approve the State Accreditation Program Report, including the timeline for Correction Action for Montana State University-Northern's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in the College of Arts, Sciences, & Education as recommended by State Superintendent Hedalen.

❖ **ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE – (Item 27)**

Renee Rassmussen

ITEM 27

INFORMATION ON THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT DATA OVERVIEW

Dr. Ryan Schrenk

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS January 14-15, 2027
Helena, MT

Exiting Board Member – Last Meeting & Recognition
MACIE Update
Review Community Choice School Annual Reports
Action on Authorizing Public Charter Schools
Transportation Report
Assessment Update
Federal Update
Annual HiSet Report
Accreditation Report
Educator Licensure Report
Qualify Advanced Opportunity Grant Applications
Quality Educator Loan Assistance Program Report
Content Standards Revision Update

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
BALLROOMS, STRAND UNION BUILDING
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

11:30AM **BOARD OF EDUCATION LUNCH**

12:30PM **BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**
AGENDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

GREG GIANFORTE
GOVERNOR

KRISTEN JURAS
LT. GOVERNOR

State Board of Education Meeting

November 20, 2026 · 12:30 p.m.
Montana State University- Bozeman, Strand Union Building Ballrooms

12:30 p.m.	Call to order and attendance Presiding Officer Governor Gianforte
12:35 p.m.	Approval of 2025 State Board of Education Minutes – **ACTION**
12:37 p.m.	Motion to adopt the agenda – **ACTION**
12:40 p.m.	Welcome and Opening Remarks Presiding Officer Governor Gianforte
12:45 p.m.	Remarks on behalf of the Office of Public Instruction Superintendent Susie Hedalen
12:50 p.m.	Remarks on behalf of the Board of Regents Chair Loren Bough
12:55 p.m.	Remarks on behalf of the Board of Public Education Chair Tim Tharp
1:00 p.m.	2027 Executive Unified Education Budget – **ACTION** Office of Budget & Program Planning
1:10 p.m.	Public Comment Limited to 3 minutes. Comments may also be emailed to Manish.Bhatt@mt.gov.

Adjourn after public comment

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Minutes
Montana Board of Education
November 21, 2025 | UM-Missoula

Friday, November 21, 2025

Members present: Lieutenant Governor Juras, Chair, Board Member Tharp, Board Member Maxwell, Board Member Slinger, Board Member Schmidt, Board Member Nieskens, Board Member Quinlan, Board Member Rasmussen (online), Board Member Comstock, Board of Regents Chair Buchanan, Regent Bough, Regent Dombrouski, Regent Southworth, Regent Hoyer, and Regent Jasper. Ex Officio members present: Superintendent Hedalen and Commissioner Christian.

Members excused: Regent Folkvord

Opening by Lieutenant Governor Juras | 00:00:22

Lieutenant Governor Juras called the meeting to order and took attendance.

Approval of 2024 Board of Education Minutes | 00:1:41

Lieutenant Governor Juras asked for any corrections or additions to the minutes. There were none so the minutes were approved.

Adoption of the 2025 Board of Education agenda | 00:02:14

Chair Tharp moved and Regent Jasper seconded adoption of the agenda. It was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

Welcome and Opening Remarks by Lieutenant Governor Juras | 00:04:05

Lieutenant Governor Juras thanked the members for their service and for the long hours and resources they devote to improving educational opportunities for Montana students. She recognized the Board of Public Education's work implementing public charter schools. She also recognized the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Educations work expanding apprenticeships, career education, and opportunities to earn credit while working. She said that she and the Governor share a goal of ensuring every Montana student has a path to reach their full potential. The Lieutenant Governor then highlighted education legislation from the 2025 session and said she anticipated another busy session for education in 2027.

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Remarks by Superintendent Hedalen | 00:07:26

Superintendent Hedalen said the boards share many common goals and are collaborating well to increase opportunities for students across Montana. The Superintendent described visiting schools to see early literacy programs in action and emphasized that students reading by third grade is critical to improving academic outcomes. The Superintendent also noted that charter schools are helping to increase the teacher pipeline. She discussed data modernization, including new digital tools for educators and opportunities to partner on research with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and other agencies. The Superintendent thanked the Digital Academy for its leadership in producing AI guidance for schools and noted that the Digital Academy Frontier Learning Lab at UM is helping schools integrate AI into classrooms. Mental health was identified as an area needing continued work, based on feedback from student panels and teachers. The Superintendent also spoke about opportunities for students in college, career, or the military and recognized Board Member Nieskens as a champion for military students.

Remarks by Chair Buchanan | 00:10:58

Chair Buchanan thanked the Lieutenant Governor for her leadership in education and said that the collaboration among the boards has reached a high level since the Board of Education was created 53 years ago. He said that the overarching theme of the Regents' meeting this week was resident student access, particularly how to increase the rate at which Montana resident students enroll in college, noting that national enrollment and degree attainment projections are bleak while Montana's projections look better. He called this the Board of Regents' highest priority because when Montana succeeds in this area, workforce needs are met and families gain opportunity and living wages. He thanked the Governor and Lieutenant Governor for their appointments. He reported on the Regents' discussions with faculty regarding dual enrollment and expressed optimism about data modernization with Superintendent Hedalen. He noted that the Regents met with the legislative Education Interim Committee earlier in the day and acknowledged the Legislature's and Governor's strong investment in the MUS. He concluded by noting that the Regents unanimously endorsed the joint resolution on FAFSA completion and direct admissions.

Remarks by Chair Tharp | 00:14:53

Chair Tharp said serving as chair of the Board of Public Education has been the deepest honor of his long career in education. He praised the Board and its staff, noted that it is the smallest state agency, and thanked current and past board members. He discussed the unprecedented level of partnership among the Board of Public Education and the Regents, the Office of Public Instruction, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Department of Labor and Industry, and the Legislature. He noted

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that this week provided time with legislators, including the Education Interim Committee, and visits to charter schools to see the results of their funding and policy decisions. He recognized Board Member Slinger's invaluable perspective on the Board of Public Education and urged everyone to capitalize on the current cooperation. Chair Tharp spoke about the importance of mental health supports, applauded the Legislature's efforts to increase training requirements, and described the QPR, Mental Health First Aid, and CISM trainings he teaches across eastern Montana. He shared a personal connection to the issue and his commitment to reducing the stigma around mental health challenges.

Joint Resolution Supporting FAFSA Completion and Direct Admissions | 00:20:13

Lieutenant Governor Juras said that the Board of Regents and the Board of Public Education each passed the joint resolution unanimously this week and asked for a motion to approve it. Regent Buchanan moved and Board Member Tharp seconded the joint resolution.

Regent Hoyer spoke on behalf of K-12 education, describing a district with about 62% poverty and stating that FAFSA completion and direct admissions remove barriers for low-income students and students whose families have not had the opportunity to attend college.

Superintendent Hedalen thanked Commissioner Christian and the OCHE team, shared results from other states implementing similar efforts, and said that letters will be sent to students notifying them of the opportunity to attend Montana's universities, colleges, and other programs, with the help of education organizations in aligning messaging to school leaders.

Chair Tharp described his surprise at Montana's low FAFSA completion rates, highlighting the impact of direct admission letters on students who never saw themselves continuing after high school, and the many possible pathways for education beyond high school. He thanked the Office of Public Instruction and the Governor's Office for finding language acceptable to all parties and fully supported the resolution.

Regent Southworth recalled a survey of perceptions of higher education showing that the lowest-income Montanans overwhelmingly viewed college as unaffordable, while $9 million in FAFSA aid was left unclaimed that same year, and noted that data modernization is coming together with this effort. No public comment was received. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

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General Public Comment | 00:28:49

Rob Watson, Executive Director of School Administrators of Montana, spoke about House Bill 252, which increased teacher salaries and created the Future Ready payment, an incentive for districts to expand dual enrollment, career and technical education, and work-based learning. Watson noted that the Office of Public Instruction, the Department of Labor and Industry, and the Commissioner of Higher Education's office are collaborating on implementation. He said a recent webinar drew about 200 district leaders, and that students counted for the first payments in 2028 are current seniors in the class of 2026. Watson thanked the three agencies for their work.

Meeting Adjourned | 00:32:58

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